

**Plant Nutrition Management in  
Sustainable Agriculture**

# 农业持续发展中的 植物养分管理

李华栋 / 主编



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## Plant Nutrition Management in Sustainable Agriculture

江 西 省 科 学 技 术 协 会  
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## 前 言

植物养分是植物生长的物质基础，在农业持续发展中发挥着非常重要的作用。随着人地矛盾和生态环境安全问题的日益突出，如何加强养分管理，提高养分的有效利用，对提高作物产量、解决粮食问题、保护农业生态环境将起到决定性的作用。全世界的植物营养科学家在提高农作物生产、土壤生产力、环境质量及肥料利用率等领域进行了广泛的基础研究、应用研究和技术推广，取得了令人瞩目的成就。

为了促进植物与肥料有关的科学技术在养分资源管理中的应用，确保农业生产系统的可持续发展，江西省科学技术协会、国际植物营养研究所、江西省农业科学院、中国植物营养与肥料学会、中国农业科学院农业资源与农业区划研究所等有关单位于 2008 年 10 月 13 日至 16 日在江西南昌联合举办“农业持续发展中的植物养分管理国际学术研讨会”。与会国内外专家学者围绕农业持续发展中的植物养分管理这一主题，就土壤测试及推荐施肥技术、土壤有机无机养分资源管理、施肥与土壤质量、施肥及其对环境的影响、施肥与作物 / 农产品质量、精确养分管理及精确施肥技术等内容开展广泛的学术交流与研讨，提出建设性的意见和建议。

本次研讨会得到了江西省科学技术协会、国际植物营养研究所、中国植物营养与肥料学会、加拿大钾肥公司（Canpotex）、江西省农业科学院、中国农业科学院农业资源与农业区划研究所、广东省农业科学院土壤肥料研究所等单位的赞助和支持，得到了朱兆良、赵其国、刘更另、颜龙安等院士的指导，大会组织委员会在此深表感谢。

本次研讨会共收到来自中国、美国、加拿大、阿根廷、英国、菲律宾、埃及、新加坡、韩国、日本、波兰等国的专家学者撰写的论文 96 篇。现将这些论文结集出版，旨在共享经验和相互借鉴，共同促进植物营养学科的发展，为全世界农业的可持续发展作出应有的贡献。

编 者  
2008 年 10 月

## Preface

Plant nutrients, as the basic materials of plant production, played a vital role in the agricultural sustainable development. Along with the increasing of the contradiction between population and arable land area, and the ecological environment security problem, how to improve nutrients management and the nutrients use efficiency have become the key problems for increasing crop yield and protecting the ecological environment of agriculture. The plant nutrition scientists in the world are having devoted in wide basic and applied research and technical extension in the fields for improving crop production, soil productivity, environment quality, fertilizer use efficiency and have achieved great achievements.

To promote the application of science and technology that involved in plant and fertilizers in nutrient resources management and the development of sustainable agricultural production, an international symposium on nutrients management in sustainable agriculture was jointly held by Jiangxi Association of Science and Technology, International Plant Nutrition Institute, Jiangxi Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Chinese Society of Plant Nutrition and Fertilizer Science, Institute of Agricultural Resources and Regional Planning of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Nanchang City, Jiangxi Province of China from 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of October, 2008. Based on the symposium theme of “plant nutrition in sustainable agriculture”, the participant made discussion, exchange and suggestion in several topics such as soiltesting and fertilizing recommend technology, organic and inorganic fertilizer resources management, effect of fertilization to soil quality, environment and crop quality, site specific nutrition management and technology.

This symposium obtained great financial and organize support from Jiangxi Association of Science and Technology, International Plant Nutrition Institute, Chinese Society of Plant Nutrition and Fertilizer Science, Jiangxi Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Institute of Agricultural Resources and Regional Planning of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Institute of Soil and Fertilizer of Guangdong Academy of Agricultural Sciences. It also obtained valuable instruction from the Chinese academicians named Zhu Zhaoling, Zhao Qiguo, Liu Gengling and Yan Longan. The symposium organizing committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the supporters.

This symposium totally received 96 papers coming from China, USA, Canada, Argentina, Britain, Philippines, Egypt, Singapore, Korea, Japan and Poland. The papers were edited and published for sharing the positive results, promoting the development of plant nutrient discipline.

