



## Soils – New Horizons FAQ

**DPIRD's Soils – New Horizons program** is a Whole Farm Nutrient Mapping (WFNM) initiative that supports evidence-based fertiliser decision-making in high-rainfall pasture systems. This program is the latest evolution of DPIRD's WFNM efforts, building on over 15 years of experience. Soils – New Horizons expands the WFNM approach across the entire >550 mm annual rainfall zone.

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## Eligibility

The program is open to **beef, dairy, and sheep grazing enterprises** with at least **40 hectares of cleared, arable land used for hay or grazing** that is in the greater than **550mm rainfall zone** outside of *Healthy Estuaries WA* catchments (Figure 1).

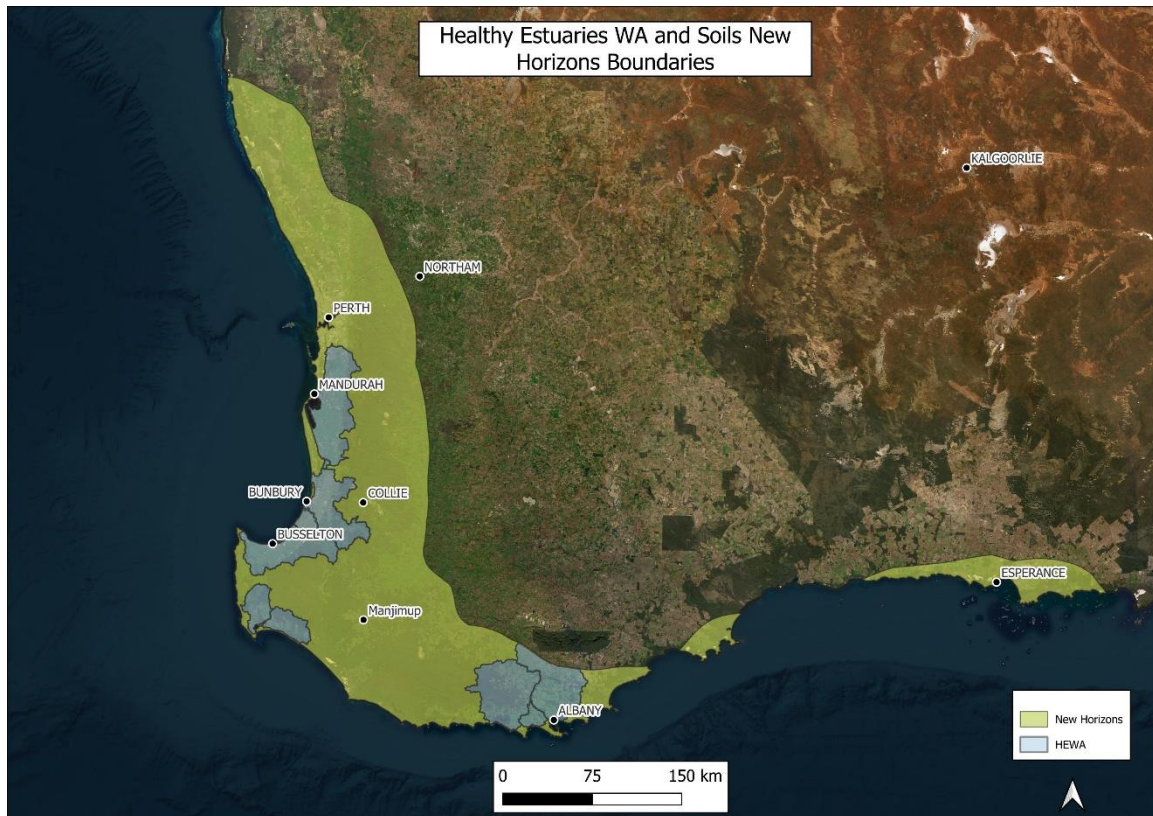


Figure 1: Boundaries for *Soils – New Horizons*

## What is considered cleared, arable land?

Cleared, arable land includes:

- Cleared paddocks used for livestock pasture or hay production
- Cleared paddocks currently in crop that will go to livestock pasture or hay production in the same sampling year

Cleared, arable land **does not** include:

- Land not used for livestock pasture, such as holding yards
- Land vegetated with non-pasture species, even if grazed by livestock
- Orchards or vineyards where livestock graze
- Blue Gum plantations or other farm forestry areas where livestock graze
- Permanent cropping paddocks

## Cost

### How much will it cost me?

If you **have not participated** in a similar program before, the **cost to participate is \$300**.

If you have participated in a similar program since 2016, the cost is \$25 per paddock, with a minimum total cost of \$300.

As a program participant, you will receive a soil sampling kit worth \$650 free of charge (one-time offer).

### When do I have to pay?

An invoice will be issued by DPIRD **after your property is sampled**.

Payment is due by **February 2027** and must be received **before you attend the workshop or receive your results**.

