

# HEALTHY SOIL MATTER(S)

30 november 2017





# WELCOME BY GUIDO VAN HUYLENBROECK PROMOTOR UGENT-CRELAN CHAIR



# Ghent University - Crelan chair

# To enhance innovations for more sustainable agriculture































































Prof. Wim Cornelis

Soil structural degradation: the invisible enemy

Stefan Denayer -Bridgestone-

Prof. Abdul Mouazen

Potential of digital agriculture for improving soil fertility

Matthias Appel -Cofabel-





Prof. Stefaan De Neve

The earthy Trinity rules nutrient availability to plants

Karlien Vermeiren -DCM-

Prof. Monica Höfte

Soilborne diseases and their management by biological control

Mark van der Werf -Koppert-

# SOIL STRUCTURAL DEGRADATION





### **DEPARTMENT OF SOIL MANAGEMENT**

SOIL PHYSICS GROUP





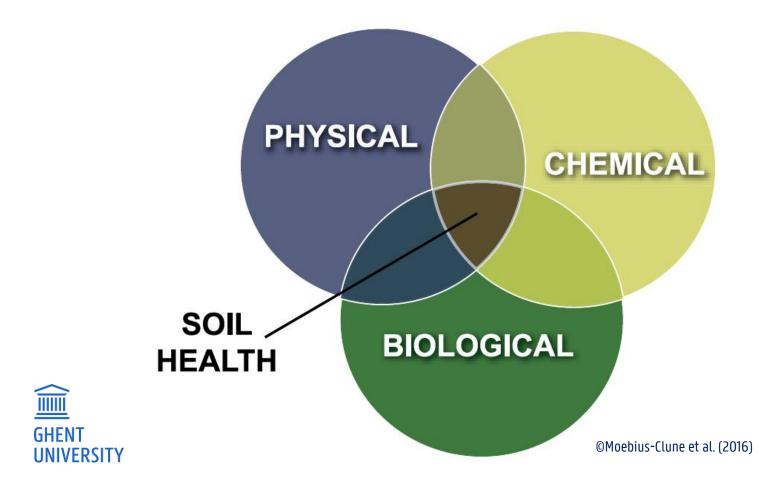






# **SOIL HEALTH**

integration of physical, chemical and biological components of soil structure (physical characteristic of soil) plays a central role

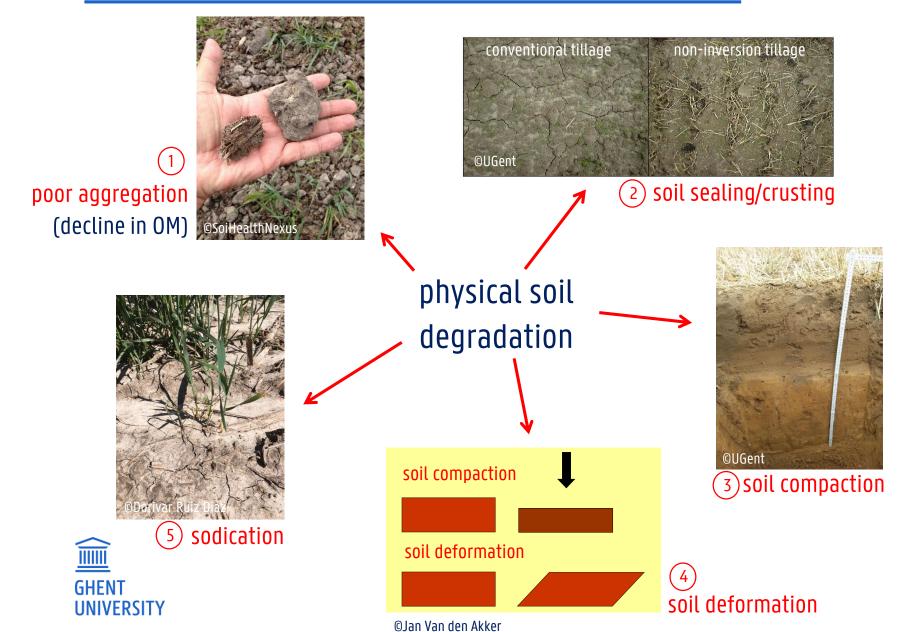


# WELL-STRUCTURED SOIL

wide range of sizes of both stable aggregates & pores (edapholically)



# SOIL STRUCTURAL DEGRADATION



# **CAUSES**

intensive tillage

- limited use of soil-building crops & soil cover
- low active rooting density + short duration limited organic additions low biological activity

cattle: density ↑

- (3) heavy machinery & tillage when wet
- uncontrolled traffic patterns tyre type & inflation pressure
- (5) irrigation













# **INVISIBLE ENEMY**

# no clear visible exposure on soil surface

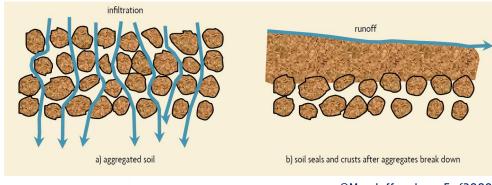
(except for surface sealing/crusting/sodication)

→ specific problems that are often blamed on other causes

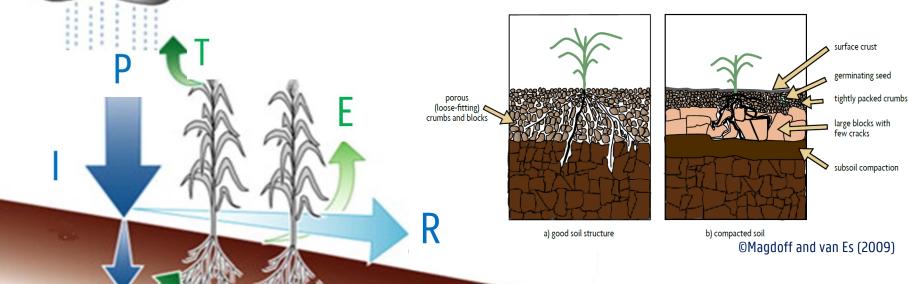




# **INVISIBLE ENEMY**







disturbed soil hydrology disturbed soil aeration mechanical resistance 1





















# **HEALTHY SOIL MATTERS: ENVIRONMENTAL**

```
runoff & soil erosion \downarrow

runoff/leaching of nutrients & agrochemicals \downarrow (water quality \uparrow)

drought & flood risk \downarrow \rightarrow resilience \uparrow

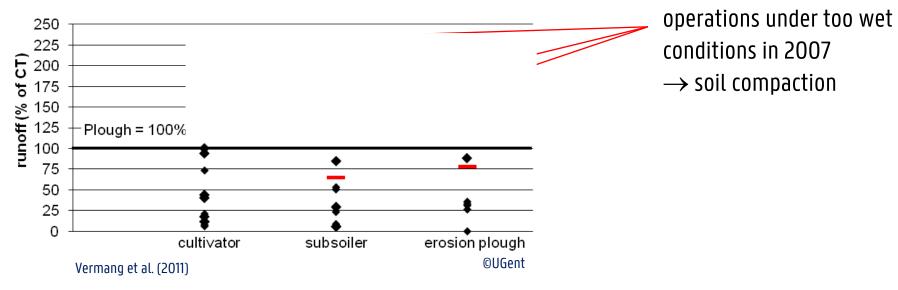
biodiversity \uparrow

N mineralisation \uparrow \rightarrow nutrient availability \uparrow

greenhouse gas emission \downarrow: N<sub>2</sub>O \downarrow, CH<sub>4</sub> \downarrow, CO<sub>2</sub> \downarrow + NH<sub>3</sub> \downarrow
```

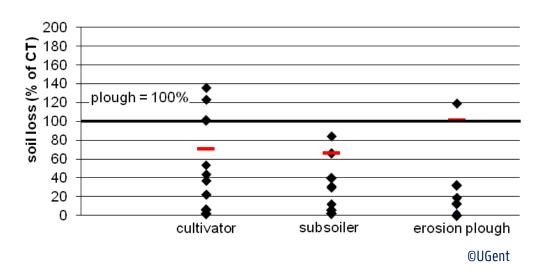


### runoff: non-inversion tillage vs conventional ploughing 2003-2010





### soil loss: non-inversion tillage vs conventional ploughing 2003-2010



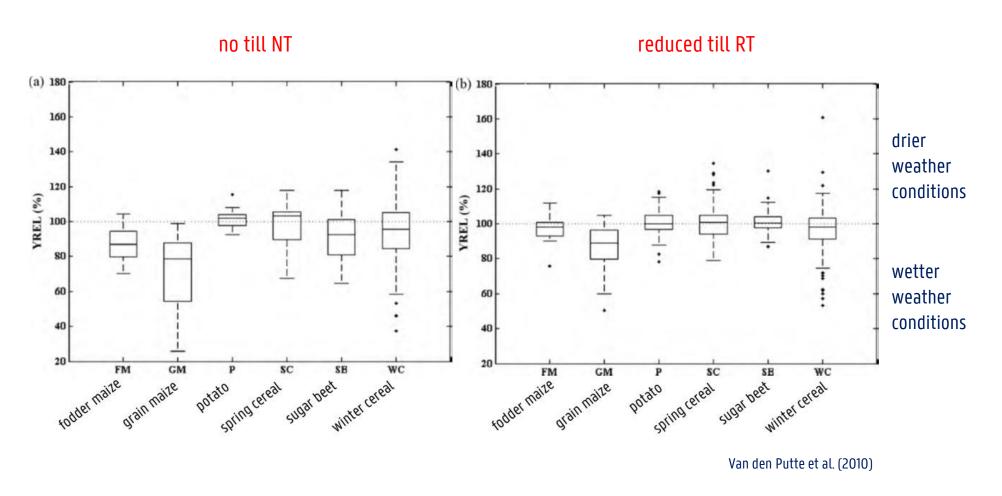


# **HEALTHY SOIL MATTERS: ECONOMIC**

```
soil productivity \uparrow \rightarrow better plant growth, quality, and yield (?)
risk of yield loss \downarrow during periods of environmental stress
(heavy rain, drought, pest or disease outbreak, ...)
better field access during wet periods → window of opportunity =
time the field is in state of 'readiness' for operations \uparrow
fuel costs \downarrow \rightarrow less tillage
input costs \downarrow \rightarrow use efficiency of fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, and
irrigation applications \uparrow
as fuel & input prices 1 and resources becoming scarcer, profitability
of sustainable soil management & importance of healthy soils 1
```

## effect of tillage: relative yield YREL per crop (relative to conventional ploughing)

meta-regression analysis of 47 European studies





keep in mind: no one-fits-all solutions, no recipe-type solutions

### effect of soil compaction

some figures from studies in Europe and Flanders...

EU-project: survey in 2013 (Hack et al. 2015):

- 34% of Belgian farmers experiences soil compaction, 54% in Netherlands, 73% in Sweden
- negatively affects income of >80% of those

Europe: yield losses of 5-35% (Stanners & Bourdeau 1995)

Flanders (2012-2013): moderately compacted loamy soils (different fields) (Elsen et al. 2014)

• subsoiling  $\rightarrow$  + 0.5 ton/ha grain maize + 50 EUR/ha

• subsoiling/ploughing  $\rightarrow$  + 1.7 ton/ha potato + 200 EUR/ha

• non-inversion tillage  $\rightarrow$  + 6.3 ton/ha sugar beet + 200 EUR/ha

Flanders (2004-2014): loamy soils (Dillen et al., in prep.)

• + 1 MPa penetration resistance → - 3.0 ton/ha potato - 350 EUR/ha

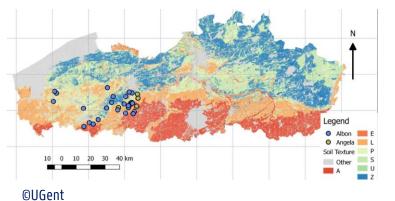
 $\rightarrow$  - 6.4-10.6 ton/ha sugar beet - 240-400 EUR/ha

Flanders (2017): sandy loam (PhD Lidong Ren)

• compacted vs normal  $\rightarrow$  - 0.3 ton/ha dry biomass winter rye (cover crop)

### inventory of soil structural degradation in Flanders

30 cropped fields, across different textural classes



poor soil structural quality

→ short-term improvements

fair soil structural quality

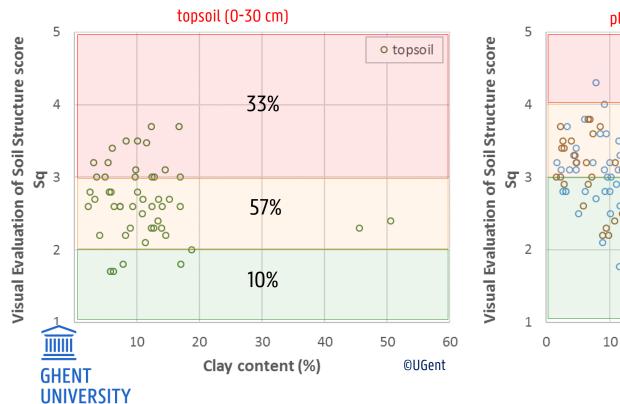
→ medium- to long-term improvements

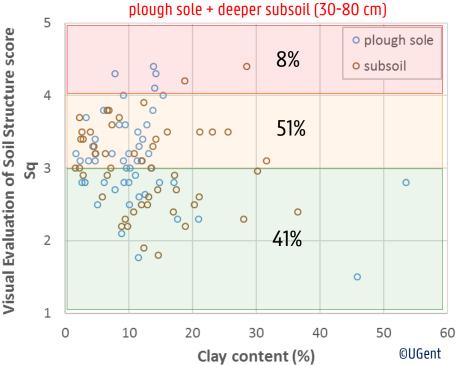
good soil structural quality

 $\rightarrow$  maintain good quality

categories:

Ball et al. 2007 for topsoil Ball et al. 2015 for subsoil





# **EVALUATION & EXAMINATION**

### direct

## indirect

# semi-quantitative

- Visual Soil Ev. & Ex. (scoring)
  - spade
  - core
  - profile

cfr. VSEE working group of ISTRO

# quantitative

- aggregate stability
  - wet/dry sieving
  - turbidimetric
  - rainulator
- computed tomography CT (3D)
- microscopy (2D)

# quantitative

- hydraulic conductivity
- penetration resistance
- air permeability
- macroporosity
- air capacity
- water retention capacity
- soil strength
- electromagnetic induction EMI
- electrical resistivity tomography ERT
- ground penetrating radar GPR



### Direct: Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure VESS – CoreVESS

### → integrated evaluation of soil structure = soil quality scores Sq

Structure quality	Aggregate (size & shape)	Visible Porosity & Breaking Difficulty	Clayey soils (>25 % clay)		Sandy soils (<15% clay & >50% sand)	
			Transect (sample broken in two)	3-5 cm large fragments	Transect (sample broken in two)	3-5 cm large fragments
Sq 1 (friable) - Crumbly structure	Mostly < 6 mm after crumbling. Large aggregates are composed of smaller ones.	Highly porous     Sample readily crumbles with fingers			Difficult to obtain crumbly	r structure with sandy soils
Sq 2 (intact)  - Porous - Rounded agg. easily detached (some subangular)	A mixture of porous, rounded fragile aggregates from 2 mm - 4 cm. Agg. crumble easily.	Most aggregates are porous     Sample easy to break with one hand				
Sq 3 (firm)  - Partly porous - Partly massive - Subangular agg.	A mixture of porous agg. from 2mm - 4 cm; Less than 30% are <1 cm; Some angular, non-porous agg. (clods) may be present.	Macropores and cracks present. Few visible pores     Sample can be broken with one hand				
Sq 4 (compact)  - Massive str Subangular or angular edges - Little porosity	No aggregates in the clod. Sub-angular non-porous. Horizontal/platy also possible. Less than 30% are < 4 cm	Few macropores and cracks      Requires considerable effort to break sample with one hand			At 200 1120	
Sq 5 (very compact)  - Massive structure - Angular edges	No aggregates in the clod. Angular. Non porous.	Very low porosity. Macropores may be present. May contain anaerobic zones Difficult to break up			Difficult to obtain angul	ar edges with sandy soils



### Direct + indirect: quantitative soil properties = soil physical quality indicators





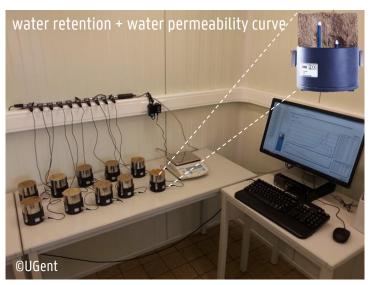








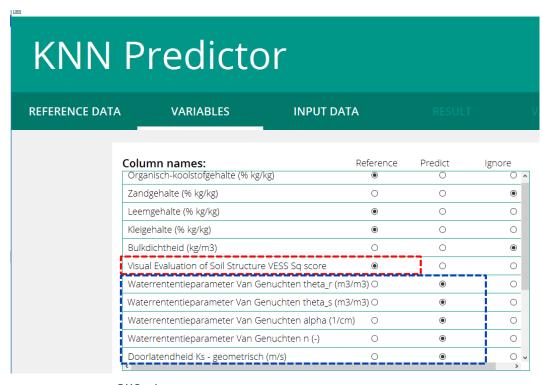






### Predict effect of soil structure on soil hydraulic properties $\rightarrow$ on soil hydrology

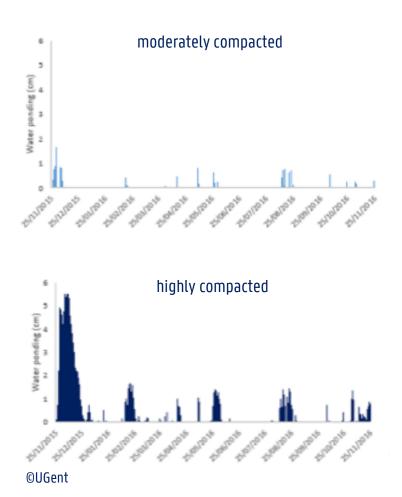
### kNN datamining technique



**OUGent** 



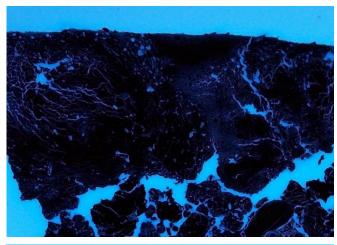
# water transport model water ponding sandy loam (Merelbeke) in 2100

