



OSCIA News & Views

Launch of the Lake Simcoe Soil Health Improvement Project

February 1, 2017

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is pleased to announce the launch of the Lake Simcoe Soil Health Improvement Project (LS-SHIP). Following in the footsteps of the Soil Health Improvement Program, available last fall, LS-SHIP offers financial support to farmers in the Lake Simcoe watershed for implementing select Best Management Practices (BMPs) that improve soil health and water quality. Funding for LS-SHIP is provided by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs.

Similar in structure to the Farmland Health Incentive Program, LS-SHIP requires producers to complete an on-farm soil health assessment by working with a participating Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) or Professional Agrologist (P. Ag.). Free of charge to producers, the Soil Health Check-Up and the Muck Soil Health Check-Up offer producers a unique opportunity to assess the health of their farm and develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are tailored to the specific needs of their operation.

"A customizable cost-share program, the Lake-Simcoe Soil Health Improvement Project gives farmers the opportunity to work one-on-one with a CCA or P.Ag to identify BMPs that would benefit their farm operation and the greater health of the watershed," said Andréa Dubé-Goss, Environmental Programs Manager for OSCIA. "Then, producers can access funding to implement these BMPs that will help to support a healthy Lake Simcoe."

The Lake Simcoe Soil Health Improvement Project offers up to 50% cost-share to a maximum of \$20,000 in funding to producers in the Lake Simcoe watershed who implement BMPs after completing a Soil Health or Muck Soil Health Check-Up. Eight BMPs are eligible for cost-share under LS-SHIP: cover crops; crop nutrient plans; buffer strips; windbreaks and windstrips; equipment customization; erosion control structures; fragile land retirement; and runoff water management.

Applications are now being accepted for this initiative. Funding will be allocated to eligible projects in the order in which applications are received. LS-SHIP application materials are available online, as well as a list of participating CCAs and P.Ags who can deliver the Soil Health Check-Up to producers.

For more information on eligibility criteria, the application process, and program deadlines, visit the OSCIA website at ontariosoilcrop.org or contact OSCIA directly at 226-706-8669 or SHIP@ontariosoilcrop.org.

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