

National Landcare Program: Smart Farms Small Grant – Fruit Growers Victoria

FACT SHEET 7 Your Target Numbers Your data

The most common question raised as we undertook this project was that of what do the number mean and what should my targets be.

Whether soil or plant tissue, during the project's extension workshops growers learned how to understand and develop their own numbers for their crops, varieties and locations.

One of the common errors that we now understand is the use of old data to make assumptions about soil pool or plant tissue results, and the lack of correlation to yield in modern farming systems with new crop varieties.

With new varieties, along with varying growing environments and management methods, developing a simple testing program (as fact sheet No. X describes), to understand our soils and our plant tissue results, and to fill the missing link of correlating these to crop yield.

We can readily model the availability of nutrients in the soil, and readily calculate nutrient removed in harvested crop,

therefore we can calculate for nutrient replacement, at times when most efficient and most beneficial to the plant, and our yield.

Model

If the soil pool has X amount of an element, and removes Y amount of that same element in the harvested fruit, there is either a deficit or an abundance of the element remaining.

Observation

Growers have developed a range of techniques and use of favourite products they trust in supporting crop yield and quality. A greater effort to be more specific with rates and timing by utilising soil and plant testing, will be valuable and improve results.

Growers are advised to seek further support from their agronomist to develop this model.

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