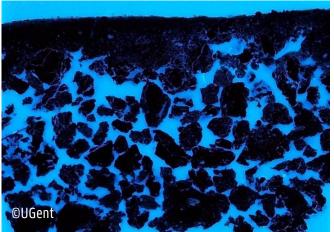


### Direct: visualisation of soil architecture → pore network (pore size, connectivity, tortuosity)

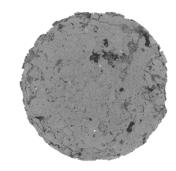
microscopy (UV light) in 2D

CT scans in 3D

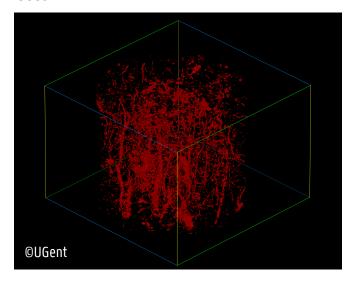






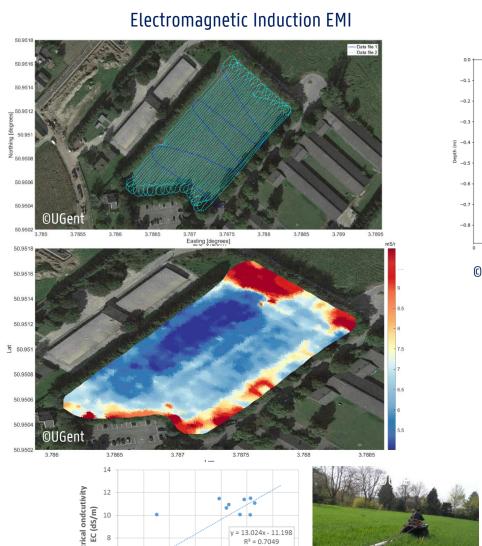


**©UGent** 





### Indirect: geophysical methods $\rightarrow$ scan soil with proximal sensors (EMI, ERT)



 $R^2 = 0.7049$ 

**©UGent** 

**©UGent** 

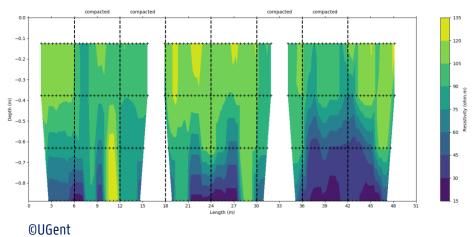
1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5

Bulk Density BD (Mg/m³)

**GHENT** 

**UNIVERSITY** 

### **Electrical Resistivity Tomography ERT**







# **SOLUTIONS**

**GHENT** 

UNIVERSITY









Wim Cornelis Professor Soil Physics

DEPARTMENT OF SOIL MANAGEMENT

E Wim.Cornelis@UGent.be T +32 9 264 60 40

www.soilmanagement.ugent.be



# SOIL STRUCTURAL DEGRADATION







The BOSS and his SOIL



#### **Approaching the BOSS**



AG challenge

SUSTAINABLE farming



Increased Business UNCERTAINTY

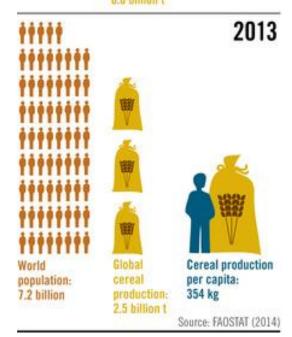


#### **AG** evolution



#### More than enough





In general, the large-scale industrialisation of agriculture in the America's, Australia and Europe and the "Green Revolution" in Asia have led to impressive successes in increasing productivity over the past fifty years.

However, the one-sided focus on productivity of industrial agriculture exploits the available natural resources of our planet to an untenable and **unsustainable** extent.

Industrial agriculture consumes large amounts of pesticides, mineral fertilizers, energy and freshwater resources, and produces large volumes of greenhouse gas emissions. Depleted and saltaffected soils, deforestation and the contamination of entire watercourses, as well as an unprecedented loss of biodiversity are the **ecological costs** of these advances.



#### AG evolution: How have we done this?



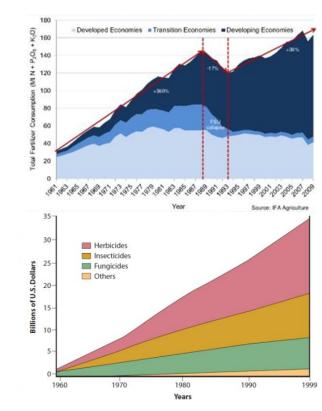
Increase yield by applying fertilisers



Increase yield by applying pesticides



 Mechanisation replacing expensive human labour by larger & heavier machines.



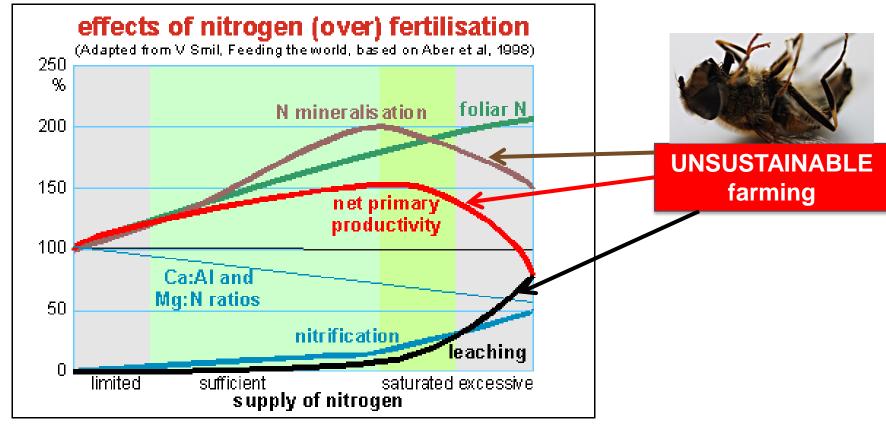




#### **Key treats to soil in Europe**



Many farmers experience over the last few years, that while continuing the traditional way of farming, it stopped achieving more crop yield.





#### **Key treats to soil in Europe : Poor land management**





An example of poor land management practices.

## **UNSUSTAINABLE** farming



Erosion causing a 1m deep rill in the Severn Valley UK,

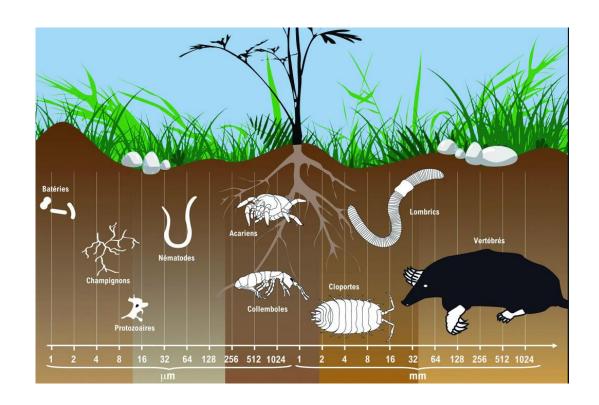


#### **Key treats to soil in Europe**



• Decline in biodiversity Nematode less efficient in compacted soils.

## **UNSUSTAINABLE** farming









#### The european agricultural situation



#### The EU agricultural situation : Europe must avoid soil degradation.

To secure agricultural income, european farmers

- ⇒ invest in larger equipment (saving labour costs),
- ⇒ need more horsepower to move **large equipment** on bigger tyres.
- ⇒ experience the **limit of yield** boost
  - through crop protection techniques
  - through soil erosion

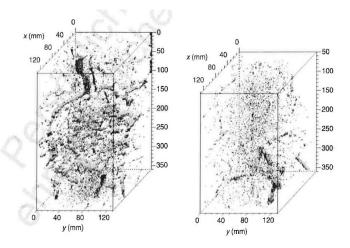
⇒ How can tyre manufacturers contribute to soil care?



#### **VT - TRACTOR**

What VALUE could a tyre manufacturer add to the farmer?

The biggest advantage of VF tyres lies in their capacity of operating **under the <u>lowest inflation pressure</u>**, creating a large footprint, decreasing the pressure on the soil, => As such, decreasing soil compaction.









## 710/70 R42 173D 170E Maxi Traction

IF 710/70 R42 179D 176E Maxi Traction

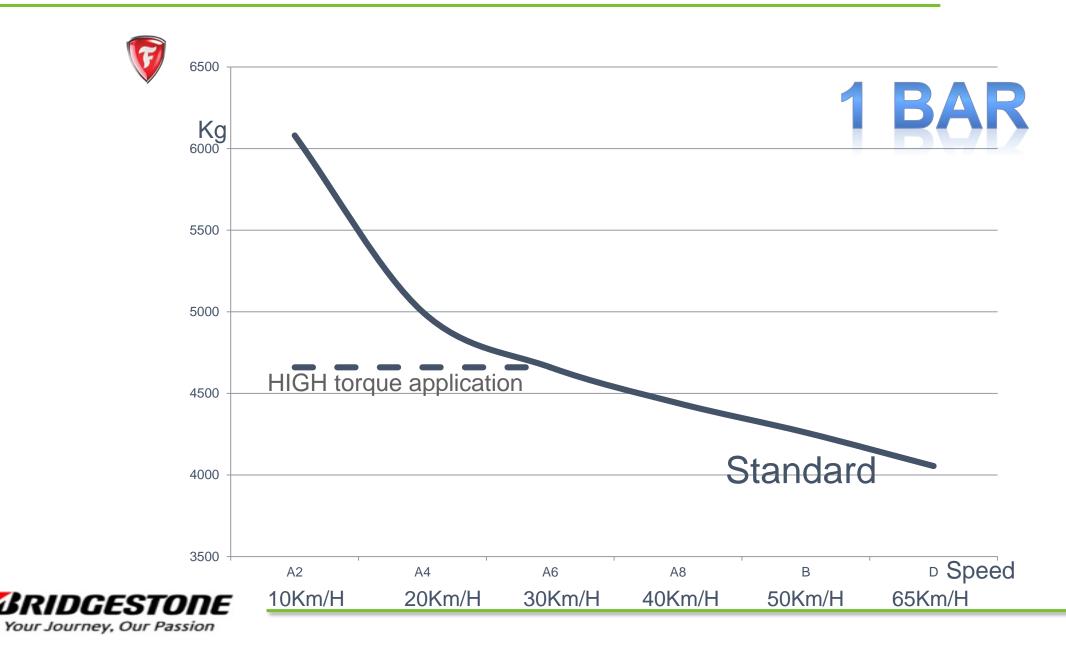
VF 710/70 R42 179D 176E VT Tractor





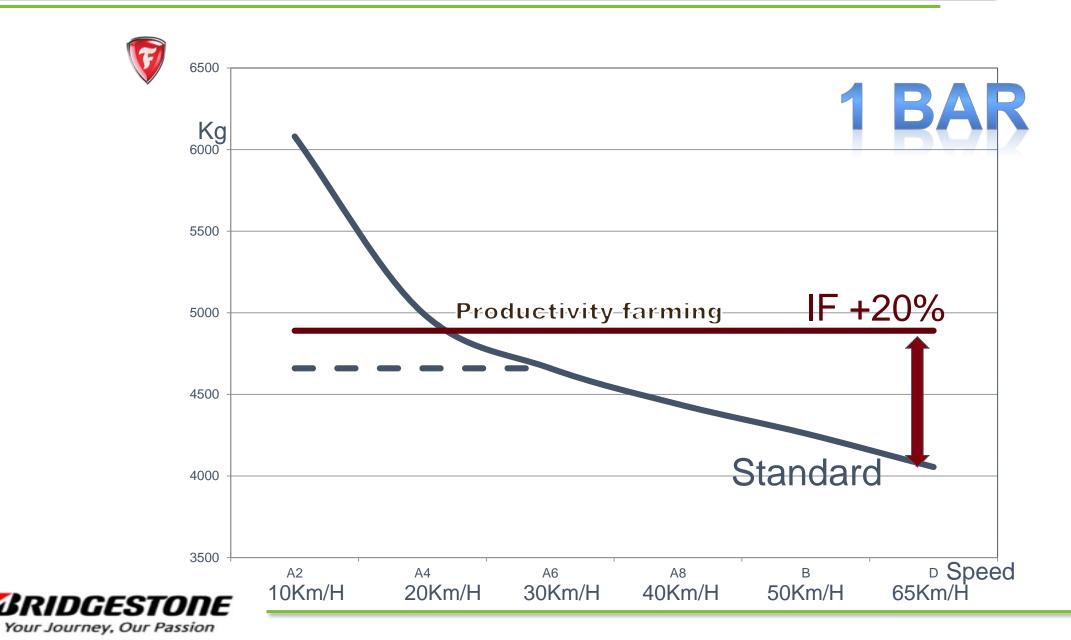
#### Tyre technology – Standard tech





#### Tyre technology in agricultural 'IF' environment





#### Tyre technology in agricultural environment IF





#### **Maxi Traction or Maxi Traction IF?**

#### **New Maxi Traction IF =**





Proven strengths standard Maxi Traction

+

Reduced soil-compaction

Increased load- and speed capabilities

Improved driving comfort

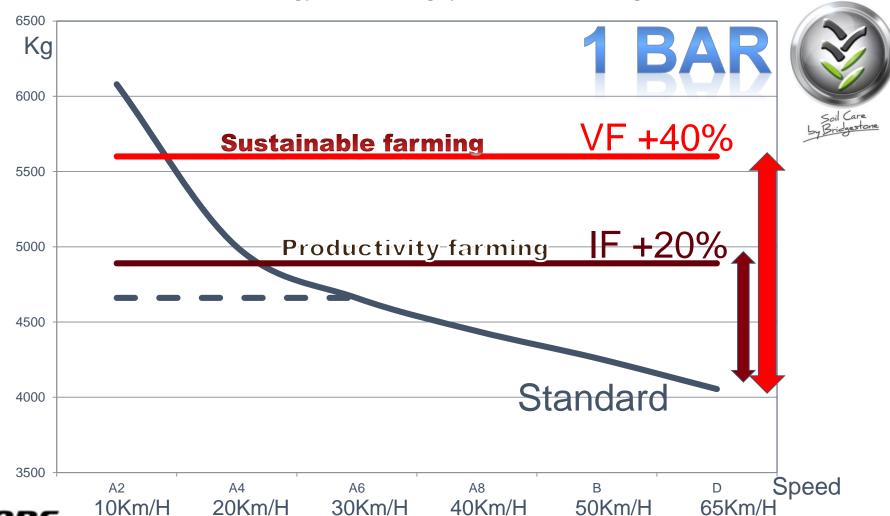


#### **Bridgestone Innovation–VF technology**



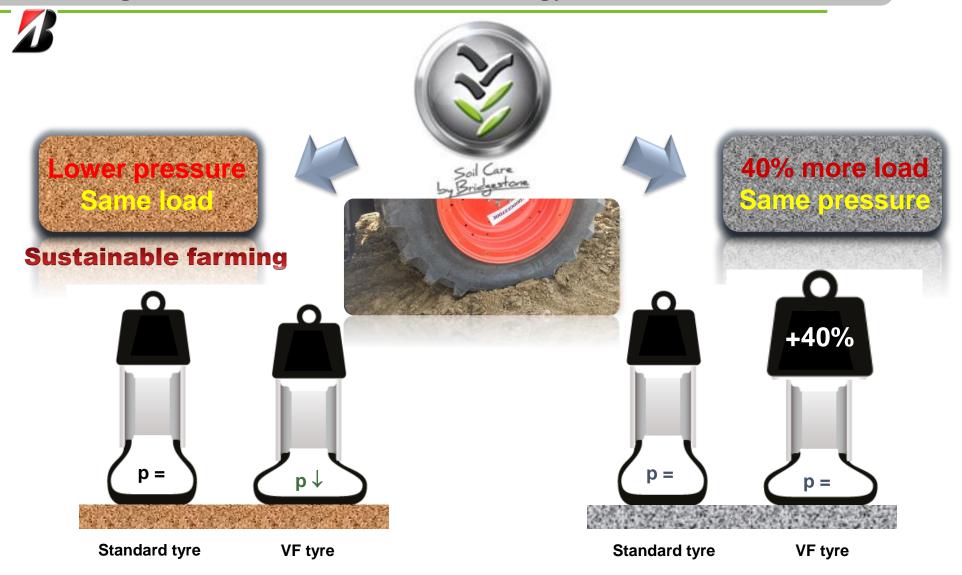
1

Bridgestone developed a technology which allows tyres to reduce tyre pressure even more than IF technology, for existing tyre sizes & existing rims - NRO.



