



Media release

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### **Summer is a good time to apply phosphate**

Applying phosphate over the summer months has no impact on the effectiveness of the product, is logistically advantageous, and can reduce the potential for run off.

Ballance Agri-Nutrients Head of Agro-Sciences Warwick Catto says that agronomically there is no disadvantage to applying phosphate over the summer months.

“The phosphate in fertiliser is gradually made available to plants over summer and high phosphate status will improve pasture production. Dry conditions do not reduce effectiveness of the phosphate content; instead, plants just need to wait for rain to utilise it. As it only takes 1 mm of rainfall to dissolve, phosphate does not lie around after application – only the shell of the superphosphate granule remains.

“Once adequate levels of phosphate are present in the soil, farmers only need to apply minimum amounts to maintain it, and it therefore does not matter when these top-up applications are applied.

“Traditionally sheep and beef farmers apply fertiliser once a year in the autumn season. By bringing this application forward they can take advantage of the better weather conditions for application without impacting on the effectiveness of the fertiliser. They can also avoid the longer wait times for equipment and spreading of the product.”

Ballance will be offering farmers a summer price discount of \$10 per tonne on manufactured products, including superten, serpentine super, and sulphur gain, to encourage application in December and January. These products will also qualify for extended payment terms through until 20 March 2007.

“The offer will enable farmers to get fertiliser on early so that they can maximise the benefits for the autumn season,” says Warwick.

**ENDS**