



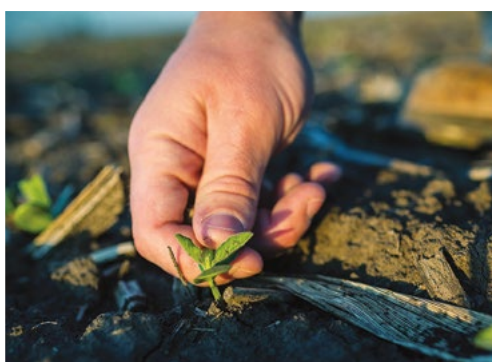
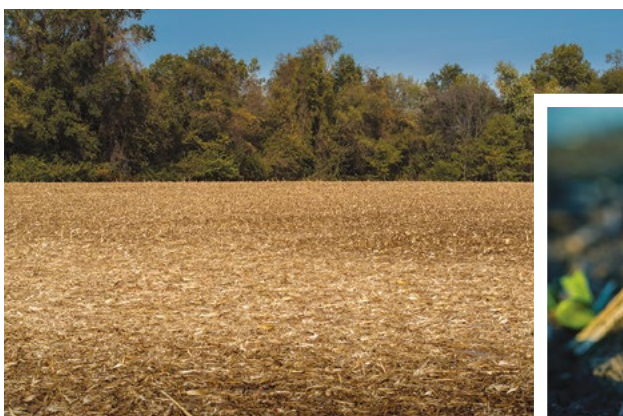
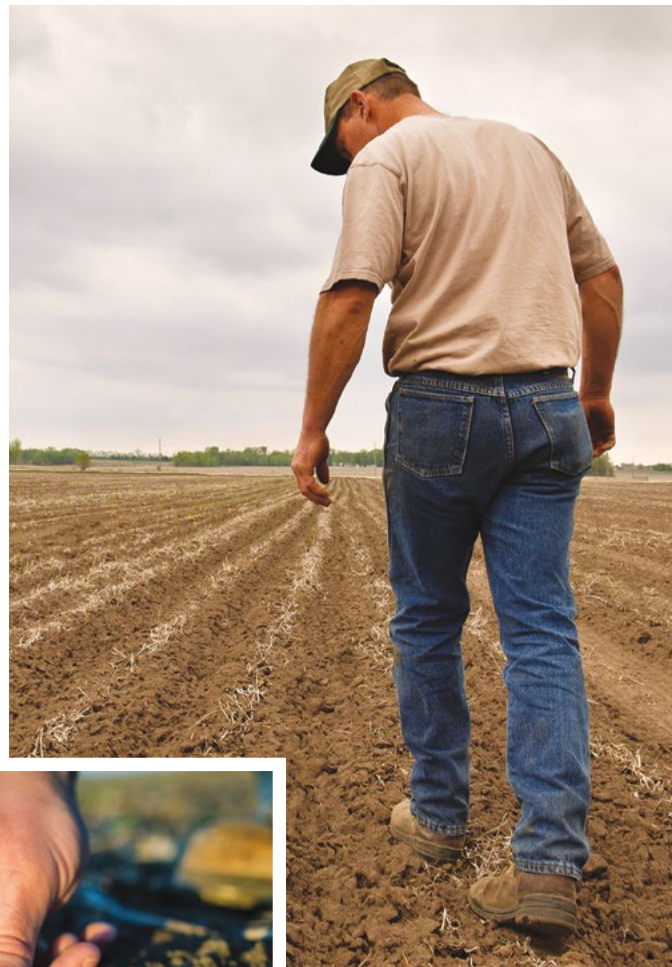
Grounded in Success

Talking with customers about soil health and ecosystem benefits

Sustainability is on the minds of many farmers. Some are all-in on practices like no-till and cover cropping. Others are starting to explore incentives like carbon credits. And most farmers are trying to figure out how they can practice sustainability without sacrificing profitability.

Ecosystem Services

Services are a valuable part of our daily lives. From the electricity that flows to our homes, to the café that serves our coffee, to the sales rep that gets the right seed to the farm on time—if you think of a service, it's pretty easy to come up with a benefit. Ecosystem services takes that lens and applies it to the environment, encouraging us to think of the many benefits we receive from the living systems around us. On the farm, healthy soils are a particularly valuable ecosystem service (the graphic on the next page explains more).





Ecosystem Services

Viewing our soils as more than simply a means to some end may be challenging. Ecosystem services is the idea that services beneficial to humans, directly and indirectly, are provided by the ecosystem. How do we discuss the value of soil through the lens of ecosystem services? Bundling services may help communicate the value soils provide. While all these services are interconnected, we can group them to describe their basic attributes.

Provisioning

Soils are the basis for growing food, fuel and fiber.

Focusing on healthy soil function may help farmers' profitability and sustainability.

The health of our crops is often directly connected to the provisioning service soil can provide.



Regulating

Soils filter water and help cycle essential nutrients.

Management practices have a direct and profound impact on a producer's ability to mitigate intense weather events such as flooding and drought.

Farmers may receive direct payments for managing to improve services (e.g. carbon markets).

Supporting

Soils are the basis for species diversity.

Conservation practices that favor wildlife and microorganisms alike have been successfully implemented by farmers all over the planet.

Sometimes, removing marginal land from production may support more diversity of life and improve farm profitability.



Cultural

Soils are the foundation for homes and infrastructure.

Soils support lifestyle choices such as fishing, hunting, and enjoying the scenery found in rural places.

The health of our landscape and lifestyle is in many ways dependent on healthy, functional soils.

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