#### **Bridgestone Innovation–VF technology**





#### **Bridgestone Innovation–VF technology**







The special VF casing and bead construction allow for a greater degree of flexing and hence **operation at lower pressures than standard tyres.** 

As a consequence, the VT-TRACTOR have an up to 26% larger lug contact area than competitor products

**Lower Pressure** 

=

**Bigger Footprint** 

=

Less Soil Compaction

&

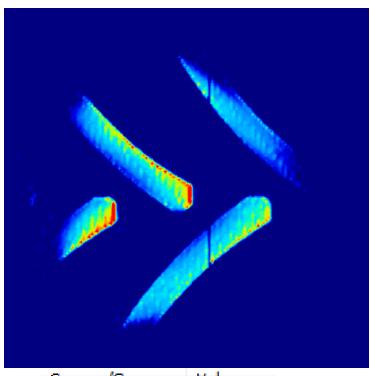
**Less Rutting** 



#### **Bridgestone internal test results**

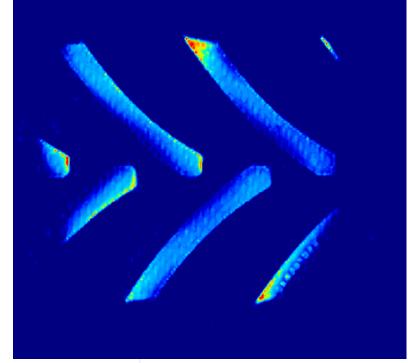


# VF 650/65R42 NRO 1.6bar 0.6bar



Sensor/Group Value IX500: 192. 19... 515.41 Avg Pres. Area (cm^2) 569.03

26% 153%



Sensor/Group	Value
IX500:192.19	
Avg Pres.	380.07
Area (cm^2)	874.84

Pressure mat data



#### The BOSS and his SOIL









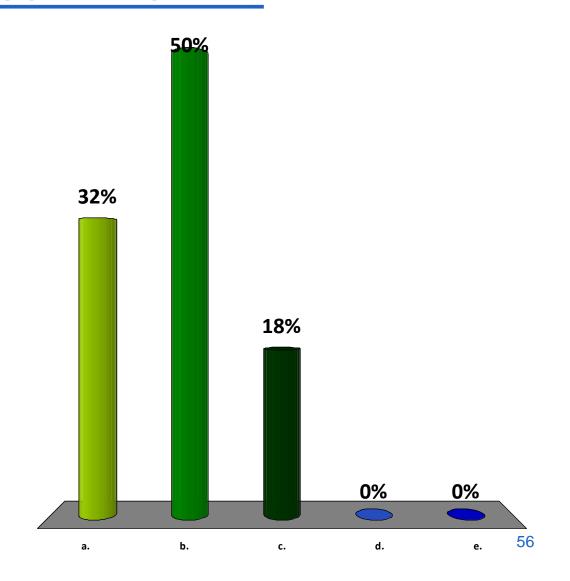
## INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS



# WHAT % OF EU FARMLAND: - IS SHORT IN ORGANIC MATTER? - IS COMPACTED?

- a. 50% and 45%
- b. 45% and 33%
- c. 33% and 25%
- d. 25% and 15%
- e. 15% and 10%

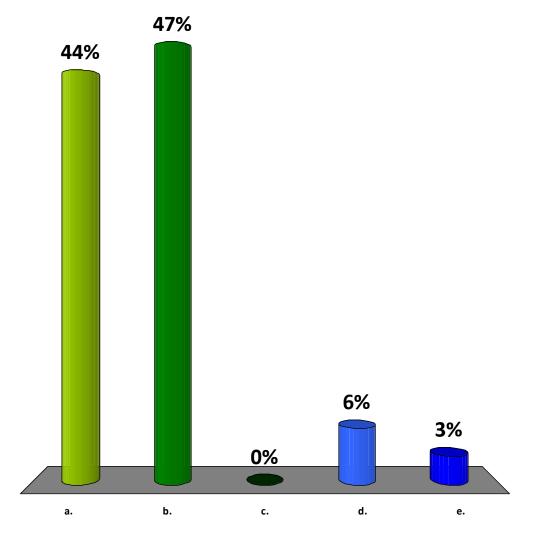




# HOW CAN WATER STORAGE CAPACITY BEST BE IMPROVED IN SOILS?

- a. Increase organic matter
- b. Prevent soil compaction
- c. Anti-erosion measures
- d. Zero tillage
- e. Other

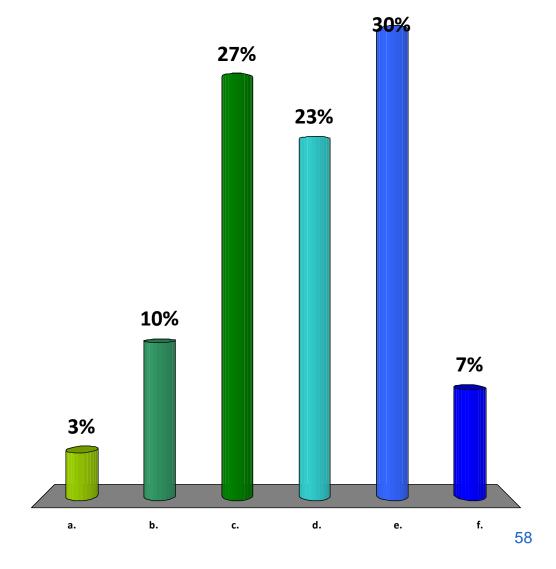




## WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEASURE TO LOWER SOIL COMPACTION?

- a. Smaller tractors (Farmers are using bigger tractors than necessary)
- b. Innovative tyres / lower tyre pressure
- c. Schedule farm operations to avoid working paddocks when wet
- d. Control traffic patterns using tramlines
- e. Context dependent
- f. Other



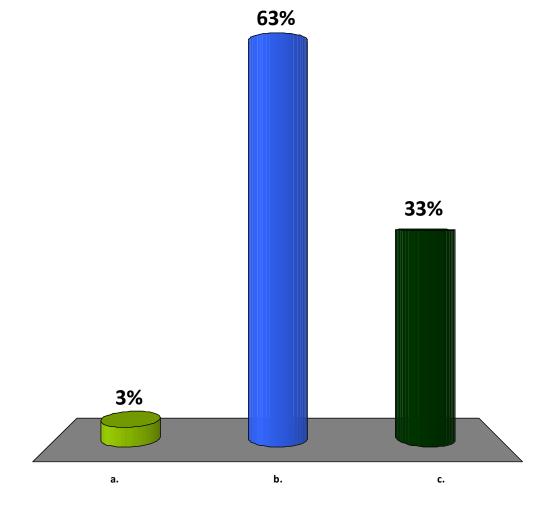


## IS THE LINK BETWEEN SOIL COMPACTION AND PRODUCTIVITY (PROFIT) CLEAR ENOUGH FOR FARMERS?

a. Yes

b. Yes, but more communication is needed

c. No, more research is needed





## POTENTIAL OF DIGITAL AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE SOIL FERTILITY









#### POTENTIAL OF DIGITAL AGRICULTURE FOR IMPROVING SOIL FERTILITY

Abdul M. Mouazen

Stakeholder Meeting 'Health Soil Matters' 30/11/2017 Gent, Belgium



















### **OUTLINE**

- Philosophy of precision agriculture
- Case studies
- •Future prospective
- •Conclusions



#### PHILOSOPHY OF PRECISION AGRICULTURE

The use of advanced sensing, modelling and control technologies for *managing within field variability* site specifically. This can be achieved by applying the right amount of farm inputs (fertilisers, seeds, pesticides, water) in the right place and time, using variable rate technologies.

#### **Precision agriculture is:**

- 1. multi-disciplinary: agronomy, environment, modelling, engineering, sensing, socio-economic science, ....
- 2. multi-functional: researchers, farmers, growers, agronomists, service providers, policy makers, machinery manufacturers,.....



### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Significant contribution to food security and safety
- Promote more sustainable ways of farming
- Increase farming efficiency by increasing yield at reduced input cost
- Reduce environmental impacts
- Trigger wider societal changes
- Improve soil fertility potential



## **CHALLENGES**

- Low adoption of PA technologies by farmers
- Low policy makers' appetite for PA applications
- Research needs



small and smart

**SURVEY DRONES** 

mapping weeds, yield and soil

variation. This enables precise

application of inputs, mapping

spread of pernicious weed

blackgrass could increasing Wheat yields by 2-5%. **FLEET OF AGRIBOTS** 

to crops, weeding, fertilising and

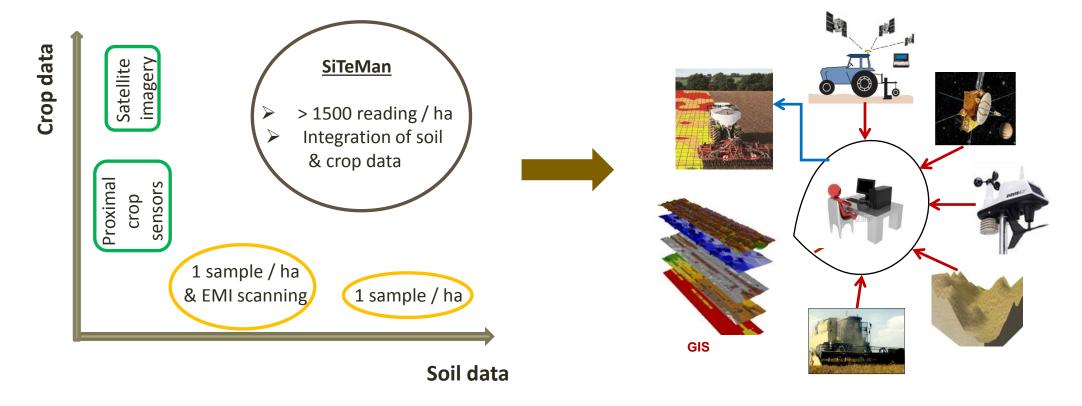
harvesting. Robots capable of

reduce fertiliser cost by 99.9%.

microdot application of fertiliser



#### **VISION**

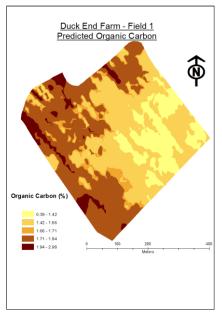


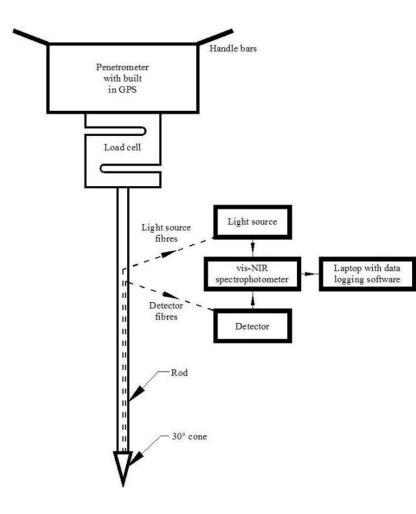
To combine cutting-edge sensors and advanced data fusion and geostatistical modelling approaches with system control technology to opitimise farm input at <u>field/sub-field</u> scales for sustainable increase in yield at reduced input cost.



#### **CORE COMPETENCY & INNOVATION**







- High resolution data (1500 2000 readings per ha).
- Any depth between 5 50 cm.
- Can be fit onto different soil equipment e.g., tillage, planters & seeding machine.
- Particularly successful for organic carbon, moisture, total nitrogen, clay and organic matter.
- Less accurate for pH, phosphorous, calcium cation exchange capacity and magnesium.



## CASE STUDIES IN SITE SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS

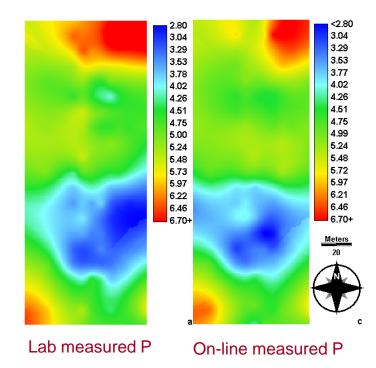


#### MAP-BASED SITE SPECIFIC P FERTILISATION No cost-benefit or environmental analyses p (mg / 100g) P (mg /100g) P (mg / 100g) 0.54 - 1.3 0.021 - 1.3 1.3 - 1.9 0.53 - 1.3 1.3 - 1.9 1.9 - 2.1 1.3 - 1.9 1.9 - 2.1 2.1 - 2.4 1.9 - 2.1 2.1 - 2.6 2.4 - 4.6 2.6 - 3.9 2012 2011 2013 Index 0, 110 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> Index 1,80 kg ha1 Index 2,50 kg ha-1 Index3, none



### SENSOR-BASED SITE SPECIFIC P FERTILISATION

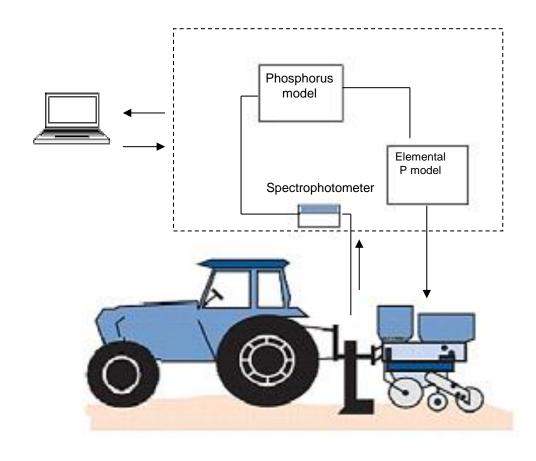






## SENSOR-BASED SITE SPECIFIC P FERTILISATION







## SENSOR-BASED SITE SPECIFIC P FERTILISATION

- 334 kg / ha increase in maize yield
- No reduction in P fertiliser applied

Spectrophotometer







**Optical sensor** 



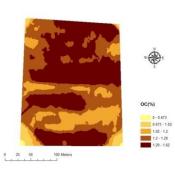


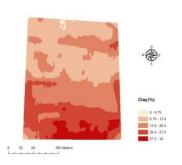
**Actuator** 



#### MULTI-SENSOR & DATA FUSION FOR SITE SPECIFIC IRRIGATION

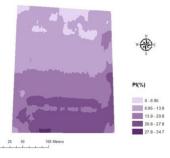


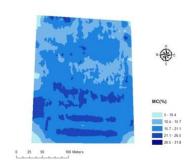


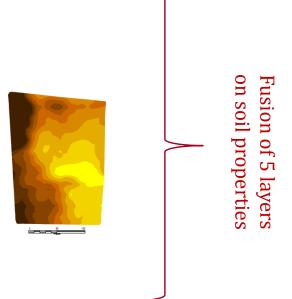


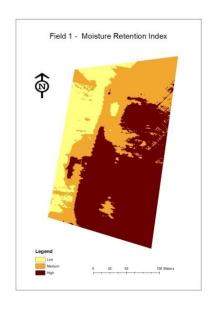












- Increase energy consumption
- Water scarcity
- Increase GHG emission



#### MULTI-SENSOR & DATA FUSION FOR SITE SPECIFIC COMPACTION MANAGEMENT



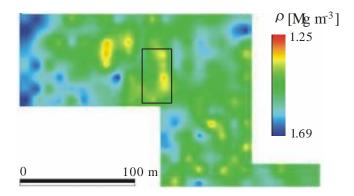
$$BD = \left(\sqrt[3]{\frac{D + 21.36MC - 73.9313d^2}{1.6734}}\right) \times (1.255 - 0.772MC)$$

- Reduce yield
- Increase energy consumption
- Increase GHG emission
- Increase risk for flood and erosion
- Reduce hydraulic conductivity











#### MULTI-SENSOR & DATA FUSION FOR VR N FERTILISATION

- Common Raster Grid Creation
- Data Fusion by Clustering
- Mapping





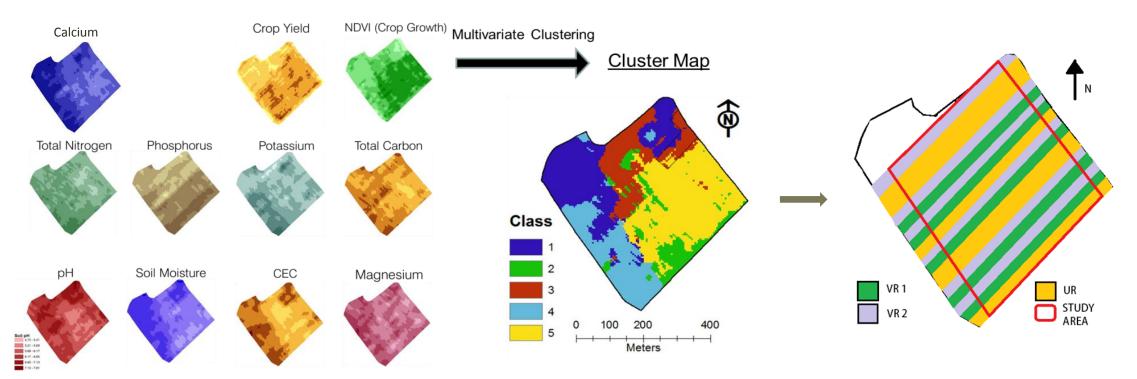










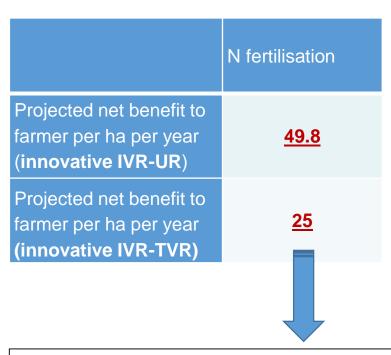




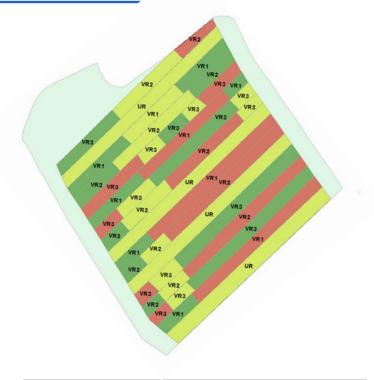
Fertility zone map

N application map

#### COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF VR N FERTILISATION



£72.8 per ha extra profit to farmer for N, P and lime



UR - Uniform rate

TVR – Traditional variable rate (NDVI)

IVR – Innovative variable rate (on-line soil





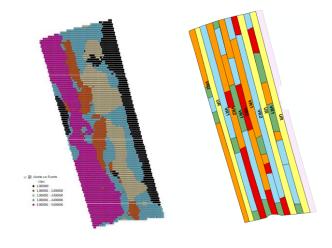




#### **PROFITABILITY**

Field	Profitability IVR vs UR (€)		Profitability IVR vs TVR (€)		Fertiliser use IVR vs UR (€)		Fertiliser use IVR vs TVR (€)	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
UK*	24	46.56	15.6	22.2	-0.07	-0.52	10.94	3.18
Germany	-	98.81	-	39.21	-	-10.91	-	-21.81
Turkey**	304.5	355.17	-	50.55	-	-1.16	-	-

<sup>\*</sup> VR N application in Fields in UK and Germany



UR – Uniform rate

TVR – Traditional variable rate (NDVI) IVR – Innovative variable rate (on-line soil data & NDVI)



<sup>\*\*</sup> VR N, P & K in Field in Turkey

#### ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES OF N FERTILISATION (£)

Impact	Receptor	Unit indicator	Cost		Annual non-	
			Value	Unit	market benefit per sensor	
Climate change impact	Atmosphere	CO <sub>2</sub> e	58	£ t <sup>-1</sup>	98,832	
		$N_2O$	17,727	£ t <sup>-1</sup>		
Air quality regulation	Atmosphere	$NH_3$	1,933	£ t <sup>-1</sup>	11,565	
	Rivers, canals	NO <sub>3</sub> -N	180	£ t <sup>-1</sup>	14,919	
Environmental water quality	Freshwater lakes	Р	1,573	£ t <sup>-1</sup>		
regulation	Transitional water	NO <sub>3</sub> -N	10	£ t <sup>-1</sup>	829	
Drinking water regulation	Drinking water	NO <sub>3</sub> -N	192	£ t <sup>-1</sup>	15,913	
Total benefit per sensor per year						

#### **Assumptions:**

- 1 soil sensor measures about 6800 ha per year
- Figures are for N fertilisation only



#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Need for advanced & integrated sensing, modelling and control technologies.

Innovative multiple sensors and data fusion approaches.

Think out of the box for new technologies.

Integration of all information on soil, crop, weather, topography, etc. – Towards system approach.

Need for collaborations across the different disciplines and functions.

Potential to increase profitability, reduce environmental impacts and waste.

Efforts to convince farmers to adopt precision agriculture practices.

Long term research, and demonstration projects with continuous training to farmers.

Science-based approaches – *simplification*, *automation* and *convenience* are key parameters for adoption.

Encourage service provider business model.





