



Educate, communicate and implement measurements that demonstrate the importance of healthy soil

Maintaining soil health and levels of organic matter are crucial to soil and crop productivity. The Department of Agriculture and Land is currently administering a number of new and established soil health initiatives. These initiatives will improve our understanding of soil health, monitor soil health with PEI-specific data, increase awareness of the importance of soil health, as well as provide support to the agriculture industry to initiate soil health projects.

Soil Health Approach

The Department of Agriculture and Land has implemented new soil health initiatives, in addition to existing programs, in order to educate, implement and communicate measurements that demonstrate and promote the importance of healthy soil.

Government Commitments

Mandate Letter Ensure that progress is measureable and transparent | Strong consideration to the environment | Safeguarding our precious land resources for all Islanders | Educate, communicate and implement measurements that demonstrate the importance of healthy soil

Speech from the Throne Protect our environment | Preserve and protect our natural environment

Soil Health– At a Glance

The Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Program currently funds:

- 5,844 soil conservation structures (4,541,287 feet or 1,019 hectares);
- 2,593 voluntary grassed headland features (1,439,826 feet or 426 hectares); and
- 2,567 high-sloped or expanded buffer zone features (2,419 hectares).

Since the launch of the Soil Health Analysis Package in September 2019, there have been:

- 4 workshops (in Charlottetown, Kensington, Montague and O’Leary)
- 81 participants at Soil Health Analysis Information Sessions; and
- 1,306 Soil Health Analysis Packages completed.

PEI Soil Quality Monitoring Project:

- 2019 | 231 points sampled (including 91 new points sampled)
- 2020 | 234 points sampled (including 73 new points sampled)

Number of Soil Health and Management BMPs completed, by year:

2019/2020

- 39 Soil Conservation;
- 16 Spring Tillage of Forage; and
- 33 Winter Cover Crops.

2020/2021 (as of December 3, 2020)

- 22 Soil Conservation;
- 17 Spring Tillage of Forages; and
- 33 Winter Cover Crops.

OUTPUTS

COMPLETE

Increased human resource capacity to support soil health initiatives in the province.

PEI Soil Health Test Information sessions to increase awareness of soil health analysis, interpreting test results, and management practices that improve soil health.

ONGOING

PEI Soil Quality Monitoring Project—a long-term (20 year) project—to monitor trends in soil nutrients and organic matter over time.

Programming to provide support to the agriculture industry with respect to implementing projects that positively impact soil health.

Outreach and partnerships to improve communication and education and leverage shared resources toward soil health efforts in the province.

Precision Soil Conservation Project (in partnership with UPEI) to assess the impact of erosion on soil health and explore the economics of production in areas prone to soil erosion.

Soil Health Analysis Package to provide producers a detailed assessment of soil health for individual properties and to track the health of soil over time.

Performance and Evaluation | Multiple Lines of Evidence

Performance will be monitored to ensure that progress is measurable, transparent, and informed by the best available evidence. Information and evidence that is analyzed to monitor the healthy soil mandate includes:

No. of Soil Conservation Structures funded | No. of Voluntary Grassed Headland Features funded | No. of High-Sloped or Expanded Buffer Zone Features funded | No. of participants at Soil Health Test information sessions | No. of Soil Analysis Packages completed | PEI Soil Quality Monitoring Project sampling locations | No. of sites sampled for the PEI Soil Quality Monitoring Project, by year | No. of Soil Health and Management BMPs completed