### What would it cost to have this done commercially?

	Estimated value	Cost to new participants	Cost to previous participants
Soil sampling	\$750	\$300	\$25 per paddock (minimum \$300)
Soil test analysis	\$50 per paddock		
Sampling equipment	\$650		
Digitising farm map	\$400		
Nutrient mapping report	\$400		
Fertiliser workshop	\$700		
Agronomic advice	\$1000		
<b>Total for a 15 paddock farm</b>	<b>\$4000+ in value</b>	<b>\$300</b>	<b>\$375</b>

## Program Timeline

<b>Late July 2026</b>	Expressions of interest close.
<b>August 2026</b>	Notification of EOI outcome.
<b>Mid-August 2026</b>	Farm map clearly identifying paddocks to be sampled due.
<b>Sep - Nov 2026</b>	Pre Surveys are taken.
<b>Sept - Nov 2026</b>	Training sessions held on DIY soil sampling techniques.
<b>Nov 2026 - Jan 2027</b>	Soil sampling period.
<b>Mid-January 2027</b>	Deadline for submitting soil samples.
<b>Feb - Mar 2027</b>	Local workshops to present your soil test results and explain how to interpret and use your nutrient reports.
<b>March 2027</b>	One-on-one agronomic advice sessions.

### When should I sample my paddocks?

Soil sampling takes place during summer, from late **November 2026 to mid-January 2027**.

All samples **must be submitted by 13 January 2027** to be included in the workshops. **Late samples will not be accepted.**

### When will I receive my soil test results?

Results will be presented at a workshop in **late February or early March 2027**.

The workshop will guide you through interpreting your results and using your farm nutrient reports.

### What happens if I need to fertilise my paddocks before sampling?

If you have applied urea, there is no issue – sampling can proceed as planned.

However, fertilisers that contain phosphorus (e.g. superphosphate), potassium (e.g. potash) and sulphur, or soil amendments like lime can affect test results. In these cases, sampling may need to be delayed.

Ideally, **avoid fertilising for at least three months before soil sampling.**

If this isn't possible, you will need to collect twice as many soil cores from fertilised paddocks, which increases the time and effort required for sampling.

### What happens if I miss the EOI cut-off date?

If you miss the EOI deadline, please still complete your details.

You will be placed on a **waitlist** and contacted for the **2027/28 sampling season**.

If you are still interested next season, **you won't need to resubmit your application** – only your updated farm map.

## Analysis

### What will be analysed in my soil samples?

Your samples will undergo a standard agronomic test, which includes:

- pH (acidity)
- Phosphorus
- Potassium
- Sulfur
- Organic carbon
- Ammonium
- Nitrate
- Electrical conductivity
- Soil texture
- Phosphorus Buffering Index

## Soil Sampling Process

### How do I ensure I sample representatively?

You will be provided with:

- **Training** on how to collect soil samples correctly
- **Support** from DPIRD or your local catchment officer
- **Equipment** required for soil sampling

An instructional video demonstrating the sampling process is also available [here](#).

### How do I access the soil sampling equipment, and what is included?

As a participant, you will receive the sampling equipment free of charge to keep and use beyond the program.

#### The sampling kit includes:

- Soil auger
- Pogo stick sampler
- Bucket
- Pen
- Infographic card

**Note:** A drill and batteries are not included.

Soil sample bags will be provided for this season. If you continue sampling in future years, replacement bags can be easily sourced.



Figure 2: Soil Sampling Kit

## What will I need to DIY soil sample my farm?

To collect your own soil samples, you will need:

- A **battery-operated 18V drill** with **spare charged batteries**
- A **mobile phone or tablet** with a SIM slot (no internet connection or SIM card required)
  - This will be used to record sampling locations
  - If you don't have a compatible device, one may be **loaned to you**
  - You will need to **download specific apps** before sampling
- **Time** to dedicate to soil sampling your farm. In most cases this takes less than a day

## Program requirements and obligations

### What are my obligations in the program?

As a participant, you are expected to:

- **Submit all required details** about your nominated farm(s) by the stated deadlines.
- **Provide an accurate and legible farm map** showing:
  - Farm boundary
  - Paddock boundaries and names
  - Paddocks to be included/excluded from sampling
- **Allow access to your property** for initial sampling instruction
- **Complete both a pre- and post- program survey**
- **Attend a local workshop** to receive your results, understand them, and learn how to optimise fertiliser use
- **Use the evidence-based advice** provided by your soil test results and agronomic advice in the spirit of the program

### What can I expect from involvement in the program?

As a participant, you can expect:

- Soil testing of **all or most paddocks** on your property
- Laboratory analysis through an **ASPAC-accredited lab**
- A **colour-coded set of nutrient maps and a tabular report** of your results
- A **local workshop** to help you interpret your results and report
- A **one-on-one session** with a DPIRD specialist or agronomist to explore your results further using the nutrient and lime calculators
- Soil sampling **equipment free of charge** for continued use beyond the program
- An estimated **\$4,000+ value**, for a modest financial contribution
- In most cases, a **significant reduction in fertiliser costs**
  - Past participants reported an **average saving of \$12,000** in phosphorus fertiliser
- Improved knowledge of **soil testing and nutrient requirements** on your farm
- Access to **expert guidance and sampling support**
- Access to **online nutrient and lime calculators**
- The opportunity to **connect with other local landholders** participating in the program

## Other Resources

[Fit for Purpose Soil Sampling video](#)

[Nutrient calculator for high rainfall pastures](#)

[Whole Farm Nutrient Mapping webpage](#)

[Whole Farm Nutrient Mapping Facebook page](#)

## Contact details

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### Important Disclaimer

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