#### Abdul M. Mouazen

Professor of Site Specific Soil and Crop management

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOIL MANAGEMENT

E abdul.mouazen@ugent.be

T +32 9 264 6037

M +32 484 7707 23

www.ugent.be

**f** Ghent University

@ugent

in Ghent University



# POTENTIAL OF DIGITAL AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE SOIL FERTILITY







# John Deere where Healthy Soil Matter(s)

Stakeholder Meeting UGent

**Matthias Appel** 





## Evolution of agriculture up to the year 2000







## John Deere tools for a healthy soil





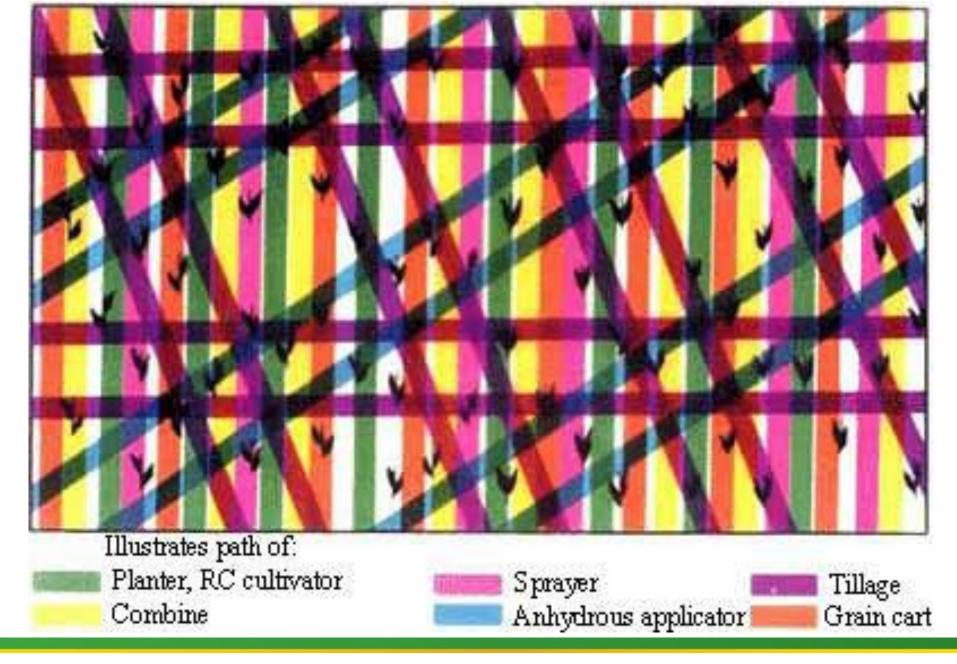
- How We Tackle Soil Compaction (CTF)
- John Deere Water Management & T3rra Cutta
- John Deere HarvestLab 3000
- John Deere Field Connect
- My John Deere



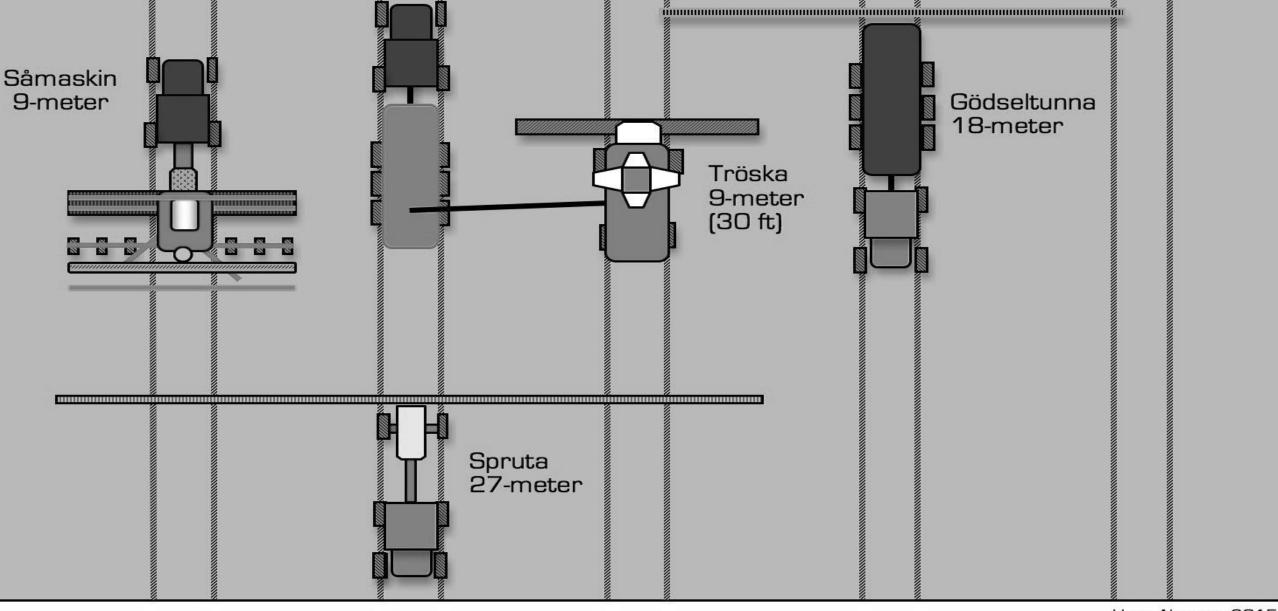
# How We Tackle Soil Compaction (CTF)











Hans Alvemar, 2015



#### TRAMLINES FOR GEN 4 AUTOTRAC

Tram line feature for Gen 4 Display Family

Setup and edit tramlines

Straight track mode

(AutoTrac activation required)





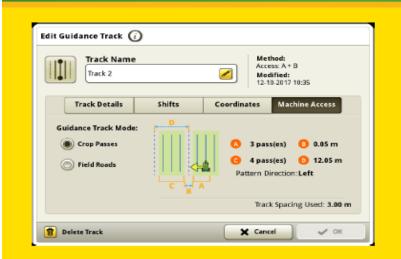


#### MACHINE ACCESS PATTERN FOR GEN 4 AUTOTRAC

Guidance with two different track spacings

e.G. 5 passes with 3m track spacing - two passes with 1m track spacing - ...











# PERFECT TURNS WITH AUTOTRAC TURN AUTOMATION

- Fully automated headland turns
- Quick and easy setup
- Untrained drivers are also able to tap the full productivity
- Constant efficiency during the whole day
- Reduce of soil compaction on the headland due to optimized turn tracks
- Combination of Turn Automation and Implement Guidance

possible











# John Deere Water Management





#### What does excessive rain cause?





- · Light risk soil top level closed
- Heavy soil saturation top level
- Heavy machinery cause soil compaction



- Need to enter wet fields
- Crop protection chemicals (soil herbicides) less effective, run off to ditch

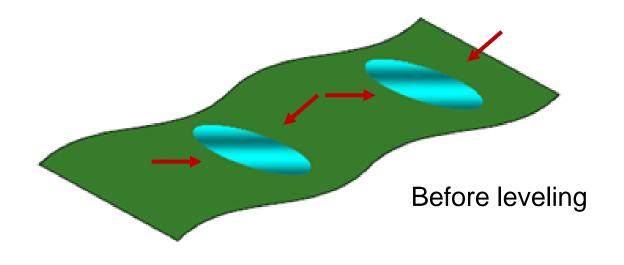


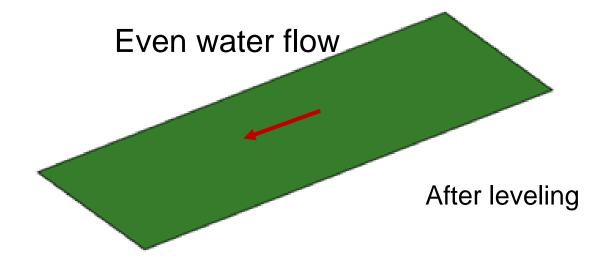
-/- € Profit



- Allow water to flow off field evenly
- Allow the soil to infiltrate water better, equally distributed





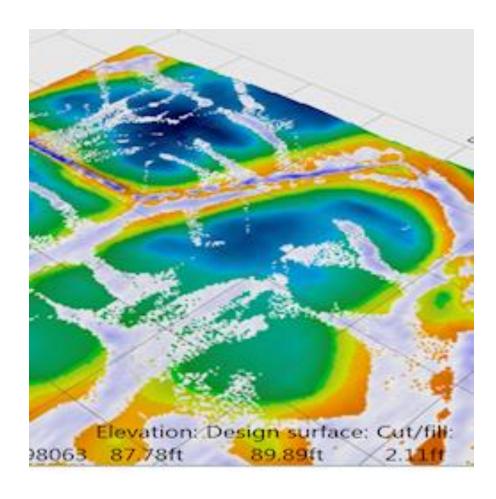




#### John Deere iGrade + T3RRA Cutta

#### Rainfall Simulation

- A real time, dynamic indication of the effects of the terrain on water flow.
- See where the water drains
- See where the water ponds
- Before/after comparisons





#### iGrade + T3RRA Cutta

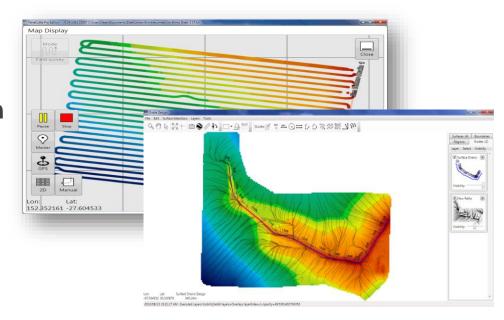
Workflow

2) Process / Design

1) Collect RTK Data



3) Implement Design









# John Deere HarvestLab 3000





#### HARVESTLAB 3000





#### HARVESTLAB 3000 – ONE SENSOR THREE APPLICATIONS

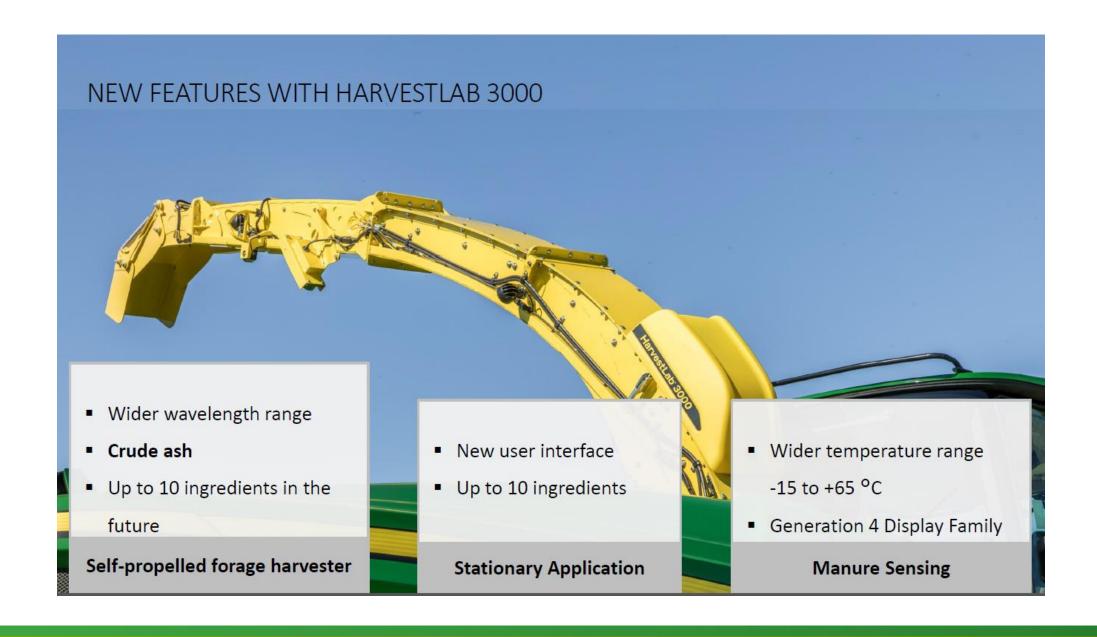






HarvestLab 3000 mounted on a John Deere self-propelled forage harvester (SPFH) HarvestLab 3000 Stationary Application John Deere Manure Sensing