Editing committee

October, 2008

## 目 录 Table of Contents

A global framework for Best Management Practices for fertilizer use	
A. Johnston, T. Bruulsema, F. Chen, F. García, S. Ivanova, S. Li, H. Singh and C. Witt .....	(1)
Fertilizer use efficiency in China	
Jiyun Jin .....	(9)
Progress and strategy for rice nutrition management in China —— an IPNI China Program perspective	
Fang Chen, Kaiyuan Wan, Yong Tao, Li Wang, Guoshi Zhang .....	(19)
Maize-N model – a systematic and mechanistic approach for N fertilizer recommendation on maize	
HaishunYang, T Setiyono, DT Walters, KG Cassman, and A Dobermann .....	(26)
Temperate fruit production and nutrient management	
Enrique E. S á nchez .....	(34)
A generic combined model for NPK fertilizer for vegetable and arable crops	
Kefeng Zhang, Duncan J. Greenwood, John P. Hammond, Philip J. White and Ian G. Burns .....	(43)
Study on accumulation and distribution of dry matter and uptake of N, P and K in potato	
Yu Duan, Debao Tuo, Peiyi Zhao, Huanchun Li .....	(52)
Spatial relationship of heavy metals in soil and vegetable	
Shaowen Huang, Jiyun Jin .....	(59)
Effect of using different kinds of fertilization modes on growth of Chinese Cabbage, nutritional accumulation and loss of nitrogen from simulative soil columniation	
Dongfeng Huang, Guo Wang, Weihua Li, Xiaoxuan Qiu .....	(76)
The development of soil-nourishing systems of farmland in China	
Guoqin Huang .....	(87)
Tea growth and qualities in relation to soils and K <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> fertilization	
Jianguo Huang, Ling Yuan, Jianmei Gen .....	(95)
Study on loss regulation and balance characteristics of potassium in typical paddy soils in Dongting Lake area	
Xionghui Ji , Lihong Shi, Zhaobin Liu , Ying Shao .....	(103)
Effects of balanced fertilization on yield and quality in some newly released peanut cultivars	
Boshou Liao, Zhiyu Li, Yong Lei, Xing Liao, Qingyuan Guo, Fang Chen .....	(115)



Effect of combined nitrogen and potassium application on ginger yield and qualities	
Lujiu Li, Dianli Yao, Xisheng Guo, Nan Ding, Jiejun Gao .....	(122)
Effects of different organic fertilizers on soil microbial biomass and peanut yield	
Xinjian Lin, Fei Wang, Haisong Cai, Rongbin Lin, Chunmei He, Qinghu Lia, Yu Li .....	(130)
Crop fertilization and soil nutrient balance status and evaluation in fluvo-aquic soil regions of Hubei	
Dongbi Liu, Guiyun Xiong, Fang Chen, Xianpeng Fan, Ximing Xiao, Hui Yin .....	(137)
Rice uptake and recovery of nitrogen with different methods of applying 15N-labeled chicken manure and ammonium sulfate	
Jingrong Liu, Qiufa Xie, Qinghua Shi, Muying Li .....	(144)
Study on the effect of silicon on the lysis of iron and manganese toxicity to rice	
Yuying Li, Ying Liu, Shuangquan Liu, Xumei Shi, Mingyi Zhang, Li Feng, Liyong Wang .....	(154)
Study on nutritional characteristics of Yellow Cape jasmine—a traditional Chinese medicine of Jiangxi	
Zuzhang Li, Gang Sun, Fusheng Yuan, Guangrong Liu, Fang Chen, and Raosheng Yu .....	(160)
Yield, floodwater nitrogen concentration and its runoff loss following application of controlled release nitrogen fertilizer to double rice cropping system	
Yanhong Lu, Shengxian Zheng, Xionghui Ji, Yulin Liao .....	(170)
Study on spatial variability of soil available nutrients in Chengdu plain	
Yusheng Qin, Shihua Tu, Wenqiang Feng, Xifa Sun .....	(185)
Spatial and temporal variation of soil available potassium in the field of wheat-rice double cropping system	
Yongjian Sun, Bingning Zhang, Jun Ma, Rongrong Zhou, Yuanyuan Sun, Changsong Wang .....	(194)
Discussion on some parameters used in calculating the amount of fertilizer on soil tested for fertilization by method of nutrition balance	
Xiuping Tian, Zhiyi Zhang .....	(200)
Integrative fertilization management within a wheat-maize rotation system	
Hongting Wang, Ping He, Binwang, Pingping Zhao, and Hongmei Guo .....	(207)
Nitrogen translocation and utilization character of rice precise production	
Qiangsheng Wang, Shaohua Wang, Ruohong Zhen, Guangbin Wei, Jie Xiong, Yanfeng Ding .....	(214)
Study on the relationship of rapeseed yield and the NPK content of each organ with the application of fertilizers during harvesting period	
Ruiqing Wang, Guozheng Yang, Yunping, Xiao, Zhanqi Yuan, Renge Liu .....	(222)
Availability of MCP in the fertisphere soil	
Tao Wang, Jianmin Zhou, Huoyan Wang, Xiaoqin Chen, Changwen Du .....	(230)

Study on the effect of balanced fertilization to spring maize	
Jiagui Xie, Kuan Zhang, Xiufang Wang , Lichun Wang, Caixia Yin, Yunpeng Hou .....	(238)
The characteristics of heavy metals adsorption on artificial zeolites saturated with $\text{NH}_4^+$ , $\text{K}^+$ , $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ and $\text{Ca}^{2+}$	
Fusheng Yuan, Naoto Matsue, Teruo Henmi, Gongrong Liu and Zuzhang. Li .....	(242)
Study on relativity of Cu, Zn, Fe, Mn respectively in purple soil between method ASI and conventional method	
Hua Yu, Jianhong Yang, Wenqiang Feng .....	(254)
Evolution characteristic of potassium recovery efficiency of rice under long-term fertilization in Southern China	
Huimin Zhang, Minggang Xu .....	(260)
Effects of nitrogen and calcium nutrition on oxalate concentrations, forms and distribution in spinach	
Yingpeng Zhang, Yan Li, Jianlin Wei, Ming Sun .....	(267)
Effect of balanced fertilizing on growth and development and photosynthetic characteristics of Bo Chrysanthemum	
Kejin Zhou, Wenna Xiao, Ligan Zhang, Hongling Lei, Chengze Ma .....	(277)
Effect of nitrogen application on forage yield in alpine rangeland	
Qingping Zhou, Kejia De, Chengti Xu, Yajun Ji .....	(284)
Improving soil testing efficiency for fertilizer recommendation in China	
Liping Yang .....	(288)
A conservation strategy of plant nutrition for Ex situ conservation based upon "Ecological Similarity"	
Kaiyuan Wan, Tao Yong, Fang Chen, Shusen Chen .....	(296)
Quantitative Study on the Absorption, Utilization and Storage of Nitrogen in Kiwifruit Tree	
Yan'an Tong, Jian Wang, Wenjuan Ma, Yimin Gao, Pengcheng Gao, Shulan Zhang .....	(299)
Limiting nutritient elements survey for peanut in Shandong province	
Rongzong Cui, Jianlin Wei, Guo Yang, Ye Tian, Lisheng Guan, Yan Li, Xiaoxia Dong .....	(313)
Development a Canadian Agricultural Nitrogen Budget (CANB v3.0) model and calculation of residual soil nitrogen and N losses from 1981 to 2006	
Jingyi Yang, Craig, F. Drury, Reinder De Jong, Xueming Yang, E. Ted C. Huffman and Keith Reid .....	(317)
Using the DSSAT (Decision Support System for Agrotechnology Transfer) model for yield prediction and soil N management: Field validation and sensitivity methods	
Jingyi Yang, Craig, F. Drury, Reinder. De Jong and Gerrit. Hoogenboom .....	(319)
Effect of soil salinity, nitogen fertilization levels and potassium fertilization forms on growth, yield and	

quality of sugar beet crop in eastnorthern delta of Egypt	
El Kholy, M. H.; M.T. Abdelhamid and E.H.H. Selim .....	(320)
Evaluation of different doses and sources of sulfur on growth and uptake of some nutrients by plants	
Gamal EL-Dawwy .....	(322)
Urea-montmorillonite hybrid fertilizer : nitrogen efficiency	
Young-Jin Seo, Kwang-Seop Kim, Chan-Yong Kim, Jong-Su Kim, Man Park .....	(323)
Impact of innovative fertilizer with (ALA) on plant, yield and quality of fruits	
Szwonek E, Buczek M. ....	(324)
Rhizosphere regulation to grow plants in adverse soil- a review	
Mitsuru Osaki, Jun Wasaki, Toshihiro Watanabe, and Takuro Shinano .....	(325)
中国农业中的氮素管理问题	
朱兆良 .....	(326)
营养元素科学循环是农业生产的根本问题	
刘更另 .....	(331)
我国耕地资源保育与可持续利用	
赵其国 .....	(333)
秸秆覆盖还田对土壤肥力的影响研究	
朱钟麟,陈尚洪,刘定辉,舒丽 .....	(336)
江西省农田养分管理研究中需要重视的几个问题	
罗奇祥,刘光荣,李祖章,黄良生 .....	(343)
萝卜/芹菜间作对土壤和蔬菜硝酸盐累积的影响	
赵同科,吴琼,杜连凤 .....	(350)
土壤养分运移对流-弥散模型数值解的 MATLAB 实现	
章明清,陈防,吴启堂,林琼,李娟,陈子聪,颜明娟 .....	(357)
现场土壤硝态氮、速效磷和速效钾速测方法的改进	
陈延华,孙焱鑫,肖强,张成军,刘保存 .....	(365)
尿素在土壤土中氮营养释放特性研究	
范伟国,杨洪强,苏秀伟,张民 .....	(372)
浙北单季晚粳稻高产栽培中的氮肥管理策略	
郭海超,魏幼璋,王光火 .....	(376)
氮肥运筹对玉米产量、氮肥利用率及其环境的影响	
郭红梅,王宏庭,王斌,赵萍萍 .....	(383)

半干旱区秸秆腐解和还田的培肥增产效果研究	
郭贤仕,杨茹萍,郭天文,兰晓泉,苏敏 .....	(390)
平衡施肥油茶林土壤酶活性研究	
郭晓敏,余林,牛德奎,胡冬南,黄义松,彭宝珠 .....	(396)
水稻土的磷素型态以及对 P 的吸附-解吸特性研究	
何松多,张奇春,王光火 .....	(404)
几种施肥模式对华南地区不同株穗型超级稻生长发育的影响研究	
黄旭,唐拴虎,徐培智,陈建生,张发宝,解开治 .....	(411)
低钾胁迫对不同钾效率棉花基因型抗性指标的影响	
姜存仓,陈防,夏颖,鲁剑巍,万开元 .....	(420)
浙江杨梅原产地土壤环境及主产区土壤养分空间分布研究	
姜丽娜,符建荣,马军伟,叶静,王强,汪建妹 .....	(426)
露地栽培条件下不同作物对田间地下水的影响研究	
金海洋,姚政,徐四新 .....	(437)
交替施肥灌溉对夏玉米农田土壤氮挥发的影响	
雷杨莉,薛亮,李志军,尚浩博,王林权 .....	(442)
不同有机肥对番茄及芹菜硝酸盐含量和重金属含量的影响	
李吉进,邹国元,宋东涛,孙钦平,刘本生,张青,徐振桐 .....	(450)
安徽省江淮丘陵区土壤养分空间变异特征	
李录久,许圣君,孙义祥,戚士胜,郭照盛,李红松 .....	(458)
平衡施肥及雨强对紫色土养分流失的影响	
林超文,陈一兵,黄晶晶,涂仕华 .....	(465)
不同蔬菜穴盘育苗复合基质理化性质及育苗效果分析	
林义成,郭彬,傅庆林,丁能飞,刘琛 .....	(475)
湖北省杨树林土壤养分分级研究	
罗治建,李金柱 .....	(482)
长期定位施肥对水稻土磷素形态的影响	
卢志红,嵇素霞,张美良,刘经荣 .....	(487)
施肥对江西省农业生态环境的负面影响及对策	
钱海燕,方豫 .....	(493)
不同氮源对菠菜体内抗坏血酸含量及其代谢的影响	
孙园园,徐芳杰,孙大生,章燕平,林咸永,章永松 .....	(499)

缓/控释肥在水稻上应用效果研究	
唐拴虎, 黄旭, 陈建生, 徐培智, 张发宝, 杨少海, 解开治 .....	(507)
不同供肥水平的钾镁硫配施对花生生长及养分吸收的影响	
王飞, 李清华, 何春梅, 林诚, 李昱, 林新坚 .....	(516)
长期不同施肥对太湖地区黄泥土表层土壤的酸化影响	
汪吉东, 张永春, 沈明星, 高秀美, 许仙菊 .....	(522)
不同缓释肥料的氮素释放特性及对边坡复绿植物生长的影响	
王强, 符建荣, 姜丽娜, 叶静, 马军伟, 汪建妹, 俞巧钢 .....	(530)
肥料配施对超高产夏玉米产量、养分积累量的影响	
王宜伦, 谭金芳, 韩燕来, 张许 .....	(536)
生物有机-无机复混肥的研制及其在西瓜上的施用效果研究	
万强, 龙彬, 周艳, 罗连光 .....	(543)
氮肥用量对免耕抛栽稻产量及氮素吸收利用的影响	
吴建富, 潘晓华, 石庆华 .....	(547)
莲藕土壤养分限制因子的田间试验研究	
熊桂云, 刘冬碧, 陈防, 张继铭, 范先鹏 .....	(555)
广东省坡地柑橘园有机无机肥料配施的效应研究	
徐培智, 杨少海, 解开治, 陈建生, 张发宝, 唐拴虎, 黄旭 .....	(561)
水稻不同生育期重金属污染土壤镉铅的形态分布	
许仙菊, 陈丹艳, 张永春, 汪吉东, 李兆君, 梁永超 .....	(566)
施用污泥堆肥对芹菜重金属累积及产量的影响	
杨丽标, 邹国元, 崔希龙, 晏维金 .....	(572)
竹篙薯施氮磷钾效应研究	
杨庆根, 郭晓敏, 牛德奎, 刘仁勇, 梁盛, 罗文平, 肖克伶, 夏得粽, 王茂玉, 涂家勇, 段学渊, 罗秋华 .....	(578)
Monte Carlo 法在多元肥效模型参数估计和推荐施肥中的应用	
章明清, 徐志平, 姚宝全, 林琼, 颜明娟, 李娟, 陈子聪 .....	(585)
热带地区菠萝养分管理研究	
张文, 谢良商, 符传良, 潘孝忠, 潘顺秋, 刘国彪 .....	(594)
机械化不同量秸秆归还对稻麦产量及土壤碳活性的影响	
张永春, 汪吉东, 聂国书, 丁汉平, 孙丽, 许仙菊, 王志明 .....	(599)
南昌市近郊集约化农业利用下土壤重金属含量及评价	

郑诗樟, 肖青亮, 李芬芬 .....	(606)
红黄壤坡耕地土壤肥力退化研究	
朱青, 王兆骞, 陈正刚, 李剑 .....	(610)
氮肥用量对小白菜抗氧化物质含量和抗氧化活性的影响	
朱伟锋, 孙大生, 徐芳杰, 章燕平, 林咸永, 章永松 .....	(620)
优质有机肥对莴笋产量和品质的效应研究	
朱小梅, 吴家旺, 刘芳, 王正银, 洪立洲 .....	(629)
胶东棕壤区冬小麦养分限制因子试验研究	
魏建林, 崔荣宗, 杨果, 田叶, 管力生 .....	(636)
人为干预下的高寒草甸恢复演替过程中土壤有机碳的变化规律	
李月梅, 徐仁海, 陈占全, 曹广民 .....	(643)
分蘖期水稻地上部和空气间的 NOX (NO, NO <sub>2</sub> ) 交换作用	
徐胜光, 陈能场, 周建民, 吴启堂, 毕德, 卢维盛 .....	(650)
春玉米磷钾平衡施肥试验研究	
张成军, 赵同科, 刘宝存 .....	(658)
我国冬油菜区土壤肥力变化及油菜施肥效果演变	
邹娟, 鲁剑巍, 陈防, 李银水 .....	(662)

## A global framework for Best Management Practices for fertilizer use\*

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This paper describes a framework designed to facilitate development and adoption of best management practices (BMPs) for fertilizer use, and to advance the understanding of how these practices contribute to the goals of sustainable development. The framework guides the application of scientific principles to determine which BMPs can be adapted to local conditions at the practical level.

