

## MEDIA RELEASE

FRIDAY, 27 MAY 2016

### **Review shows farmers' lime use could reduce by 33%**

Australia's leading provider of precision agriculture services, Precision Agriculture, today released findings from its Grid Soil Mapping Review, showing an average reduction in lime application of 33% was achievable through variable rate techniques for the land surveyed.

Over 7,500 hectares across Southern NSW and Victoria were mapped during January to April this year with measurements taken for pH levels and phosphorous.

Precision Agriculture's lead advisor who conducted the review, Brendan Torpy, said getting the balance right between the requirements of the land and lime application rates is a complex task without the right information.

"The traditional blanket approach to applying lime can be hit and miss as pH levels commonly vary quite significantly within and between paddocks," he said.

"By measuring scientifically you can match lime rates to soil pH levels – using what is needed and where. There's no guess work and the cost saving is often significant.

"Our results showed twenty-nine percent of land we surveyed did not require lime at all but twenty-six percent required more than a standard traditional rate of 2 tonnes per hectare."

Mr Torpy said that a blanket application rate in these areas would lead to an over application of lime in some areas while a significant area would not receive sufficient nutrition, which could lead to yield penalties for a number of years to come.

"It highlights how efficiency of input use and unlocking yield potential are interlinked," he said.

"There are a lot of moving factors that contribute to yield and it varies from paddock to paddock, however our anecdotal experience has been that a change to precision farming techniques has seen around a 10 percent improvement in poor production zones," he said.

Mr Torpy said the results of the survey were similar across regions "with a 20-60 percent range for lime saving and an average of 30 percent continually showing through."

Phosphorous measurements from the review indicated savings of 20-25 percent on average may be achievable across the region without affecting yield.

"The results reinforce the importance of our philosophy of measuring to manage and grid soil mapping is an integral part of this, particularly for farmers in Southern Australia," Mr Torpy said.

Grid soil mapping is a technique where measurements of pH, phosphorus and potassium are taken at regular intervals across a paddock and are used to build a geographical profile of soil characteristics. This in

turn provides a base to make lime and fertiliser decisions on a variable rate basis and also pinpoints areas that could benefit from soil repair programs.

The review is the first time Precision Agriculture has aggregated its results in this way and provides a comprehensive picture of grid soil mapping techniques in Southern Australia. The next review will be completed in Spring 2016.

Headquartered in Ballarat, Precision Agriculture has five offices around the country including Wagga Wagga and Shepparton. Phone 1800 773 247.

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#### **Note to editor**

For more information, contact Precision Agriculture Advisor Brendan Torpy on 0432 203 715 or email [brendan@precisionagriculture.com.au](mailto:brendan@precisionagriculture.com.au).

Images available:

- Examples of grid soil maps
- Measuring equipment at work on-farm

For more information regarding images contact Jo Chaseling on 0448 244 677 or email [joinbyron@gmail.com](mailto:joinbyron@gmail.com)

#### **Precision Agriculture**

Established in 2009, Precision Agriculture is one of the Australia's most experienced providers of precision agriculture services.

Operating from five locations around the country and with approximately 600 customers across primary production, agribusiness and industry, we aim to help our customers improve their productivity and profitability through better, more informed decisions.

We measure and interpret data to find opportunities to integrate spatial technologies with farm management practices and provide practical assistance to apply our findings on farm.

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