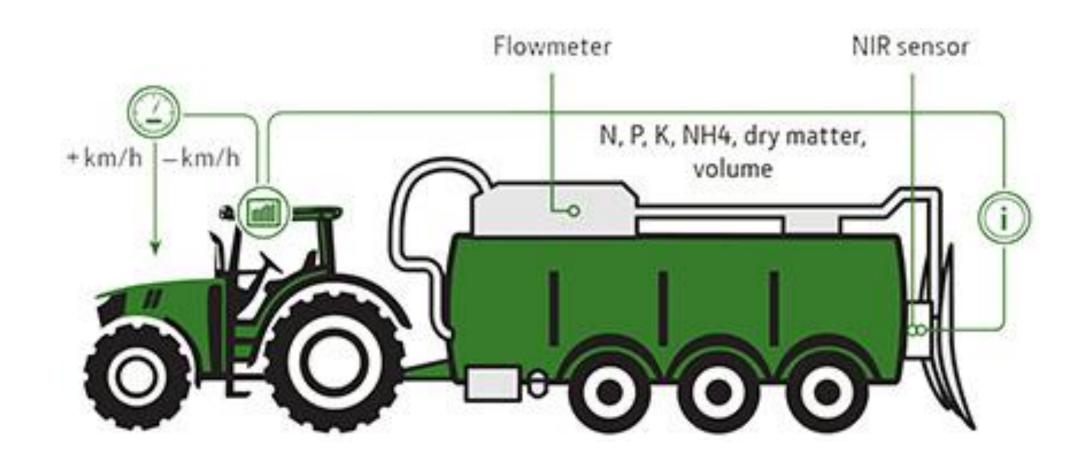




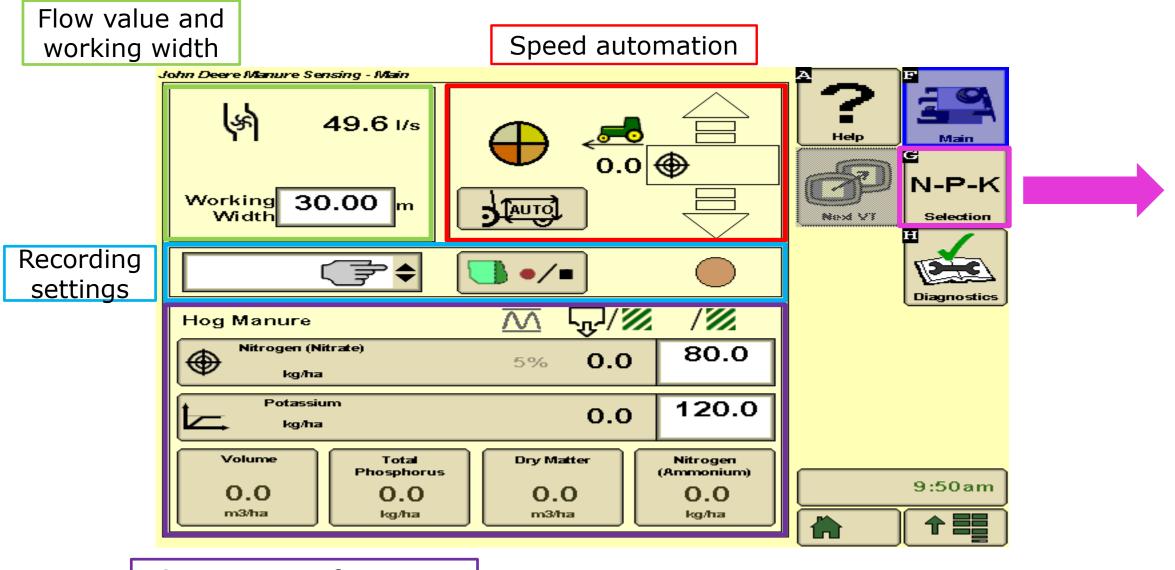






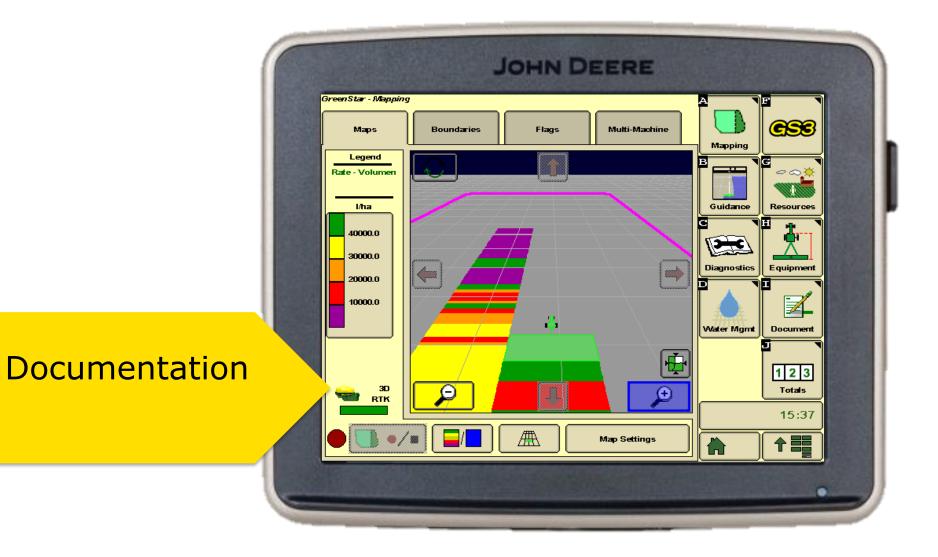






Constituent information













# John Deere Field Connect





#### **Field Connect**







# My John Deere



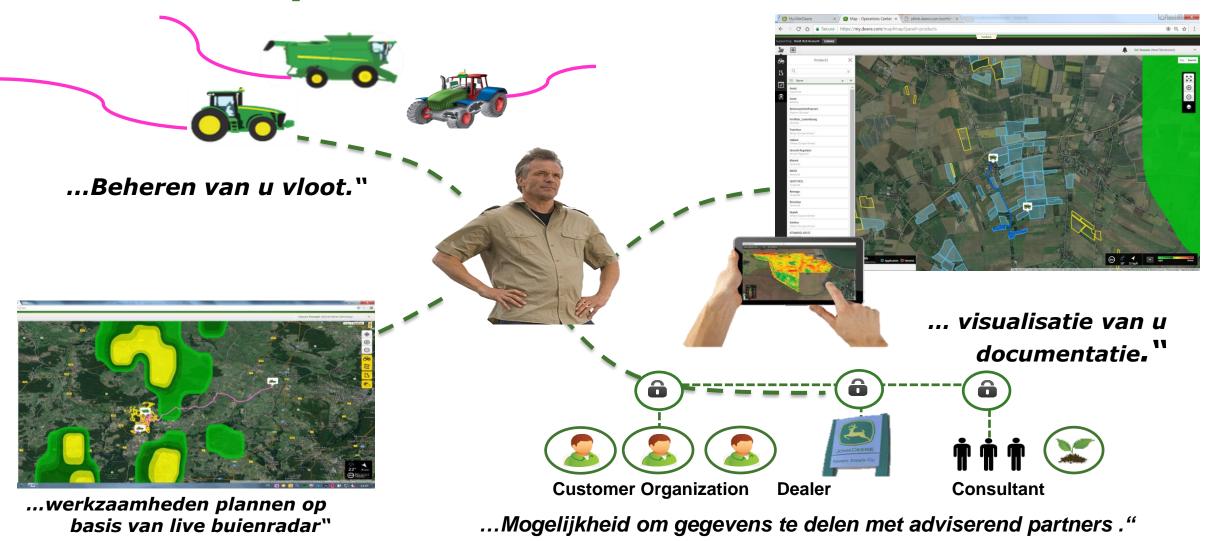


### MyJohnDeere.com

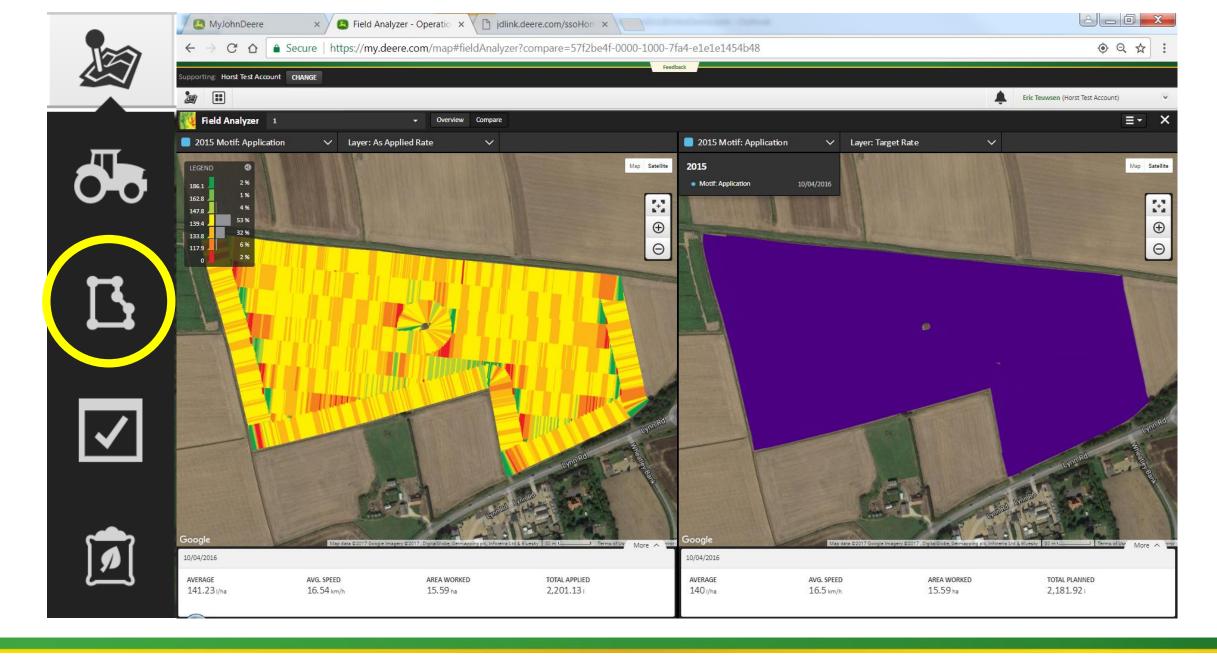




# "With the Operations Center I can...



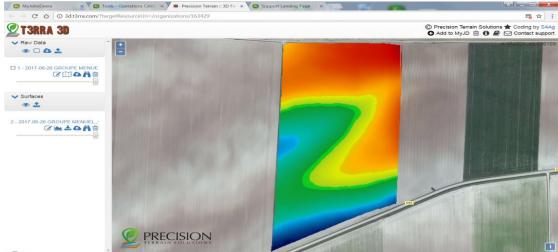


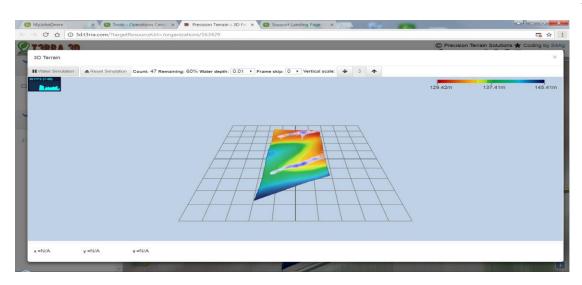


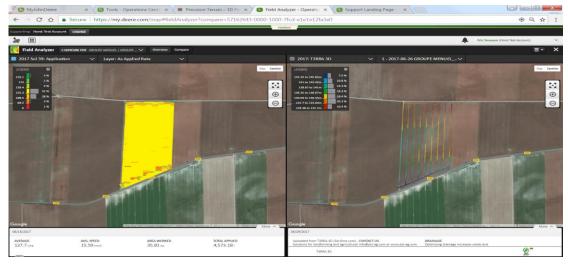


# My Operations Center: tools/terra 3D/drains













# JOHN DEERE



# Interactive questions

# WHAT % OF EU FARMLAND HAS BROAD BAND INFRASTRUCTURE?

a. 90%

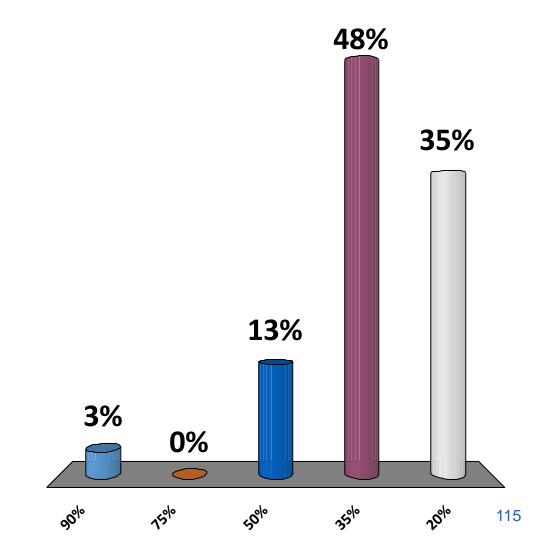
b. 75%

c. 50%

d. 35%

e. 20%

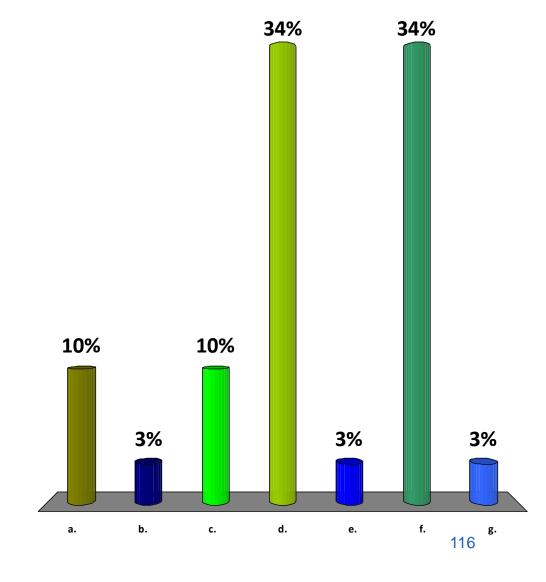




# WHAT IS SLOWING DOWN THE GENERAL APPLICATION OF DIGITAL FARMING?

- a. Some farmers hold on to tradition
- b. Technology is not fully developed
- c. Cost of Investment
- d. Return on investment is not clear
- e. Lack of standardization in data processing
- f. Combination of the above
- g. Other

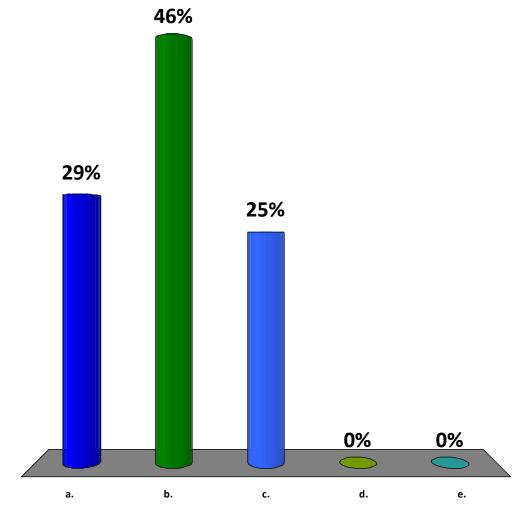




# HOW CAN FARMERS ADOPTION OF DIGITAL AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES BE ENHANCED?

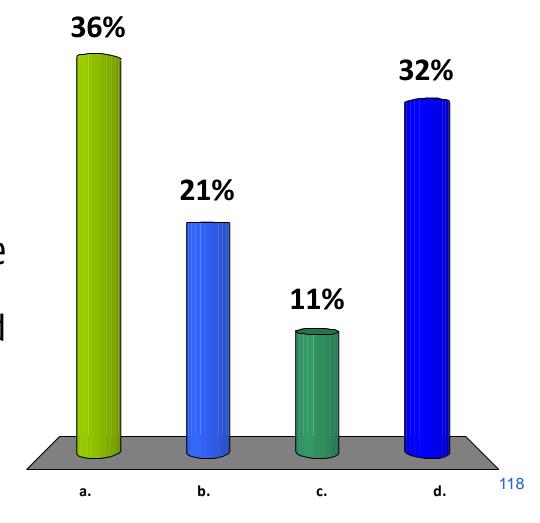
- a. Workshops / demonstrations
- b. More success stories needed
- c. Investment support by government
- d. More research
- e. Other





# DO WE NEED TO CONVINCE FARMERS TO STOP CULTIVATING UNPROFITABLE PARTS OF THEIR FIELDS?

- a. No,
- b. No, it depends
- c. Yes, but how?
- d. Yes, but alternative uses, such as nature restoration, need to be better promoted





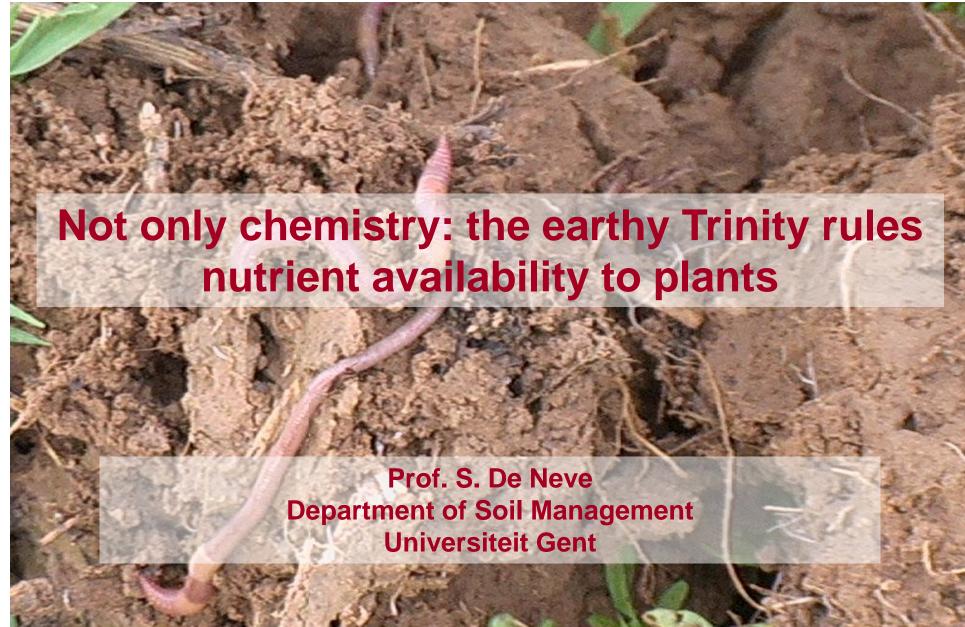




# THE EARTHY TRINITY RULES NUTRIENT AVAILABILITY TO PLANTS









#### 1. Introduction

What is soil fertility??

"the capacity of a soil to provide crops with essential nutrients"

(Merriam Webster dictionnary)

Does this include everything?

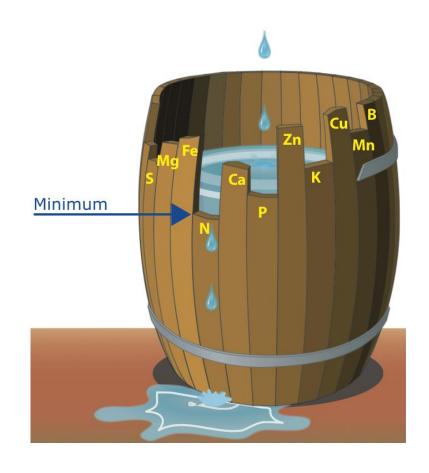
What about:

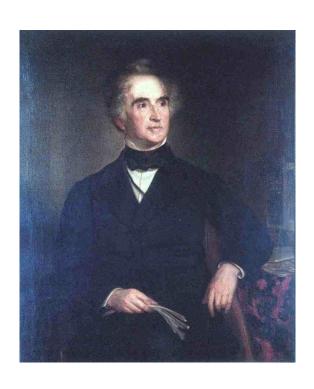
- Water and air?
- Plant growth promoting microorganisms?
- •Crop protection?

• . . .



### The chemical revolution







#### The chemical revolution

Chemical crop protection started in the 19th century: highly toxic mineral components: arsenic, mercury, cyanides, ...

Fromt the 1930's: organic herbicides and pesticides





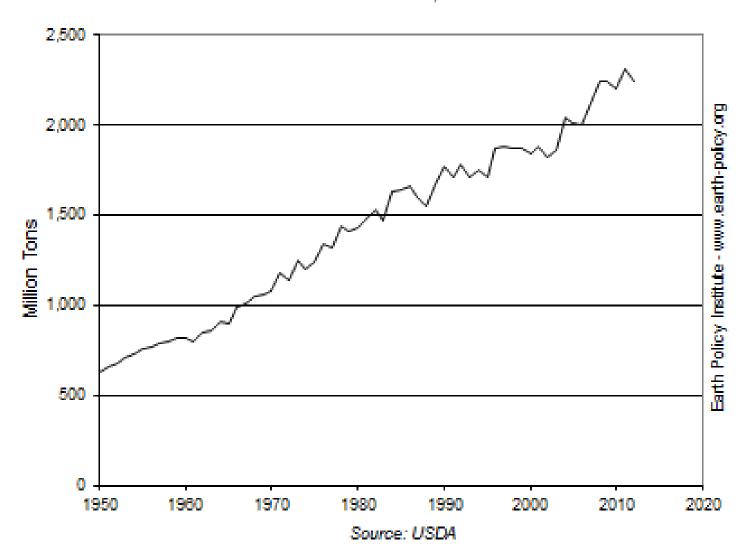
# The mechanical revolution





#### **Results**

#### World Grain Production, 1950-2012





### Are we then where we want to be?











parameter	waarde	situatie t.o.v. streefzone*	Beoordeling	methode- nummer	analyse- datum
Grondsoort	40		Leem	458	13/02/2010
рН	6.9	6.7 - 7.3	Gunstig	089 B	13/02/2010
Koolstof	1.6 %	1.2 - 1.6	Normaal	452 B	13/02/2010
Humus (berekend)	2.8 %	2.1 - 2.8	Normaal	452 B	13/02/2010
Fosfor (P)	39 mg/100g DS	13 - 19	Hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Kalium (K)	35 mg/100g DS	15 - 21	Tamelijk hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Magnesium (Mg)	19 mg/100g DS	10 - 15	Tamelijk hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Calcium (Ca)	235 mg/100g DS	169 - 370	Normaal	376 B	13/02/2010
Natrium (Na)	3.5 mg/100g DS	3.2 - 6.4	Normaal	376 B	13/02/2010

Is this sufficient to get a grip on soil fertility?



#### Soil = "mechanical anchoring for plant roots"?



Soil life is dangerous and needs to be eliminated

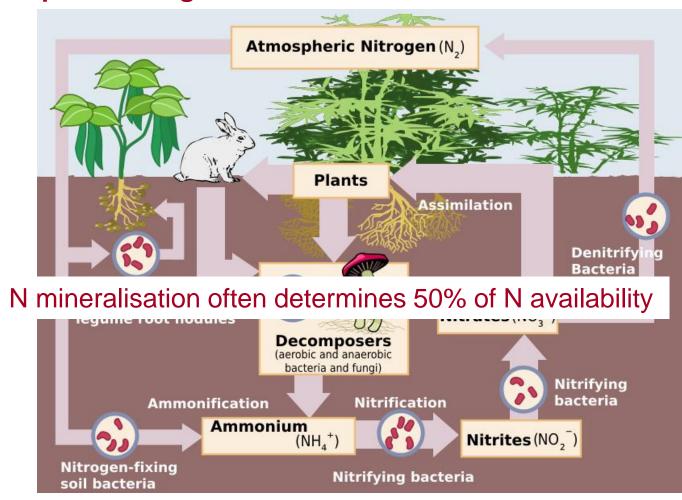






Measuring soil fertility: more than a chemical analysis!

