

Soil Management Workshop 2008 “Digging beneath the surface”



Purpose:

Approximately 50 agri-business and interested producers participated in the 2008 Soil Management Workshop held on August 19th on a farm just outside of Fergus. The day was designed to enhance the skills and techniques needed for diagnosing soil quality problems in field and horticultural crops. Participants were also informed about practices that could be used to improve and maintain soil health and productivity.

The topics covered included:

- measuring soil health
- the implications of soil texture
- soil structure and compaction
- impact of various stresses on root development
- role of soil organic matter & nutrient cycling
- water, drainage & crop production
- tools for diagnosing soil problems

Participants had the opportunity to have a close up look at a couple of soil pits, gain a better understanding of water movement in the soil and the role of soil organisms on nutrient cycling. They also had the opportunity to try some tools used to identify compacted layers in the field.

The afternoon program included a field diagnostic challenge, and a demonstration of the measurement of soil health with Bob Schindelbeck from Cornell University.

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Learning about the importance of roots



Practicing soil texture determination