



PEI Analytical Laboratories
Soil Testing

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Spring Cereal Fertilization

The nutrients recommended for cereal fertilization are based on your current soil nutrient status as outlined within the “Fertilizer Recommendations” section of your soil report. The phosphorus and potash requirements within the report should be adequate under all conditions, whereas the nitrogen recommendations can vary based on the desired cropping program (reduction or increase in the nitrogen recommendation).

1. A reduction in the nitrogen application **below** the recommended amount will reduce the chance of lodging and to some extent, reduce the susceptibility to some diseases. Protein content of the grain will also be reduced.
2. An increase in the nitrogen application **above** the recommended amount will increase protein content of the grain and may increase yield. It will also increase the possibility of some diseases and may increase the chance of lodging. High nitrogen application rates should not be considered unless applied at the proper stage of crop development. The use of growth hormones and fungicides could also be necessary when using high rates of nitrogen.

When fertilizers are being drilled directly with the seed, the following are maximum levels which can be drilled in without seedling damage:

N - 55 kg/ha (25 kg/ha if fertilizer contains urea)
P205 - 110 kg/ha
K20 - 55 kg/ha

If you are exceeding these limits, some of the nutrients can be drilled in and the remainder can be broadcast. Keep in mind that it is important to have some nitrogen and most of the phosphorus drilled in close to the seed, with the majority of the nitrogen and all of the potash to be broadcast.

Nitrogen, phosphorus and potash applications can exceed the above limits in most cases where newer drills are being used and fertilizer placement is below and to the side of the seed itself.

For more details and general information, contact a PEIDAF Nutrient Management specialist at (902) 316-1600 or the Cereals and Oilseeds Specialist at (902) 314-0233.

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