The example of nitrogen

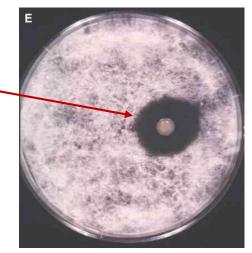




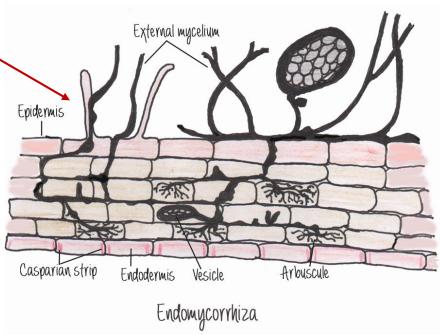
**Phosphorus** 

Endomycorrhiza

Phosphate solubilizing bacteria-

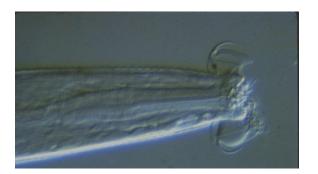


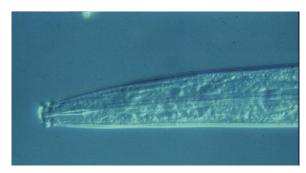


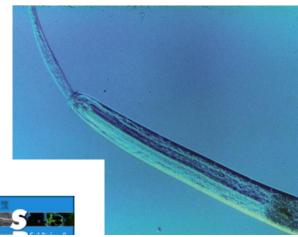




"The soil foodweb": also includes fauna







Soil Biology & Biochemistry 60 (2013) 142-155



Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect



Soil Biology & Biochemistry 70 (2014) 131-141



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

#### Soil Biology & Biochemistry

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/soilbio



David Buchan\*, Mesfin Tsega

disturbed soil cores

The effect of free-livin

Department of Soil Management, Faculty of Bio-

Quantifying the influences of free-living nematodes on soil nitrogen and microbial biomass dynamics in bare and planted microcosms

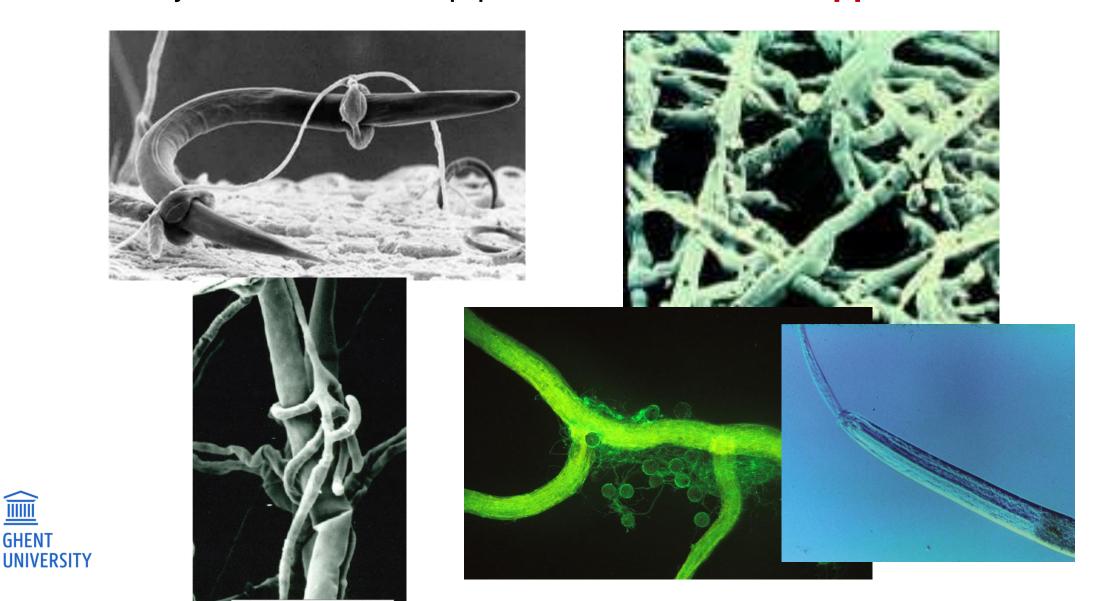


Mesfin Tsegaye Gebremikael\*, David Buchan, Stefaan De Neve

Department of Soil Management, University of Gent, Coupure Links 653, 9000 Gent, Belgium



Soil fertility is also about crop protection: "disease suppressive soils"



Soil biological activity and soil structure are mutually reinforcing





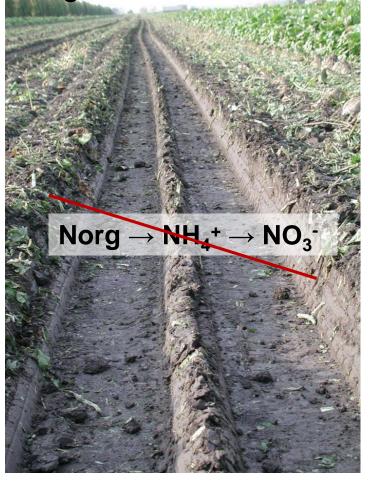


parameter	waarde	situatie t.o.v. streefzone*	Beoordeling	methode- nummer	analyse- datum
Grondsoort	40		Leem	458	13/02/2010
рН	6.9		Gunstig	089 B	13/02/2010
Koolstof	1.6 %	1.6	Normaal	452 B	13/02/2010
Humus (berekend)	2.8 %	2.1 - 2.8	Normaal	452 B	13/02/2010
Fosfor (P)	39 mg/100g DS	13 - 19	Hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Kalium (K)	35 mg/100g DS	15 - 21	Tamelijk hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Magnesium (Mg)	19 mg/100g DS	10 - 15	Tamelijk hoog	376 B	13/02/2010
Calcium (Ca)	235 mg/100g DS	169 - 370	Normaal	376 B	13/02/2010
Natrium (Na)	3.5 mg/100g DS	3.2 - 6.4	Normaal	376 B	13/02/2010

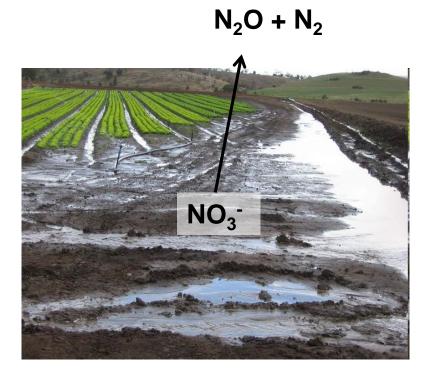


#### **Some examples**

Degradation of soil structure:



Reduced N release

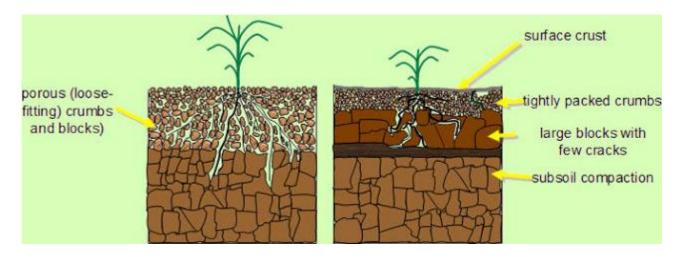


Gaseous N losses: low efficiency of N fertilizers



#### **Some examples**

#### Superficial rooting









Fertilizer advice on a pure chemical basis is pointless in these cases

How to determine physical and biological soil quality? Farmer, look into your soil!



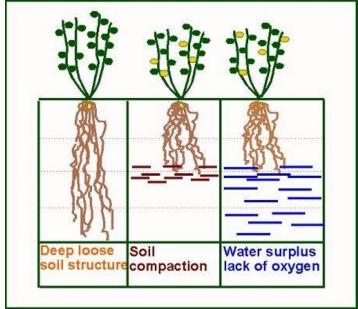




Soil life



O<sub>2</sub> deficit



No soil life



**Root architecture** 

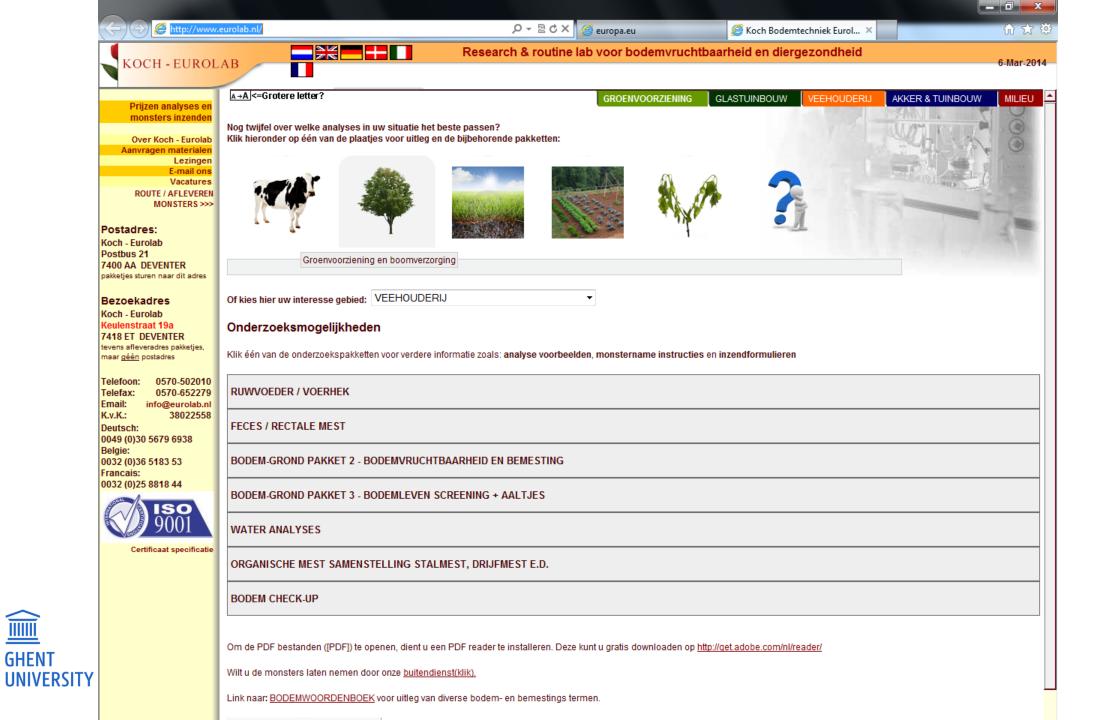


Fertilizer advice on a pure chemical basis is pointless in these cases

How to determine physical and biological soil quality? Farmer, look into your soil!

Biological soil fertility is measured commercially: reliability of such advices?







### Fertilizer as a substitute for good soil structure?





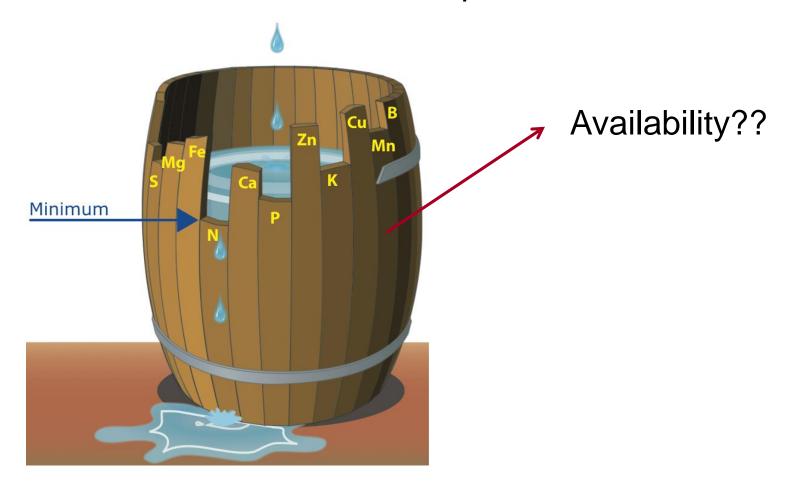


Fertilizer limits (MAP)?



## Is chemical soil fertility not important at all?

Yes, the nutrients need to be present in soil somewhere.







Prof. Stefaan De Neve Department of Soil Management

E stefaan.deneve@ugent.be T +32 9 264 60 61

www.ugent.be

f Ghent University

@ugent

in Ghent University



## THE EARTHY TRINITY RULES NUTRIENT AVAILABILITY TO PLANTS







# Nutrient availability: chemical, biological and physical interactions

**Practical Examples DCM** 



#### **EXAMPLE 1**

Slow down the initial mineralization of organic fertilisers by complexing the nutrients with natural plant extracts











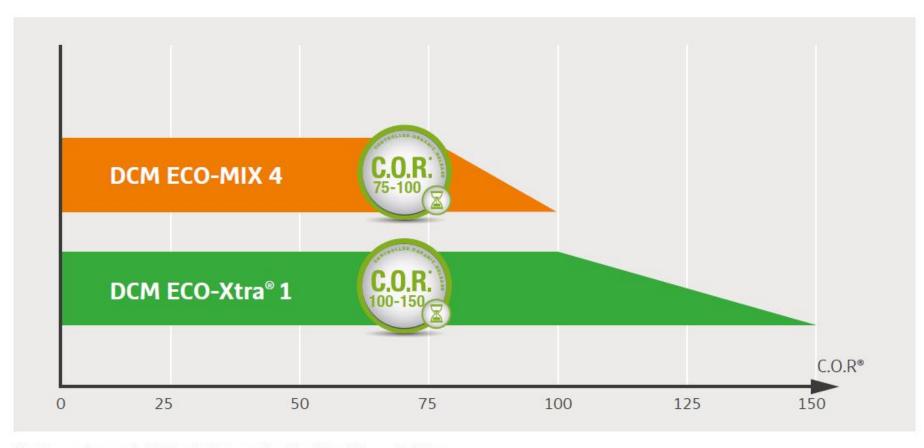








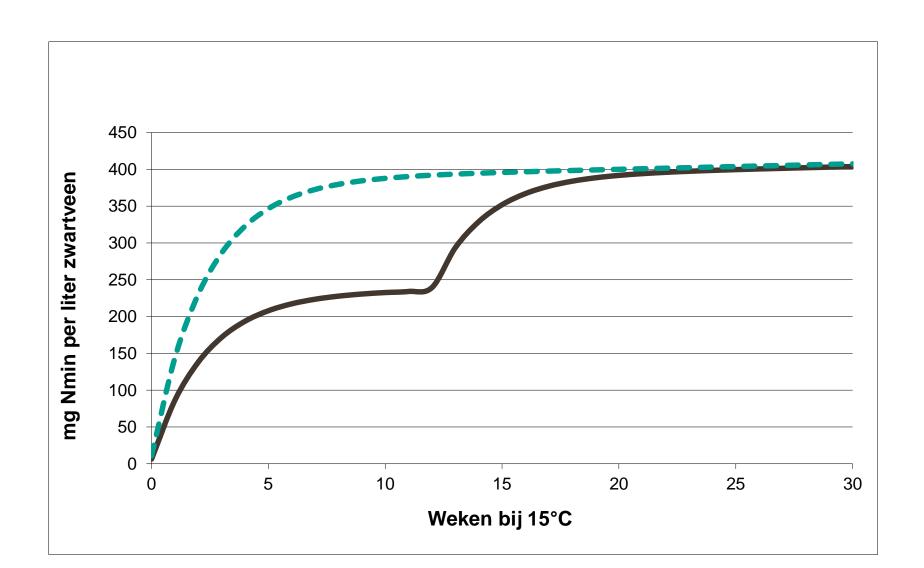




Nutrient release trial, Scientia Terrae, Sint-Katelijne-Waver, Belgium.

Base fertilization: DCM ECO-MIX 1; 4,5 g/L After 12 weeks: DCM ECO-MIX 1; 3 g/L

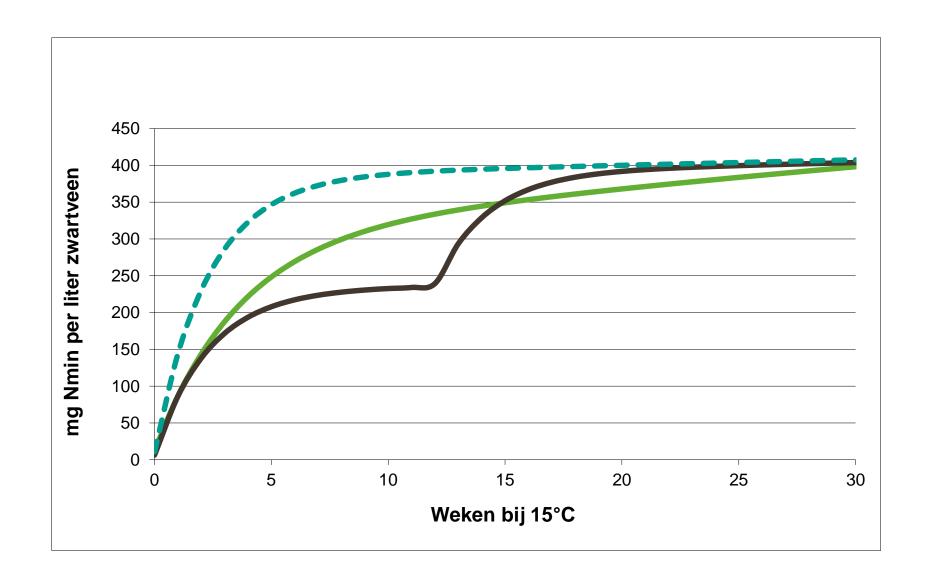
Base fertilization: DCM ECO-MIX 1: 7,5 g/L



Base fertilization: DCM ECO-MIX 1; 4,5 g/L After 12 weeks: DCM ECO-MIX 1; 3 g/L

Base fertilization: DCM ECO-MIX 1: 7,5 g/L

Base fertilization: DCM ECO-Xtra® 1: 8,3 g/L





## Lavender



1 : standard organic fertiliser 2: DCM ECO-Xtra® 1

after 7 weeks



# Hydrangea





Standard =  $4,5 \text{ kg/m}^3$  chemical slow release fertiliser 8 m.



