

PRIORITIES | FALL 2023

Healthy Soil

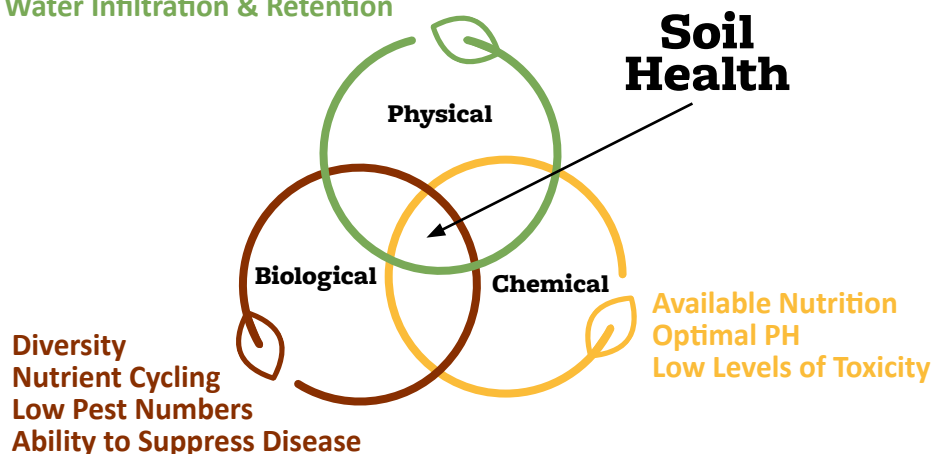


In April 2022, the standing committee on Agriculture and Forestry was authorized to begin a study on the current status of soil health in Canada. **The study is set to examine four key areas:**

1. Current soil conditions in Canada;
2. Possible federal measures that would support and enhance agricultural and forest soil health, including in relation to conservation, carbon sequestration, and efforts to address the effects of climate change;
3. The implications of soil health for human health, food security, forest and agricultural productivity and prosperity, water quality and air quality; and
4. The role of new technologies in managing and improving soil health.

Soil Type

Good Structure & Aeration
Water Infiltration & Retention



Engaging in economical and conservative practices such as no-till practices, soil management and mapping techniques, crop diversification, pest control, and carbon sequestration techniques will aid in Canadians becoming sustainability leaders and improve our economic prosperity.

As
representatives
of Saskatchewan
rural
municipalities,
SARM believes
that cultivating
healthier soil in
Canada benefits
farmers, the
environment,
and all
Canadians.

Some factors that should be examined by the standing committee on Agriculture and Forestry before it reports to the Senate at the end of the year are:

- Saskatchewan's farmers and agricultural researchers are at the forefront of agricultural innovation and soil health. They strive to meet the challenges of feeding a growing global population while maintaining sustainable and environmentally responsible practices. Their successes literally put food on the table around the world.

- Saskatchewan producers are deeply invested in maintaining and increasing soil health. In 2022, Saskatchewan produced:

88 per cent of Canada's chickpeas

85 per cent of Canada's lentils

77 per cent of Canada's durum

74 per cent of Canada's flaxseed

71 per cent of Canada's mustard

53 per cent of Canada's canola

49 per cent of Canada's oats

46 per cent of Canada's dry peas

37 per cent of Canada's non-durum wheat

- Saskatchewan has long been an innovator when it comes to sustainable agriculture practices. Much of the equipment and technology that has revolutionized the Ag industry have roots that can be traced back here. Zero-till farming practices were adopted and refined long before reducing emissions became a national priority.

- Soil carbon credits need to be in a separate offset structure allocated from the biological sinks (agriculture and forestry). The conservation and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs require different treatment than other emission reduction mechanisms.



- There needs to be a clear understanding of the difference between soil carbon sequestration and retroactive carbon sequestration. Agricultural producers engage in new and incremental sequestration year after year to gradually build up the soil sink under their fields.
- Initiatives undertaken by agricultural producers engaging in carbon sequestration practices towards the federal climate change goals should be recognized and reimbursed for meeting the regulatory requirements.
- Collect more information on practical aspects of soil formation, classification, landform recognition, and soil management that have been effective and that can be used in the development of a soil carbon offset protocol.
- Any government oversight or regulatory changes pertaining to soil health needs to be made in consultation with industry and the producers that work the land. Everything needs to **COME FROM THE GROUND UP.**

