

# Soil pH Revisited



Kit Leake, Ebony and Jason Syred

## Key messages

- Soil acidity levels can be vastly different at depth compared to what is on the surface
- It is important to not only measure the pH of soil on the surface but also subsoil pH
- Lime should be applied where it's needed and a farmer can only know that through appropriate soil-testing
- It is only through measuring subsoil pH that a farmer can gain an accurate picture of soil quality

## Project Snapshot

Land Manager Names:	Kit Leake; Ebony and Jason Syred (Kit's Daughter and Son-in-Law)
Property Name:	Nanyanine
Property Size:	3200ha
Location:	6984 Kellerberrin/Bencubbin Rd, Kellerberrin
Annual Rainfall (mm):	320mm
Enterprise Mix:	Full Cropping
Soil Types/Vegetation Types:	Sandy Duplex; Jam; Tammin Sand
Local Community Group:	Members of the Kellerberrin Demonstration Group and Wallatin Wildlife Group







## The story so far

Kit Leake and his family are primarily wheat farmers and have been involved in farming for four generations. Kit and his family have been involved with NRM activities over a long period of time and have planted in excess of 200,000 trees over the past 20 years. While aware of and engaged in environmental and NRM issues, the Leake family's primary focus is on production. They have a long term interest in maintaining soil quality and have been applying lime since the 1970s in an effort to reverse soil acidity that occurs as a result of farming practices.

The project involved soil-testing at depths of 10-30cm to confirm the efficacy and financial viability of applying lime. As Kit himself said, "It's all very well just testing the first ten centimetres but you need to know the subs, otherwise you're just guessing...guessing with money".

Soil testing was carried out at 120 sites across the property to depths of 30cms with soil analysis being conducted by Soil Tech.

## Lessons learnt

The project has enabled the Leake family to see positive results of liming on soil acidity, improved soil quality and increased productivity. The Leake family is now convinced that applying lime over a long period has a demonstrable effect on soil quality and productivity.

## Acknowledgements

Tracey Hobbs – NRMO, Shire of Kellerberrin

Kit Leake; Ebony and Jason Syred



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