 $DCM = 6 \text{ kg/m}^3 DCM ECO-Xtra 1}$ 



#### **EXAMPLE 2**

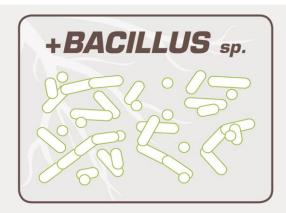
# Improve nutrient availability in the soil/substrate by using extra bacteria





#### **DCM VIVISOL®**

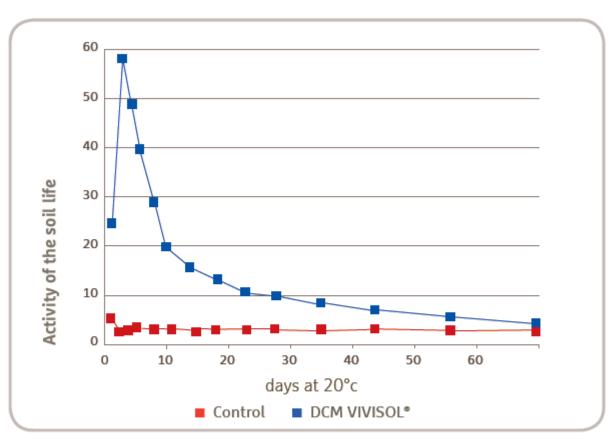
- **Bacillus sp.** 10<sup>6</sup> CFU/gram
- Inoculated onto vegetal raw materials, rich in organic matter



- Creates ideal soil conditions: both physically and biologically
- Guarantees a fast colonization of the rhizosphere
- Releases soil phosphorus and makes it uptakeable for the plant roots
- Optimizes the health of plants and roots
- Produces stronger plants boasting improved growth and quality
- Scientific research proves added value for many crops



### More active soil life



Soil life activity determined by measuring the microbial respiration rate,  $(mg C-CO_2/kg/day)$  Scientia Terrae vzw, Belgium



## **Colonisation of the root surface**

#### Controle



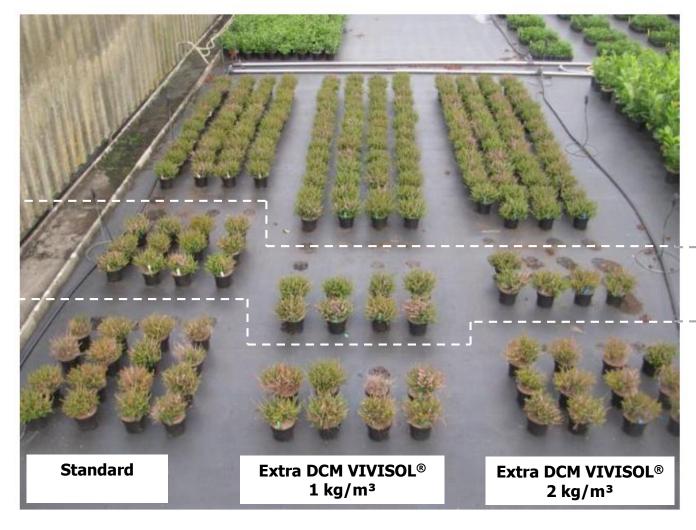
+ Bacillus



Arabidopsis, KULeuven



# DCM VIVISOL® = better quality, less losses



#### **A** quality

= sufficient size, few to no brown branches

#### **B** quality

= insufficient size, few to no brown branches

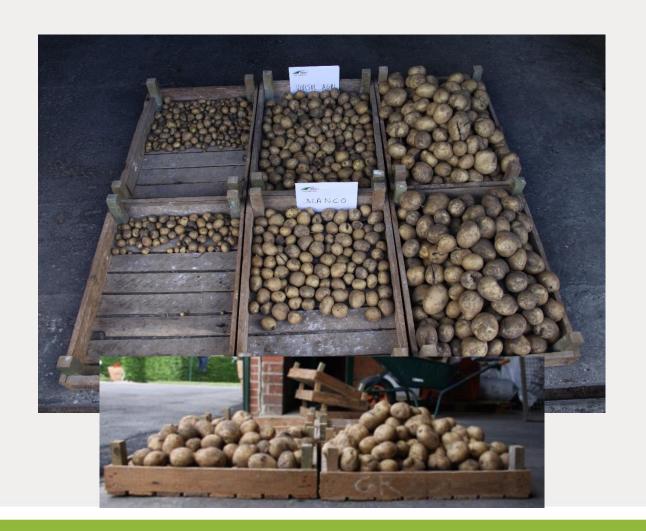
#### **C** quality

= commercially unacceptable/ loss

Erica darleynsis in container, Aegisto/Delphy, Wageningen, the Netherlands, 2016



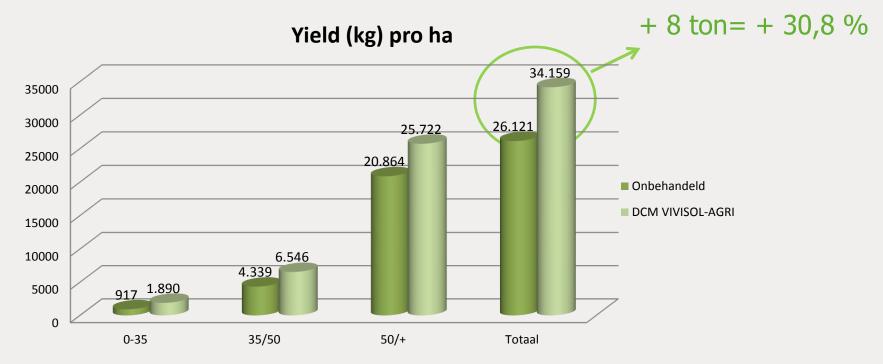
# DCM Vivisol®-Agri potatoes *Anosta*





# DCM Vivisol®-Agri potatoes *Anosta*

Harvest: 03/08/2017



Culture: Potatoes (consumption), Anosta

Grower: Wim Calrysse, Wingene, West-Vlaanderen

Soil: loamy sandsoil

Soil conditions: Dry (spring - summer 2017)



#### **EXAMPLE 3**

# Improve nutrient availability in the soil/substrate with biostimulants







### **Biostimulant**

**Bacillus** 

Complex carbon chains of vegetable origin

Bacteria (Bacillus sp.): 10<sup>9</sup> CFU/g

**Combined action** 



# DCM VITACT® F: Stimulation of root formation with more fine root-hairs

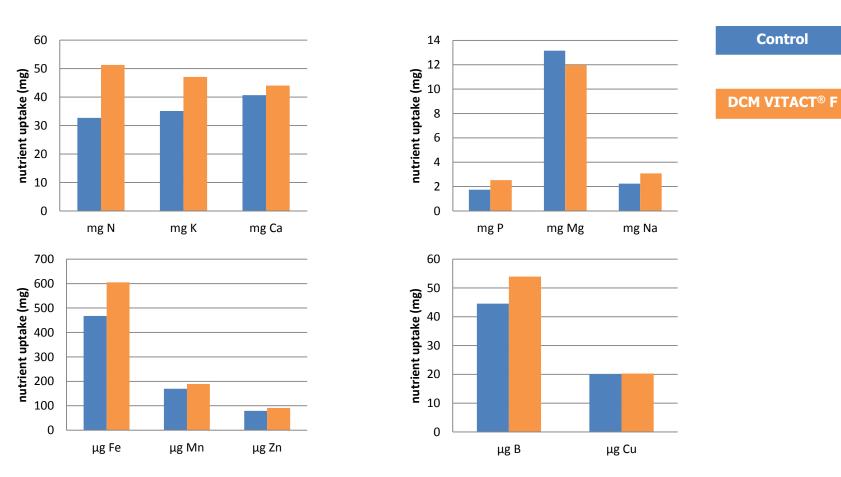


Tomato – Kanavaro, Dose-response test DCM VITACT F, 2017

1 application of DCM VITACT F (different dosages); 11 days after application

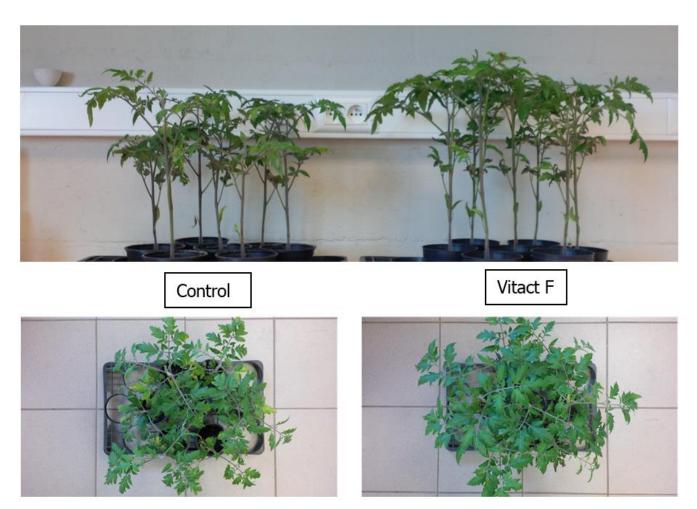


## DCM VITACT® F: Better nutrient uptake





# **DCM VITACT® F:**Stimulation of the (aboveground) vegetation

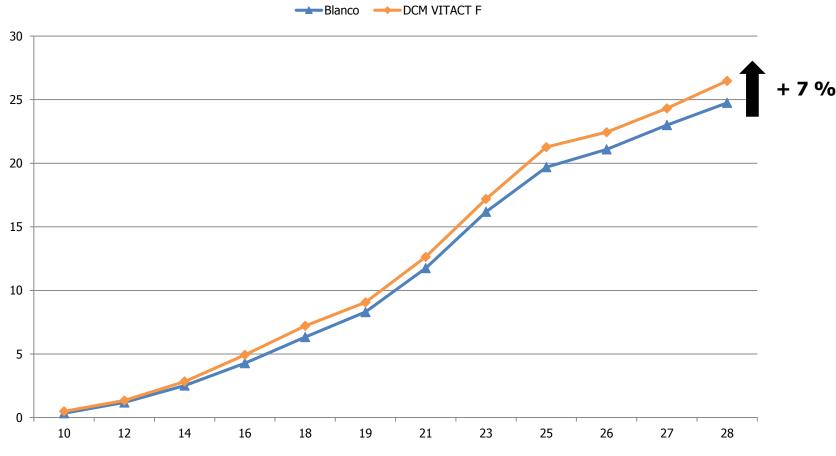


**Effect of biostimulant products on P nutrient stress – Tomato; Scientia Terrae** 



# **DCM VITACT® F:** more tomatoes

cumulative production (kg/ha until week 28)



Effect of biostimulant on yield – Tomato; Noud Steegh, Grenspaal, Nederland; 2015



Thank you!

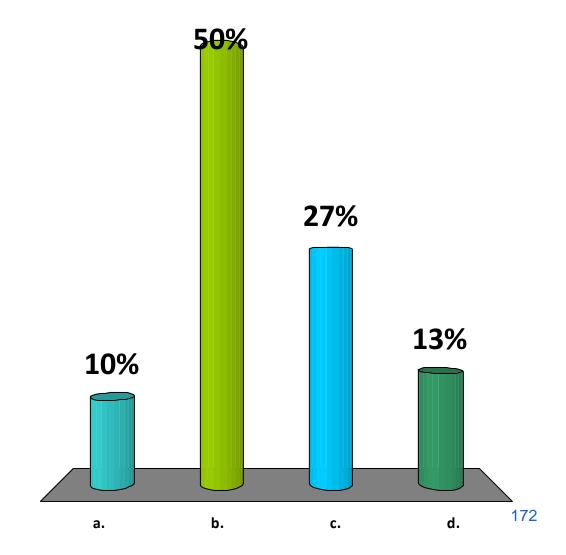


# Interactive questions

# HOW BIG IS THE NUTRIENT SURPLUS IN FLANDERS AS N & P MEASURED BY MAP IN 2017?

- a. 10% N and 40 % P
- b. 20% N and 65 % P
- c. 30% N and 50% P
- d. 40% N and 60% P

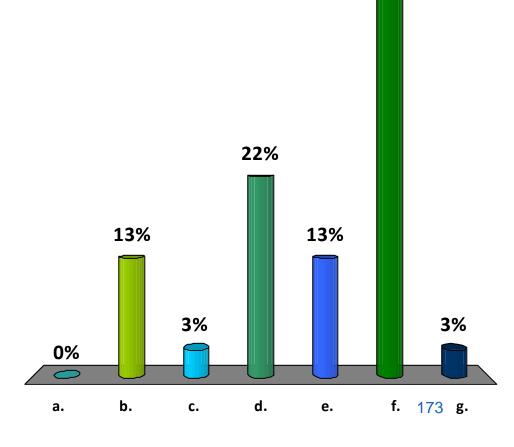




# HOW CAN THE NUTRIENT SURPLUS IN FLANDERS BE BETTER MANAGED?

- a. Slow release fertilizers
- b. Increase bio availability of existing soil nutrients
- c. Use more bio fertilizers
- d. Use of precision farming
- e. Policy and awareness
- f. Combination
- g. Other



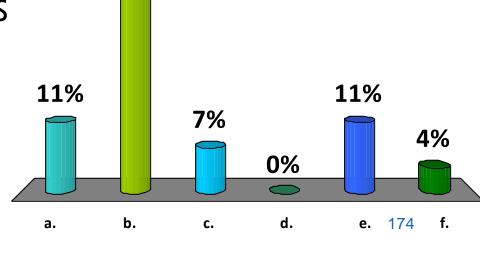


47%

# WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAIN FUTURE FOCUS OF INNOVATIONS IN THE FERTILIZER INDUSTRY?

- a. Products that improve the bio-availability of the nutrients that are present
- b. Products that improve soil structure and soil biological activity
- c. New formulations like controlled release
- d. Products that improve plant resilience, e.g. vaccins
- e. New application technologies
- f. Other



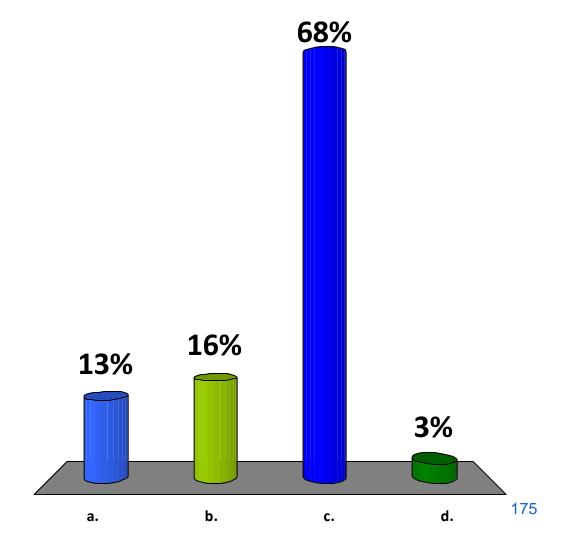


68%

## HOW CAN FUTURE FERTILIZER ADVICE SYSTEMS BEST BE IMPROVED?

- a. Quantifying soil properties with precision farming
- b. Quantifying plant needs with precision farming, e.g. green seekers
- c. Focus on general soil fertility (physical, chemical, biological), not only chemistry
- d. Other





# SOILBORNE DISEASES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT BY BIOLOGICAL CONTROL







# SOILBORNE DISEASES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT BY BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

Monica Höfte, Department Crop Protection



## SOILBORNE DISEASES

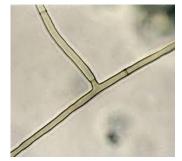


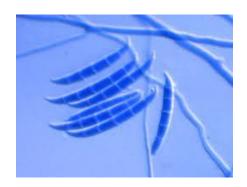


Extremely rare in natural habitats – enhanced by agricultural practices

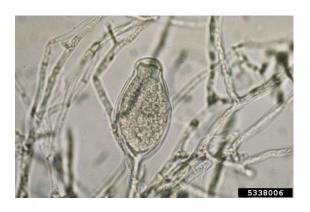
## SOILBORNE PATHOGENS

- Fungi (Sclerotinia, Fusarium, Rhizoctonia, Verticillium)
- Oomycetes (Pythium, Phytophthora)
- Rhizaria (Plasmodiophora, Polymyxa)
- Nematodes, bacteria, viruses
- Usually necrotrophic, with a wide host range





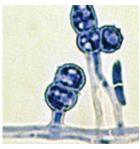






## SURVIVAL IN SOIL











- Sclerotia, chlamydospores, oospores, thick-walled conidia or hyphae, resting spores, ...
- Survival in plant roots and crop residues
- Survival in soil for many years in some cases



## DESASTROUS EXAMPLE

- Fusarium wilt on lettuce
- Spreading very quickly in the Netherlands, Belgium, UK, France
- Some growers in Belgium have already stopped producing lettuce
- The end for lettuce production in soil?







### MANAGEMENT OF SOILBORNE PATHOGENS

- Prevention
  - Certified seed and planting material
- Crop rotation
- Host resistance
  - Grafting susceptible crops on resistant rootstocks
  - Feasible for some pathogens (e.g. Fusarium)
  - No host resistance against necrotrophic fungi
- Chemical control



## CHEMICAL CONTROL

- In intensive production systems, soilborne pathogens used to be effectively controlled by methylbromide (CH<sub>3</sub>Br)
- Methylbromide is a total soil fumigant that kills fungi, insects, nematodes and weeds
- MB is also an ozone depleting gas
- Use is completely banned in Belgium since 2006







## **CHEMICAL ALTERNATIVES**

- Other fumigants
  - Dazomet, Metam-P, Metam-K
  - Chloropicrine
  - 1,3-dichloropropene (1,3-D)
- Fungicides
  - Do not usually kill survival structures
  - Often not effective
  - Many active ingredients will be lost



Directive 2009/128/EC: sustainable use of pesticides Priority to non-chemical methods and practices

## NON-CHEMICAL ALTERNATIVES

- Steam application
- Soilless cultivation
  - High initial investment costs
  - Requires disinfection of recirculating nutrient solutions







### BIOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVES

### Biological soil disinfestation

- Biofumigation
- Biofumigation + solarization
- Anaerobic soil disinfestation
  - Organic amendments + flooding
  - Organic amendments + tarping



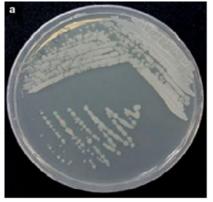




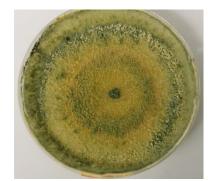
## MICROBIAL BIOCONTROL AGENTS

- Fungi: Trichoderma,Gliocladium, Coniothyrium
- Bacteria: Pseudomonas,Bacillus, Streptomyces









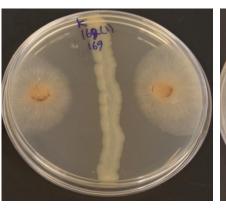


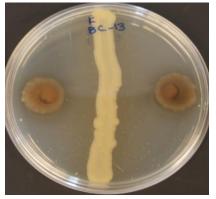


## **DIRECT ANTAGONISM**

- Antibiosis: antibiotics,
   toxins, volatile organic
   compounds, biosurfactants
- Competition: for nutrients or minerals (Fe)
- Parasitism: chitinases,
   cellulases









## INTERACTION WITH THE PLANT

- Phytohormones
  - Production of phytohormones
  - Interference with phytohormones
- Nutrient acquisition
  - Nitrogen fixation
  - Phosphatase activity
- Induced resistance
  - Plant recognizes Microbial Associated Molecular Patterns (MAMPs)
  - Activation of plant defense mechanisms

# FROM CHEMICAL TO BIOLOGICAL CONTROL STRATEGIES

- Much more knowledge about pathogens is needed
- Proper identification becomes important
- Knowledge about biology and ecology of the pathogen becomes important
- Has led to more attention for crop and soil health



## BIOPESTICIDES OR MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIVE SOIL MICROBIOME?

- Failure of introduced microbial agents to consistently and effectively provide biological control
  - Persistence and expression of functional traits is influenced by competition, plant genotype, abiotic soil characteristics
- Multistrain or multimechanistic options?
- Can we learn from disease suppressive soils?
- Change the soil microbiome by organic inputs
- Influence of host genotype





