

Healthy Pasture

“I was looking to grow more grass, so the focus on soils and soil fertility was a key aspect for me. There are a lot of people out there selling different products and I wanted to find out which product worked best in terms of pasture production and cost-effectiveness.”

(Waikato farmer John Vosper on a key reason for taking part in the GOD project.)

“Some organic farmers really struggle with weeds, but my overall impression was that farmers participating in the GOD project had a pretty good handle on the problem, and weeds were not that much of an issue for them...You want to keep the pastures as dense as possible so that you keep weeds out.” (Weed scientist Kerry Harrington.)

Key findings

Most farmers apply fertilisers to maintain or raise nutrient levels in the soil. The organic farmers in the study were keen to know which organic fertilisers work best, so three fertilisers they were already using and one they wanted to know about are being trialled on four different farms in a range of locations on those farms.

The trial is not yet complete, but so far the chicken compost-based fertiliser is giving the best results.