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Comprehensive Soil Test Benefits

Topsoil may well be the farmer's greatest asset. The fertility of the top few centimetres of the soil largely determines the farms productivity. This raises some questions: "How much effort is directed toward monitoring this asset?" "Is the soil testing programme appropriate to the farming enterprise?"

In the financial world, there are many ways to grow assets, each with differing degrees of risk, return etc. Before making an investment decision, the wise investor gathers information, seeks advice and carefully weighs the options available. Then, having made a decision, he continues to monitor and evaluate how well his assets are performing because he knows that failure to do so could be financially catastrophic.

Farming is no different. With limited information on your soil asset, how will you know what nutrients are required or how much to apply? To be a good primary producer presupposes that you are a good manager of your soil resource, which in turn presupposes an ongoing and up to date knowledge of your soil.

Every topsoil soil has some inherent value. In fact, in most soils, the value of the nutrients in the topsoil is generally well in excess \$5000 per hectare! That means, if you have a 200 hectare property, you are literally sitting on over *one million dollars worth of nutrients!*

To get the best soil information means getting the best soil tests. Many companies offer a soil testing service. Some tests are rather basic and are of limited value. Others are more comprehensive providing a wider range of different analyses and thus more information on which to base soil and farm management decisions. Given the value of your soil asset, a comprehensive soil test for around \$250-300 is a good investment, particularly if it enables you to optimise production and save money on next seasons fertiliser budget!