## Prof. Monica Höfte Department Crop Protection

E monica.hofte@ugent.be

T +32 9 264 60 17

www.ugent.be

- f Ghent University
- @ugent
- in Ghent University



# SOILBORNE DISEASES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT BY BIOLOGICAL CONTROL





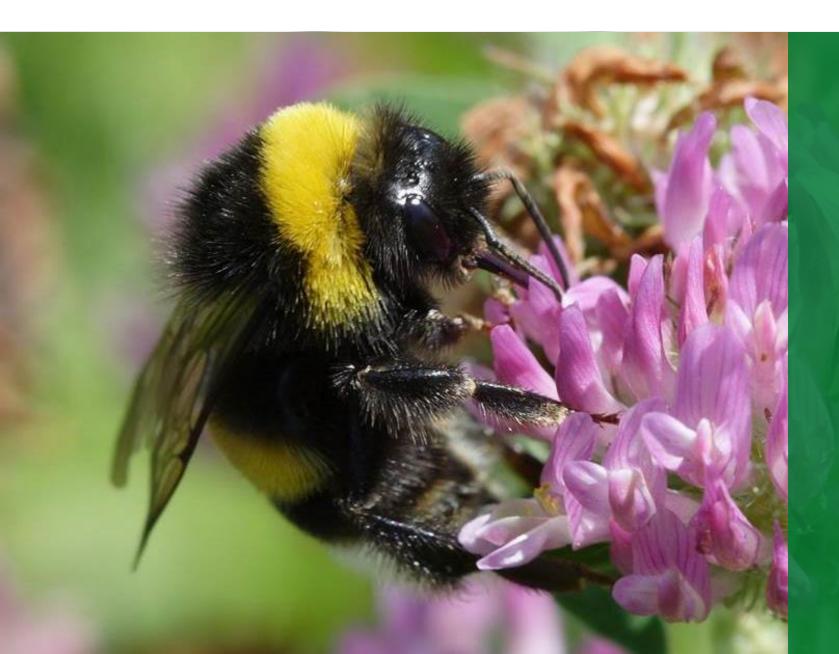


BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS



#### INTRODUCTION KOPPERT



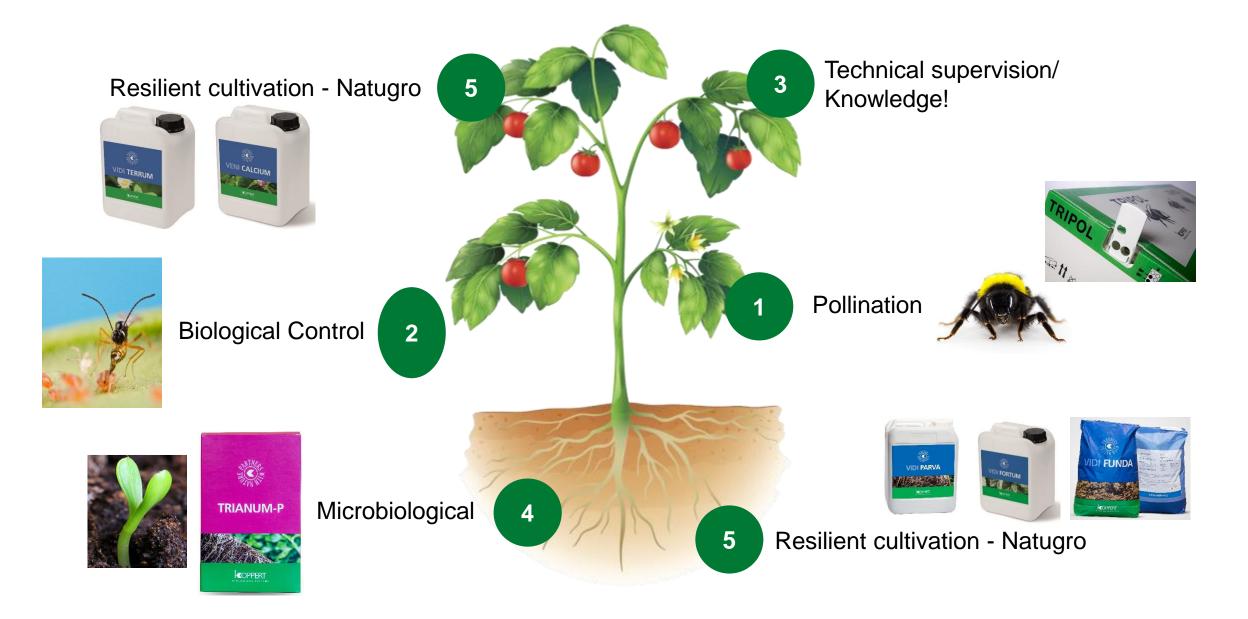


## KOPPERT'S CORE DISCIPLINES:

- Research and development
- Know-how and knowledge sharing
- Worldwide production and distribution of solutions
  - Biological pest and disease management
  - Natural Pollination
  - Application techniques& monitoring
  - Seed treatment
  - Resilient Growth with NatuGro

#### KOPPERT INTEGRATED CROP MANAGEMANT

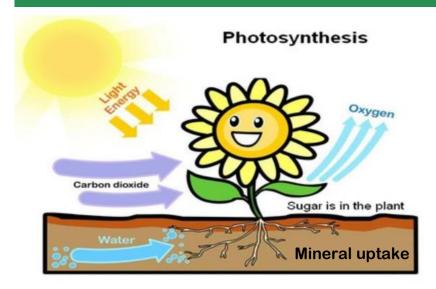


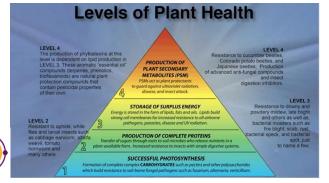


#### MANAGING SOIL DISEASES (THEORY)



1. Make sure plants are no foodsource for the pathogens.





2. Create competition between beneficial microbes and the pathogens.



#### MANAGING SOIL DISEASES (PRACTICAL 1)



SUBSTRATE (soil, substrate or water)

WATER QUALITY AND WATERING STRATEGY

CROP PROTECTION (fungicides, insecticides and herbicides)

CLIMATE (always "room for exudates" to support microbials/soil food web around the roots)



#### MANAGING SOIL DISEASES (PRACTICAL 2)





#### **EXAMPLE: STRAWBERRY PROPAGATION - PROTOCOL**





Jack																	=\.	100 C							
			O <sup>1)</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Ī
			0	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	Ī
Trianum-P <sup>2)</sup>	0,5	kg/ha	1									1													Ī
VidiParva	5,0	ltr/ha	1	1									1		1										Ī
VidiFortum	5,0	ltr/ha			1		1		1		1														Ĺ
VidiTerrum	5,0	ltr/ha		1	1		1		1		1			1			1			1					Ī
VidiFol-D <sup>3)</sup>	2,0	ltr/ha	1	1	1		1		1				1				1				1				Ī
VeniCalcium	2,5	ltr/ha					1				1				1				1						Ī
Trianum meting							х																Ī		
																									1000





Crop cycle: July/Aug – Nov/Dec

Runners in substrate (in trays)

Problems: Phytopthora cactorum & Pestalotiopsis spp (5-25% plant loss)

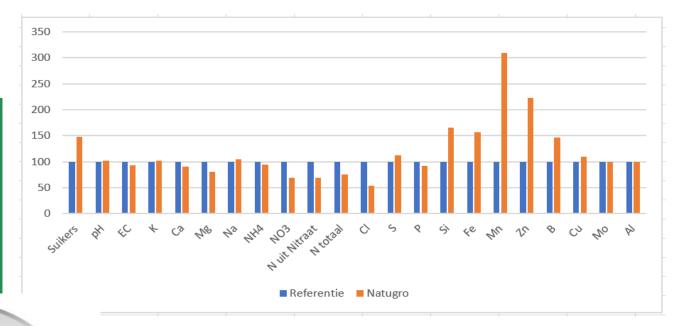
Standard chemical schedule vs. NatuGro protocol

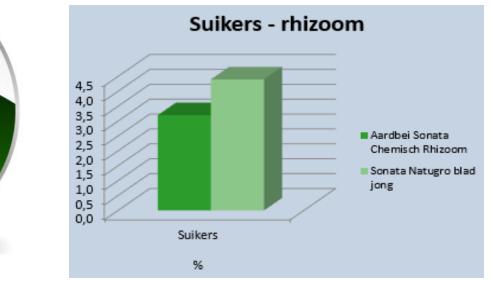


#### **EXAMPLE: STRAWBERRY PROPAGATION - RESULTS**



- Less plant loss;
- Stronger and healthier plant (plant sap analyses: more nutrients in leaves and rhizome);
- Cheaper schedule;
- Easier to manage;
- Better start in production.





#### **EXAMPLE: STRAWBERRY PRODUCTION OUTDOOR (US)**



Crop: November – September/October;

Ever-bearer

Goal: less soil pathogens and higher production

Standard cropmanagement (irrigation and fertilizer)

VS

Standard crop including NatuGro protocol



Result:

10% more yield (more fruits and less plant loss caused by soil-borne diseases)

Natugro schedule strawberries Salinas (current schedule)															,																												
			Tin	Time-line (crop wk's)																																				Т	ota	(p	er ha)
	rates/h	a	0	1	2	3	4 !	5 6	7	8	9 1	0 1	1 12	13	14	15	16 1	7 18	3 19	20	21	22 2	3 24	4 25	26	27 2	28 2	9 3	30 31	1 32	33	34	35	36	37 3	38	9 4	0 4:	1 42	43	44	45	total
Trianum	750	gr				1										1										1										1							3000
ProParva	5,0	ltr				1						1	L																								1					1	20,0
ProFortum	2,5	ltr							1		1																																5,0
ProTerrum	5,0	ltr							1		1	1	L	1		1	1	L	1		1	1	1	1		1		1	1		1		1		1	1	L	1		1		1	100,0
VidiFunda	250	kg	1																																								250

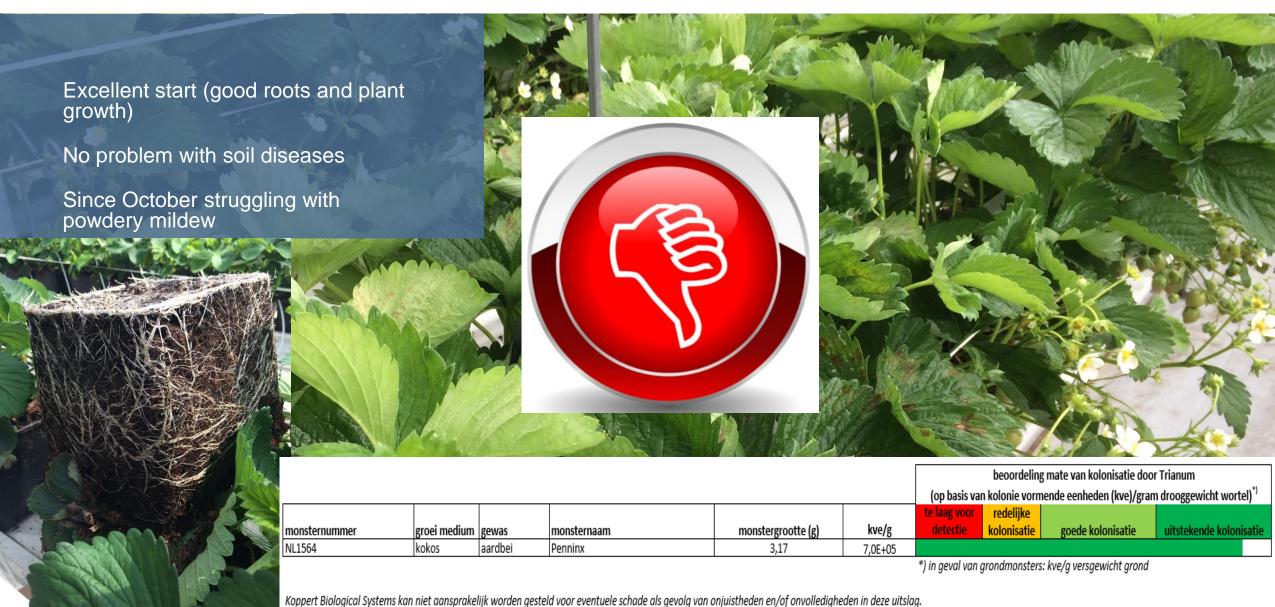
#### EXAMPLE: STRAWBERRY PRODUCTION (NETHERLANDS) - PROTOCOL



Crop: August – December June-bearer Goal: higher production (because of better quality) and resilience (no use of fungicides); Standard crop management (irrigation and fertilizer) VS Standard crop management including NatuGro protocol flowering Cropstage harvest 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 Producten drench 250 gr/ha Trianum-P drench 3,0 ltr/ha arva 2,0 ltr/ha drench Fortum foliar spray 2,0 ltr/ha Terrum drench 1,0 ltr/ha Fortafol Veni-Ca foliar spray 2,5 ltr/ha

#### EXAMPLE: STRAWBERRY PRODUCTION (NETHERLANDS) - RESULTS





#### NATUGRO EXPERIENCE







- In theory a lot is possible
- More and more we find out how plant resilience is working
- More beneficial microbials and biostimulants available

#### But . . .

- Results are not steady enough
- Influence from "outside factors" (water, soil/substrate and nutrition)
- How do you measure resilience?

For growers: Seeing is believing!





#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!

#### **CONTACT:**

Mark van der Werf BSc

Koppert B.V. The Netherlands

Phone: +31 (0)10 5140444

mvdwerf@koppert.nl















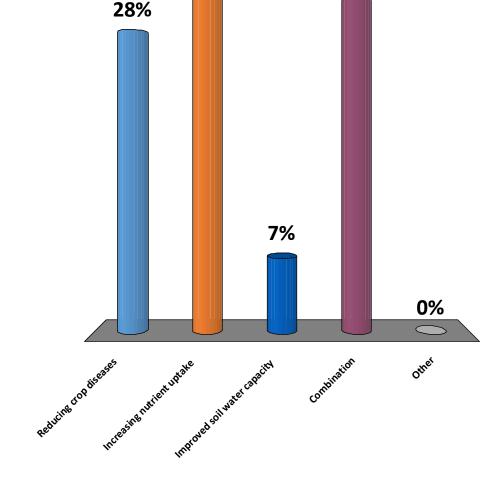


## INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS



## WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MAIN BENEFIT OF GOOD SOIL BIOLOGY?

- A. Reducing crop diseases
- B. Increasing nutrient uptake
- C. Improved soil water capacity
- D. Combination
- E. Other



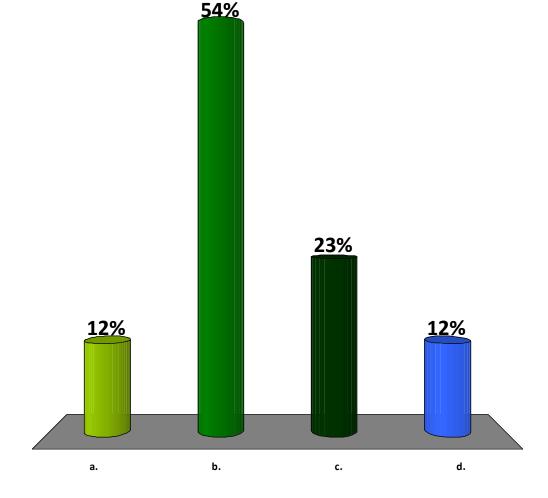
34%

31%



## HOW CAN WE INCREASE AWARENESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BIOLOGICAL DRIVERS OF SOIL FERTILITY?

- a. More studies on economic benefits
- b. More successful use cases
- c. Improving soil biology should be the goal in itself not the means
- d. Other

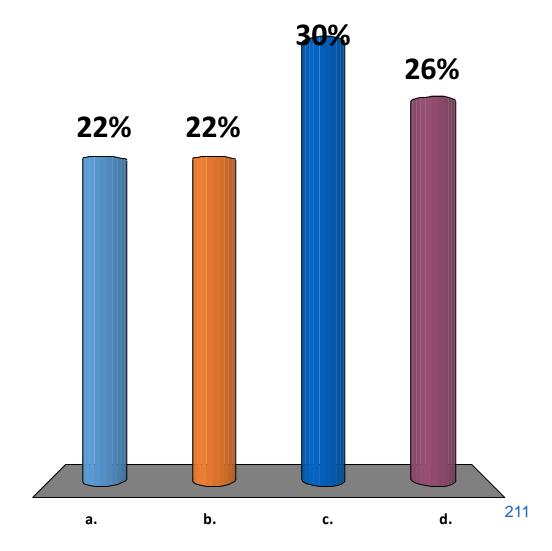




# FUTURE RESEARCH ON THE SOIL MICROBIOME SHOULD MAINLY FOCUS ON..?

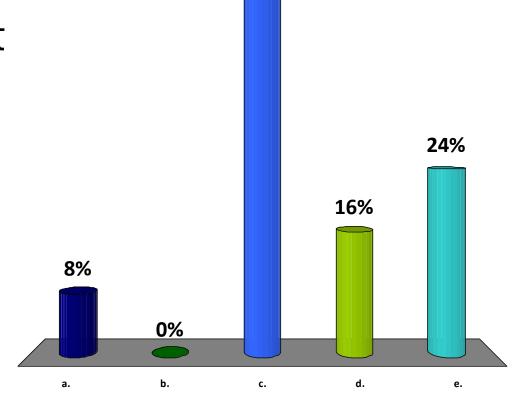
- a. Better characterization of the soil microbiome
- b. Changes in microbiome related to soil management
- c. Specificity between microbiome and plant species
- d. Other





# WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF CROP DISEASES?

- a. It is a slow process
- b. Cost of start up
- c. It does not work in every environment (different countries, soils, etc.)
- d. Can sometimes fail in its specificity
- e. Other



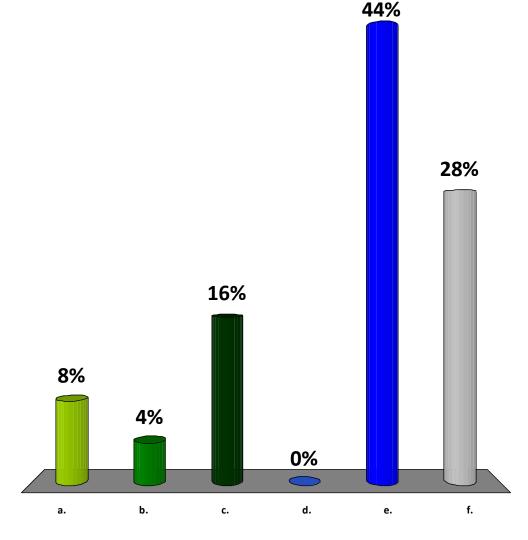
52%



## WHO IS BEST SUITED TO INCREASE AWARENESS AMONG FARMERS THAT INVESTING IN A HEALTHY SOIL MATTERS?

- a. Research institutions
- b. Industry
- c. Governement
- d. NGO's
- e. Advisors to farmers
- f. Other















#### Indi Geurs

Stakeholder Manager

#### STRATEGIC RELATIONS OFFICE

E indi.geurs@ugent.be

T +32 9 264 59 60

M +32 486 62 59 30

www.ugent.be

**f** Ghent University

@ugent

in Ghent University

