



**Agriculture for Life**  
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*For Immediate Release*

## **Ag For Life Urges Ottawa to Dig into Senate's Soil Health Report**

**(Calgary, AB, June 10, 2024)** - A new federal report calling for immediate action on the state of Canada's soil health strikes the right balance between urgency and education, say Agriculture for Life leaders.

Entitled "**Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human, and Social Health**", the report by the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry highlights several critical key issues relating to the country's soil health conditions. It details at a refreshing level of granularity several recommendations aimed at bringing soil health into the national spotlight, notes Agricultural for Life board chair Ted Menzies – who was a key supporter of the committee's undertaking when it launched two years ago.

"This report and the research it contains are perfect examples of the four principles underpinning the science of soil nutrient management," said Menzies. "It's the right work, with the right recommendations, for the right reasons at the right time." Added Menzies: "It's the first real look at soil dynamics since 1984 and with everything we know now about climate considerations, food security and stability of supply, the report offers practical and viable guidance for next steps."

Released this week, the report offers 25 recommendations for the federal government's consideration. They range from declaring soil as a national strategic asset and naming national soils advocate to facilitating carbon markets growth and investing in post-secondary soils programming.

Agriculture for Life is an Alberta-based non-profit foundation that offers a broad range of programming, all focused on awareness building and educational services, including the popular "Ag in the Classroom" offering via which teachers can incorporate agri-food content into their curriculum.

"That the Senate report speaks directly to the need for heightened literacy and awareness reinforces the work Ag for Life is doing and offers new opportunities for more training," noted CEO Luree Williamson. "In our programming, we already focus on soil and its importance to our agri-food system and the overall economy. This report gives us phenomenal scope to increase the depth and breadth of the way we educate around soil health."

Ag for Life has also created a strategic ag-energy advisory committee, via which representatives of the province's two key sectors offer guidance to the board on sustainability opportunities created by "alignment of interests" between the industries, noted director Bill Whitelaw, who leads the committee's

efforts. “We’re very heartened to see how the Senate committee articulated the importance of climate health being connected directly to soil health and connections to food security. Many of the report’s recommendations would be readily supported by the province’s various energy systems, including both renewables and oil and gas.”

Menzies noted that Ag for Life board members and staff will be monitoring the report’s progress and offering support where necessary. “It’s imperative the cabinet takes the report and its finding seriously. To state the obvious, soil health is both a climate advantage and a competitive advantage when it comes to Canada’s reputation globally.

You can find the report here, along with a news release, executive summary, and recommendations. [Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human, and Social Health \(sencanada.ca\)](#)

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### **About Ag for Life**

Ag for Life (Agriculture for Life) has the mandate to deliver educational programming designed to improve rural and farm safety while building public understanding around the agricultural industry.

Ag for Life is made possible through the funding and commitment of companies that employ almost 20,000 people in more than 350 Alberta communities. Founding Members include AdFarm, Glacier FarmMedia, Nutrien, Rocky Mountain Equipment and UFA Co-operative Limited. Find out more at [agricultureforlife.ca](http://agricultureforlife.ca).

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