At the practical level, cropping systems are managed for multiple objectives. Best management practices are those that most closely attain those objectives. Management of fertilizer use falls within a larger agronomic context of cropping system management. A framework is helpful for describing how BMPs for fertilizer use fit in with those for the agronomic system.

The goals of sustainable development, in the general sense, comprise equal emphasis on economic, social, and ecological aspects (Brundtland, 1987). Such development is essential to provide for the needs of current and future generations. On the practical level, however, it is difficult to relate specific crop management practices to these three general aspects. Four practical management objectives are applicable to the practical farm level of all cropping systems (Witt, 2003). These four objectives are productivity, profitability, cropping system sustainability, and a favorable biophysical and social environment (PPSE). They relate to each other as illustrated in Figure 1.

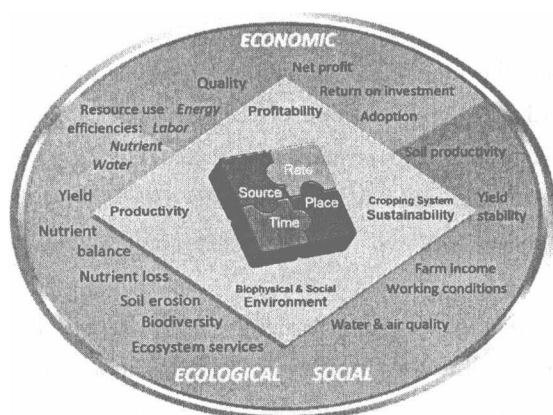


Figure1 A global framework for best management practices (BMPs) for fertilizer use. *Fertilizer use BMPs—applying the right nutrient source at the right rate, time, and place—integrate with agronomic BMPs selected to achieve crop management objectives of productivity, profitability, sustainability, and environmental health. A balanced complement of indicators is needed to reflect the influence of fertilizer BMPs on the four crop management objectives at the farm level, and on the economic, ecological and social goals for sustainable development on the broader scale for regional public policies.*

Fertilizer use BMPs comprise an interlinked subset of crop management BMPs. For a fertilizer use

\*This paper is also presented on the IPNI website as a Concept Paper describing Global fertilizer BMP development work by IPNI.  
See: <http://www.ipni.net/ipniweb/portal.nsf/0/88BDE1CF66B7BE52852573F0004EC075>.

practice to be considered “best”, it must harmonize with the other agronomic practices in providing an optimum combination of the four objectives, PPSE. It follows that the development, evaluation, and refinement of BMPs at the farm level must consider all four objectives, as must selection of indicators reflecting their combined impact at the regional, national, or global level. Appropriate indicators for use at different scales are further discussed below in the section on performance indicators.

#### Cropping System Management Objectives

**Productivity.** For cropping systems, the primary measure of productivity is yield per unit area of cropland per unit of time. The quality of the yield is part of the productivity measure. Both can influence profitability, through volume and value, respectively. Productivity should be considered in terms of all resources, or production factors, involved. Multiple efficiencies can and should be calculated to accurately evaluate productivity.

**Profitability.** Profitability is determined by the difference between the value and the cost of production. Its primary measure is net profit per unit of cropland per unit of time. The profitability impact of a specific management practice is the amount of increase in gross revenue it generates, less its cost.

**Sustainability.** Sustainability—at the level of the cropping system—refers to the influence of time on the resources involved. A sustainable production system is one in which the quality (or efficiency) of the resources used does not diminish over time, so that “outputs do not decrease when inputs are not increased” (Monteith, 1990).

**Environment (biophysical and social).** Crop production systems have a wide range of effects on surrounding ecosystems through material losses to water and air. Specific effects can be limited or controlled by practices designed to optimize efficiency of resource use. However, not all effects are controlled to the same level. Some environmentally important losses, like those of phosphorus (P) or nitrous oxide, involve only a small fraction of the input applied. Others like ammonia emission or denitrification may involve large losses, and they are largely controlled by consideration of impacts on profitability. Environmental health and sustainability are intertwined. Management choices at the farm level, when aggregated, also influence the social environment through demand for labor, working conditions, changes in ecosystem services, etc.

