

# 2016 State Report Card

## Is soil acidity improving in our agricultural areas?

Healthy soil provides us with food and fibre through our crops and livestock. Healthy soil provides nutrients for crops and pastures, stores and cycles water and carbon, and resists erosion.

Almost 20 per cent of the agricultural area of South Australia has naturally occurring acidic soil. Acidic soil limits the fertility and productivity of agricultural areas.

Agricultural production accelerates soil acidification, particularly where large quantities of produce are harvested, and where fertilisers that contain or form ammonium are used.

Land managers can reduce acidity by applying lime to their soils. Lime sales are monitored to track the management of soil acidity in South Australian agricultural areas.



**State target**  
Improve soil and land condition

5 year trend (2012–16)

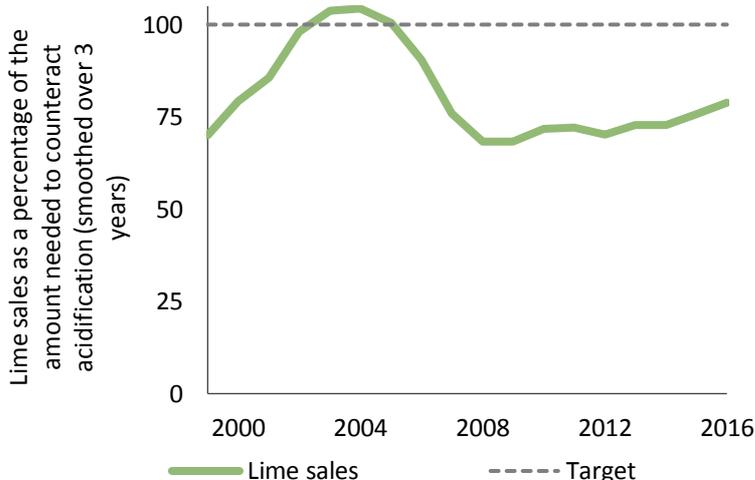
Stable

Ongoing efforts will be needed to increase the amount of lime applied to our soils

The amount of lime sold peaked between 2002–04, and remained stable between 2012–16 (see graph on right).

Between 2012–16, land managers applied an average of 100,000 tonnes of lime each year. This is about 30,000 tonnes less per year than what is needed to counteract soil acidification.

Some land managers applied sufficient quantities of lime to counteract soil acidification. From a broad perspective, the application of lime (to maintain pH levels above the target for acid soils) is getting better but has not been sufficient across the state (map above and graph to right).



Where we are at (2016)

Fair

Land managers applied about 80 per cent of the lime needed to counteract soil acidification

The amount of lime currently applied in South Australia is just under 80 per cent of what is required to counteract soil acidification. Soil acidity continues to increase when an insufficient amount of lime to counteract soil acidification is applied each year. Many land managers do not apply lime because they perceive it to be too costly.

Controlling soil acidification is important to maintain long term productivity of agricultural soils.

Reliability of information



Good

Further information:

[Technical information for this report card](#), [Soil and land condition monitoring trends in South Australia](#)