

# Soil Health Coalition

[www.soilhealthcoalition.ca](http://www.soilhealthcoalition.ca)

Newsletter June Update 2018

*Community Action, Climate Change, and Soil Health in the Greenbelt*

**Greetings! Welcome to our first newsletter. We hope you can take a brief break between planting and haying to read about the happenings with the Erin Soil Health project.**

## **SUMMARY**

With many thanks to everyone, especially the Transition Erin team, we held our project kick off with a community forum on March 28 and a full day farmer forum on March 29, 2018.

The 2018 farmer forum was well attended and 25 farmers agreed to sign up for soil carbon and water infiltration tests.

We plan to be working with up to 21 Citizen Scientists.

On May 22, we held our first Citizen Scientist training and collected our first soil samples and water infiltration data from Everdale.

If you were selected as a testing site you will have received a confirmation by an email along with a request for an interview. The site testing will be scheduled from June through to October depending on the cropping cycle.

Also, we plan to get together in groups again in October or November, to discuss the data results and share your interpretation of the results and your management for improving soil health.

## **Interest Groups & Knowledge Exchange**

At the March 29 workshop, the group happily sub-divided into sub-groups.



March 29 Workshop - Hillsburgh

The sub-groups were:

- Cover crops in small diverse farms and market gardens
- Cover crops integrated into cash crop operations at broad acre scale.
- Grazing and integrating livestock into cropping systems
- Reduced tillage in cropping systems
- Raising awareness and land tenure implications of soil health practices



March 29 2018 Farmer Forum - Hillsburgh, Ontario - JP Melville

## Project by Numbers

We originally planned to start with 20 farmers.  
Enthusiasm pushed us to adjust the budget and make space for 27 properties.

Our project target for total acreage is 6,000 to 13,000 acres.  
At sign up in March, total project acreage was already 4420 acres.

On the map:

- 14 are within the boundaries of the Greenbelt, around Erin
- 7 more are within a few kilometres of Erin
- 6 sites are clustered around Guelph.

Farm enterprises include the following activities:

- hay/pasture/grazing (11)
- cash crops (5)
- beef (9)
- vegetable (13).

We had 21 willing volunteers sign up to be Citizen Scientists.

## Quick Calendar

### **June 2018**

Interviews with Farmers  
Testing on Hay, Pasture Type Farms

### **July 2018**

Citizen Scientist Training # 2  
Testing on Hay, Pasture Type Farms

### **August 8, 2018**

Joint farm demonstration with EFAO  
Heartwood Farm & Cidery (Val & Brent)  
5438 Second Line, Erin  
Testing on Wheat / Other Farms

### **September 2018**

Twilight Meeting @ Gary Mountain  
Testing on School Site  
Testing on Soybean / Other Farms

### **October 2018**

Testing on Corn / Other Farms

### **October / November 2018**

Regroup and Discuss with Participating Farmers  
Evaluation of Project



Citizen Scientist Training - Everdale

## Many Thanks to Our Supporting Partners !

