

Purpose:

The purpose of a NMP is to ensure there is an adequate supply of nutrients for crop production, to efficiently use manure and other organic sources of nutrient as a plant nutrient source, to minimize agricultural non-point source pollution of surface and groundwater and to help improve the overall quality of the soil.

The Completed Plan:

A complete nutrient management plan must include:

- ✓ Producer identification and operation description;
- ✓ At least three cropping years;
 - Three-year manure plan (timing and amount of application)
 - Three-year fertilizer plan (timing and amount of application)
 - Three-year lime and wood ash program template
- ✓ Manure and/or commercial fertilizer recommendations based on previous two year’s history of manure and crops to be grown;
- ✓ Recommendations to be based on current soil analysis and manure analysis (not older than one year);
- ✓ Farm land base: farm maps (aerial and line); field names, sizes and soil types;
- ✓ Nutrient balance sheets;
- ✓ Phosphorous level description and spreadsheet;
- ✓ Environmental concerns (including information on surface water bodies and wells);
- ✓ Manure AUE/ha and alternative manure plan (if needed).

An Example of a Nutrient Balance Sheet:

Field Description																
Field ID:	30						Soil type:	Stewiacke								
Size:	6.5						pH:	6.6								
P ₂ O ₅ :	679						K ₂ O:	354								
Year:		2012		Projected P ₂ O ₅ change			-4.0			Previous crop:		grass forage				
Crop	Nutrient Needs			Legume Manure Residual			Manure Recommendation			Fertilizer Type				Nutrient Balance		
	N	P	K	N	P	K	N	P	K	N	P	K	kg/Ha	N	P	K
Winter Wheat	120	0	55							13	6	30	200	-120	0	-55
P ₂ O ₅ removal rate:										34	0	0	175	26	12	60
45										34	0	0	150	51	0	0
														8	12	5

Challenges:

What makes the planning process challenging is that these nutrients are subject to physical, chemical and biological transformations in the soil environment and that these transformative processes are also influenced by a number of factors such as temperature, moisture, oxygen availability, etc. A well trained planner attempts to take these factors into account when making final recommendations on the quantity on nutrients that need to be applied to meet crop requirements and maintain an acceptable level of nutrients in the soil.

Planner Credentials:

Nutrient management planners in Nova Scotia are required to be a good standing member of the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrolgists, have passed the Atlantic Agricultural Coordinating Council Nutrient management Course Exam delivered by Continuing and Distance Education at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, and have completed a mentorship period where initial plans are review by another certified planner. A list of trained planners is maintained by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and can be found posted on their website at:

<http://novascotia.ca/agri/documents/programs-brm/nutrient-mgmt-planners.pdf>

Funding:

For farms registered under the *Farm Registration Act*, the cost of initial nutrient management plans are funded at 100% up to a maximum of \$1,500 through the Home Grown Success Program, administered by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture. Renewed plans are funded at 50% to a maximum of \$600. For more information regarding the Home Grown Success Program please refer to: <http://novascotia.ca/agri/programs-and-services/financial-funding/growing-forward2/innovation/>

The Planning Process:

For producers, the planning process involves a number of steps including:

