

Soil Management Day 2014 *“Improving Soil Health and Productivity”*

Huron SCIA in partnership with the OMAFRA Soil team hosted a half-day soil management bus tour followed by a tillage equipment demonstration. The event allowed farmers and agribusiness to explore late summer soil conditions in a variety of fields followed by a tillage demonstration which featured a variety of tillage tools designed to prepare a seedbed while managing residue for just about any Ontario condition.

Close to 80 participants met at the Claussen farm near Brucefield on Sept 3rd. After an introduction to the soils of the area, buses took participants to the first stop that featured a steep topography with ideal conditions to show the impacts of water and tillage erosion of the different slope positions. Soil pits emphasized the differences in soil quality and allowed participants to observe how soil texture, soil structure, soil water and soil biology were impacted by erosion.

The second location focused on the tools, diagnostics and management strategies to measure and improve soil quality. Compaction, soil fertility, evaluating tillage effectiveness and nutrient/manure application and movement were topics featured at the field stations. The tillage demonstration was held after supper and featured about a dozen different pieces of equipment. With commentary detailing the unique features of each piece of equipment they were set into action to till the Listowel silt loam soil.

The Soil Management Workshop has been offered by the OMAFRA Soil Team for over ten years, each year in a different part of the province. The goal of the workshop is to provide practical and applied, hands-on training on the many aspects of soil that impact good crop production. The training helps participants to look beyond the crop and encourages the consideration of soil management issues.

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