



Figure 2. The percentage of soil samples testing <30 ppm Bray P equivalent or >50 ppm Bray P equivalent in the West region and the percentage in North America.

continue to remain low or medium in soil P concentrations. Crops grown in these soils will generally respond to fertilization with higher yields and plant health compared with crops growing in fields with nutrient-deficient conditions. Given the high yield potential and profitability of most crops grown in the West, it is surprising that so many growers continue to allow a lack of adequate plant nutrition to drag down profitability.

Overall, the results from this most recent soil testing survey correspond well with a study released from the University of California showing that soil quality has generally improved over the past 50 to 60

years of intensive management and cropping. Does that mean that the status quo is fine? No, continued efforts must be made to continue to protect and improve our soils that are vital for food and fiber production for the world's population.

We know that soils cannot be continually cropped and nutrients removed without depleting their native fertility and quality. Efforts to maintain high yields and soil quality are essential for long-term sustainability. Careful management and utilization of modern technology accomplish this. The technology available in 2005 is beyond the wildest dreams of the farmers not too many years ago. Let's continue the progress that has been made to improve the soil nutrient status of soil through regular testing and monitoring. Replacement of essential nutrients when needed is a key factor in profitable and sustainable farming. A healthy and fertile soil is in everyone's best interest. **BC**

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Soil Test Levels in North America, 2005

A new publication from PPI/PPIC summarizes soil test levels for phosphorus (P), potassium (K), and pH...plus magnesium (Mg) and sulfur (S)...in North America. The summary was prepared with the cooperation of numerous public and private soil testing laboratories.

The 45-page publication—titled *Soil Test Levels in North America, 2005*—offers a snapshot view of soil test levels in the U.S. and Canada in 2005, but also provides a comparison to the previous summary which was completed in 2001.

The 8 1/2 x 11-in. coil-bound booklet is available for purchase at US\$25.00 each. An optional CD-ROM is available for US\$10.00 each. It contains a PDF file

showing the pages of the report, a PowerPoint file of all figures (graphs) in the report, and an Excel workbook of the major tables to facilitate construction of custom graphs for regions of interest. The combination package of the printed publication plus the CD-ROM is available for US\$30.00. Shipping cost is additional.

An order form is available as a PDF file at the website: >www.ppi-ppic.org<. Or contact Circulation Department, PPI, 655 Engineering Drive, Suite 110, Norcross, GA 30092-2837. Phone: 770-825-8082. Fax: 770-448-0439.

