

Nitrogen efficiency needs to increase

The use of nitrogen needs to be reduced for environmental targets to be achieved, but nitrogen is needed to ensure sufficient food production and food security. That is why measures are needed worldwide to increase nitrogen efficiency, maximizing the amount of nitrogen absorbed by the crop. That is one of the conclusions of scientists from WUR and elsewhere in a study that was published in *Nature Food* in September.

‘However well you apply nitrogen, the crop will never take up all of it,’ says co-author Wim de Vries, professor of Environmental Systems Analysis at WUR. ‘Some is always lost to the environment. Higher nitrogen efficiency can limit those losses with little or no negative impact on crop yields.’ According to De Vries, this can be achieved by applying nitrogen at the right time, in the right place, using the right fertilizer and in the right quantity.

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