

South African farmers are stuck between needing to fertilise, to grow food and the need to protect the environment!

The problem is called **EUTROPHICATION**.

This happens when too many nutrients get into the water, causing too much algae to grow, and that ends up killing fish and other life in the water.

FOULING THE STREAMS OR feeding the soil?



FARMERS NEED TO FERTILISE – BUT IT CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS

South African soil in many areas, is naturally low in nutrients. Crops won't grow well without extra help, especially maize, vegetables, and fruit.

Fertilisers help improve the crop yields, but it can be a problem.

When too much fertiliser is used, or it's used at the wrong time, rain can wash it into rivers and dams.

This causes **EUTROPHICATION**, which damages rivers, dams and water systems.

SO, THE DILEMMA FOR THE FARMERS IS: HOW DOES HE GROW ENOUGH FOOD TO SURVIVE AND SUCCEED, WITHOUT HARMING THE ENVIRONMENT?

SOLUTIONS

- **AWARENESS** and **EDUCATION** for all farmers on the problem. Many are unaware that they are the cause of upsetting the ecosystem.
- **Using precision farming.** The soil is properly tested and the correct amount of fertiliser is used.
- **Buffer zones** (grassy strips or trees) are planted between the crops and the rivers or dams.
- **Government guidelines** need to be followed to protect water bodies.
- Trying out new **farming methods** with access to soil testing and eco-friendly products.
- Municipalities need to take ownership of better wastewater treatment.



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