



## Office of Hon Nathan Guy

**MP for Otaki**

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Racing

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Peter Burton  
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Dear Peter Burton

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2015 regarding your new soil fertility process. Soil fertility is one of the most important farm management factors that farmers need to address to gain optimum economic and environmental farm performance.

As you have pointed out, good soil carbon and nitrogen levels are needed to ensure maximum pasture production. It is encouraging to hear that your soil fertility process has been able to produce more pasture, apply less nitrogen fertiliser, and produce high animal performance. It was also interesting to note that despite lower stocking rates, the farming system was able to produce high per hectare production and hence profitability.

The implementation of the Government's freshwater reforms seek to address water quality issues such as excess levels of nitrate and phosphate in our freshwaters. Soil fertility processes that seek to limit these elements getting into freshwater, while maintaining farm productivity and profitability, will be a major advance.

I would encourage you to continue to acquire scientifically robust data on your system and to build the evidence base on its effects. I have passed your information on to staff at the Ministry for Primary Industries for their information.

I wish you every success in the future development of your new soil fertility process.

Yours sincerely

Hon Nathan Guy  
**Minister for Primary Industries**