

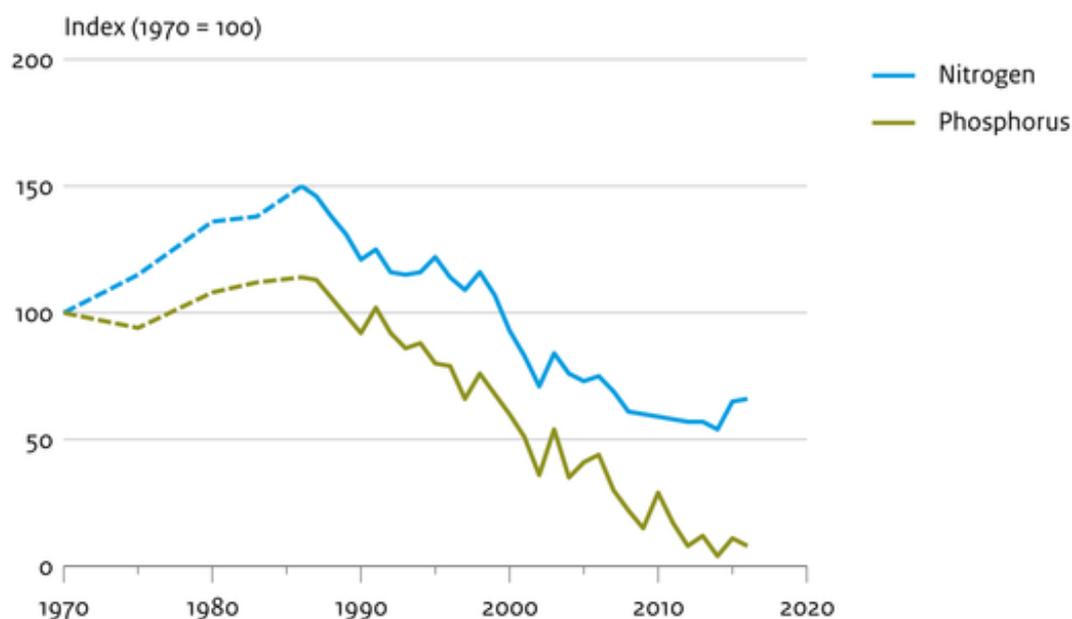
Manure surpluses in agriculture, 1970-2016

Indicator | 14 March 2018

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Since 2006, when a new fertiliser policy was introduced in the Netherlands, the nitrogen surplus in agriculture decreased by 11 percent. In 2016, the nitrogen surplus was somewhat higher than the years before. The phosphate surplus has virtually disappeared in the last few years.

Nutrient surpluses in agriculture



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Nitrogen surplus

In 2015 and 2016 the nitrogen surplus in agriculture was somewhat higher than in the years before. The trend has been downward since 1986 after having risen since 1970, due to the increase in intensive livestock farming. The maximum level was reached in 1986 and was subsequently reduced by half over the next two decades. In the last 10 years, the nitrogen surplus was further reduced by 10 percent.

In the years 2011 up to 2016 58 percent of nitrogen input on agricultural land was absorbed in vegetable growing. In the 1990's this percentage was still around 47 percent. Since then application of inorganic fertilisers has been reduced and manure production was reduced considerably. Also, more manure was used outside the agricultural sector.

Phosphorus surplus

In 2016, the phosphorus surplus in agriculture has almost disappeared, which means that nearly 100 percent of phosphorus applied on agricultural land was used in crop growing. On average, 89 percent of phosphorus was used during the period 2011-2015, as against 50 percent in the 1990s. Over the past 10 years, less phosphorus was applied on agricultural land, as a result of a reduced application of inorganic fertilisers. Also more manure was used outside the agricultural sector. For phosphorus the share of disposal outside the agricultural sector in the total of manure production was 24 percent between 2011 and 2016, versus approximately 6 percent in the 1990s.

Policy

In 2006 a new fertiliser policy based on application criteria for fertilisers was introduced in the Netherlands. As a result application criteria became more strict between 2006 and 2016. Since 2010, application criteria for phosphorus have been made dependent on the concentration of phosphorus in the soil. Manure production was also restricted. In terms of nitrogen and phosphorus, the annual Dutch manure production is not allowed to exceed the 2002 level.

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Reference for this page

CBS, PBL, RIVM, WUR (2018). [Manure surpluses in agriculture, 1970-2016](#) [10] (indicator 0096, version 17 , 14 March 2018). www.environmentaldata.nl. Statistics Netherlands (CBS), The Hague; PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, The Hague; RIVM National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven; and Wageningen University and Research, Wageningen.

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