

*Stuart Burge, Pastures Australia*

## **The Phosphorus Assessment Tool**



## **Five Easy Steps** to ensure you are making money from superphosphate



## “Five Easy Steps” Tool

“*THE* most important decision support tool available in the grazing industries of southern Australia ...!”

Essential for ALL advisors and consultants



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## Why?

- P is essential for high levels of pasture growth, productivity and profitability
- P application is a significant farm cost
- World supplies of high quality P are finite
- Price has doubled in last 10 years
- Future of grazing industries is therefore reliant upon “best practice” P use



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## Five Easy Steps – for whom

“something for everyone ...”

- Advisors and consultants
  - technical ie agronomic “best practice”
  - financial analysis
- Producers (“better”)



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## Five Easy Steps – where from?

- Research – state governments, CSIRO, N.Z On-farm trials including Grassland Productivity & Triple P Programs
- Compiled by CSIRO and NSW I & I



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***“Five Easy Steps  
to ensure you are making money  
from superphosphate”***



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**Step 1**

*Use soil testing to assess the Phosphorus fertility status of your soil and your target values for soil fertility management*

- Taking soil tests
- Interpreting soil tests – Colwell & Olsen P
- Critical P levels
- Phosphorus Buffering Index



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## Step 2

*Determine the stocking rate that is appropriate for your current or projected soil fertility level*

- Average annual rainfall (French 1987)
- Growing season length
- Paddock size



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## Step 3

*Determine how much P needs to be applied*

- Capital P
- Maintenance rates of P
- Soil and animal loss factors
- Pasture quality



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## Step 4

*Check that the proposed investment in fertiliser and livestock will generate an acceptable \$ return*

- Economic / financial analysis
- Cash Flow Budgets
- Return on fertiliser investment
- Time to break even



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## Step 5

*Think through any other factors that might modify your decision*

- Other nutrients
- Pasture composition and stability
- Sustainability - grazing management



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## Training and Support

Want to know more .....

FREE training with the use of the P Tool “at a place near you ....”

- Tailored to suit your needs
- Familiarisation as well as “train the trainer”
- Technical assistance and support



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## Key Details

[www.mla.com.au/nutrient](http://www.mla.com.au/nutrient)

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**The Pasture Selection Tool**



The Pasture Selection Tool

[www.pasturepicker.com.au](http://www.pasturepicker.com.au)