



SOIL CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF CANADA CONSEIL CANADIEN DE CONSERVATION DES SOLS

*The face and voice of soil conservation in Canada
Le visage et la voix de la conservation des sols au Canada*

Healthy Soil — Healthy Planet! SCCCs Soil Health Summit



Keir Miller

Soil health is a big deal, and the Soil Conservation Council of Canada is proud to be the face and voice of soil conservation in Canada. Our biennial Soil Health Summit is one way we give soil health the attention it deserves.

Last November, our virtual soil health summit titled “Healthy Soil — Healthy Planet” brought together a range of agricultural professionals to present and discuss vital soil topics. Each speaker emphasized the necessity of soils as a source of solutions to threats faced around the world. Regional perspectives were brought to light through regional breakout room discussions, and an educational 4-H panel brought hope for the future, revealing a dedicated and informed younger generation ready to take up the cause of soil health.

Looking back on the summit, New Brunswick producer and SCCC chair Kier Miller said, “We are always learning, and I don’t think we’ll ever stop learning.”



David Lobb

For University of Manitoba soil science professor David Lobb, “The key thing that struck me is that there is a great willingness in all sectors to do more.”

Along with the promise of a bright future for soil health, SCCC took away an overriding theme from key action items arising from the regional breakout rooms.

Their theme? The need for better communication – specifically, the communication of soil health information and data. As emphasized by Paul Smith, a sustainable agriculture consultant with the Greenbelt Foundation, there is a “lack of availability of farmer-accessible knowledge and information about soil health and how to do these practices.”

Smith said the problem is augmented by the “limited availability of knowledgeable soil health advisors... Many producers have agronomists in their area but they may not have detailed knowledge about soil health practices.”

As well as the need for training agricultural advi-



Paul Smith

sors in soil health practices, SCCC chair Miller emphasized the necessity for more peer-to-peer opportunities, “I place a lot of value on what my neighbour is doing right next to me because if it works for him, it could work for me.” Smith echoed that. “Learning from someone who’s done it is really the best”.

Lobb said data overload is part of the problem. “We need to ask what farmers really need and how do we get it to them... Farms need useful economic information; they need to know if adopting a practice has a benefit for climate change and what the real cost to them is — the economics.”

These action items will help guide the future direction of SCCC. We would like to thank the speakers and participants who took part in our 2021 Soil Health Summit.

The Soil Conservation Council of Canada acts on behalf of its members. Join today, and together, we can advocate for the maintenance and improvement of soil health and demonstrate its benefits.

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