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# **Incentives for the Efficient Use of Natural Resources in the Swiss Agricultural Policy**

**Harald Menzi**, Univ. of Applied Sci., Dep. of Agricultural, Forestry and Food Science

**Eva Wyss**, Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG

**Beat Achermann**, Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

# Nutrient aspects in Swiss agricultural policy

## step 1

- Since 1994 direct payment program with strong focus on reduced environmental impact and more animal welfare
- N and P balance have led to improved nutrient efficiency:
  - Mineral fertilizer use: N –25%
  - Manure nutrients: N – 5% N
  - no decrease in yields
  - Antropogenic NH<sub>3</sub> emissions decreased by 13% since 1990
  - Farmers awareness for good manure management has increased considerably
- Manure covers currently approx. 70% of N fertilizer use

# Implementation of nutrient balance restrictions

- Every farm has to calculate the N and P balance with the tool "Suisse-Balance": input has to be balanced with output.
- Balance locally checked; random examination by Federal authorities
- All manure movements between farms have to be recorded.
- In general good compliance

## Resource programs (step 2)

- Since 2008 voluntary programs for additional measures with special relevance for the environment
- 24/26 Cantons plan are implementing program
  - Chose strategy and measures to include (17 programs with NH<sub>3</sub> measures)
  - Set clear quantitative targets: what should be achieved
  - Monitoring and assessment program
  - Six year duration
  - 20% Cantonal contribution to incentive payment (80% Federal contribution)
- Farmers can apply to join program
  - Fixed level of additional incentive payment (e.g. CHF/ha)
  - Obligation to participate until end of program
  - Obligation to continue with measures after end of the program

# New: Resource Efficiency Incentives

## step 3

- Starting in 2014 the Cantonal resource programs will be complemented by Federal Resource Efficiency Incentives
  - New programs launched by Federal Government (100% of payments)
  - Preparation and implementation simpler and more efficient than in present programs
  - Farmers in the whole country can subscribe for same measures
  - Contributions for restricted time

## Aims

- Enhance the sustainable use of natural resources (soil, water, air)
- Improve efficiency of use of production inputs (nitrogen, phosphorous, pesticides, energy)
- Contribution to achieve NH<sub>3</sub> emission reductions commitments according to revised Gothenburg Protocol (-8%).

## Measures to be included

- Air: low emission manure spreading techniques
- Soil: Conservation tillage
- Water: high precision pesticide application



## Example low emission manure spreading

- Trailing hose, trailing shoe, slot injection deep injection
- CHF 30.- per ha and application; max 4 applications per year
- No payments from 15 November to 15 February
- Reduced N losses accounted for in N balance: +3 kg N/ha/application