#### Fertilizer Management Objectives

Fertilizer management objectives are essentially to support the four objectives identified for cropping systems management. Fertilizer use BMPs can be aptly described as the selection of the right source for application at the right rate, time, and place (Roberts, 2007). Specific scientific principles apply to these BMPs as a group and individually. These principles are both global and applicable at the farm management level. The application of these scientific principles may differ widely depending on the specific cropping system (region and crop combination) under consideration.

Fertilizer source, rate, timing and placement are interdependent, and are also interlinked with the set of agronomic management practices applied in the cropping system, as illustrated in Figure 1. In addition, the relative priority among the four management objectives (PPSE) varies according to local conditions. These priorities will guide the degree to which each of the scientific principles is reflected in the choice of BMPs.

#### Scientific Principles

- 1) Crop Management BMPs (includes all fertilizer BMPs)
  - a) Seek practical measured validation.



- i) Applied field testing should reflect effects on all four crop management objectives (PPSE), with control for natural sources of variability through replication and randomization, verified by peer-reviewed publication in appropriate science literature.
- ii) Specify claimed benefits in clear language, identifying necessary context and associated costs, risks, and drawbacks.
- b) Recognize and adapt to risks.
  - i) Weather, pests, socioeconomic conditions influence management practices, crop growth, nutrient uptake, and response to fertilizers.
- c) Define performance indicators.
  - i) Using a participatory process, identify practical measurements that describe local impact on all four crop management objectives (PPSE).
- d) Ensure two-way feedback between the global scale and the practical farm level.
  - i) “BMPs are dynamic and evolve as science and technology expands our understanding and opportunities, and practical experience teaches the astute observer what does or does not work under specific local conditions” (Fixen, 2007). Decision support guiding the adoption of fertilizer BMPs requires a dynamic process of local refinement (Figure 2). Involvement of individuals knowledgeable in both scientific principles and local conditions is important to this process. Palis et al. (2007) emphasized the importance of building on farmer knowledge, experiential learning, and social capital for ensuring adoption of fertilizer BMPs for small scale farmers in Asia.

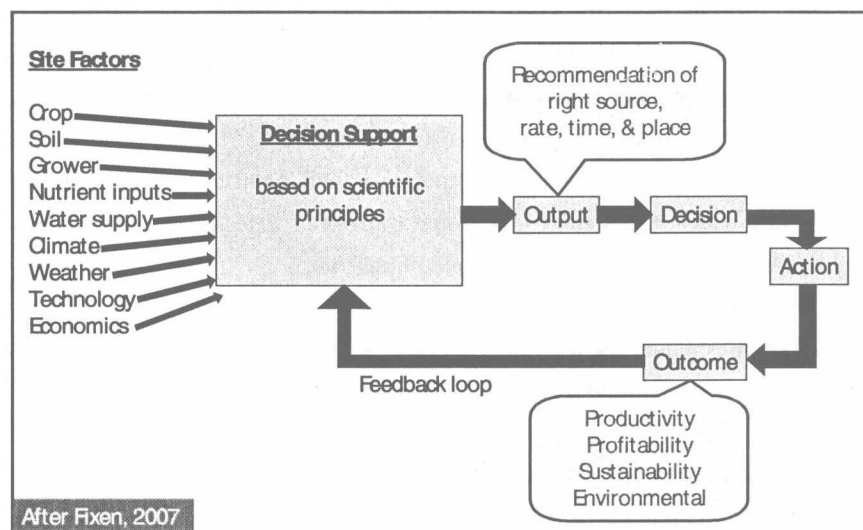


Figure 2 *Decision support for the development, evaluation, and adaptation of fertilizer BMPs requires a dynamic process of local refinement.*

## 2) Fertilizer BMPs (includes source, rate, place, and time)

- a) Be consistent with understood process mechanisms.
  - i) Specific to the scientific disciplines of soil fertility, plant nutrition, soil chemistry, hydrology, agrometeorology, etc.
- b) Recognize interactions with other cropping system factors.
  - i) Examples include cultivar, planting date, plant density, crop rotation, etc.
- c) Recognize interactions among nutrient source, rate, time and place.
  - i) For example, a controlled-release source need not be applied with the same timing as a water-soluble source.