STEWARDSHIP • JUSTICE • DEMOCRACY • HEALTH • COMMUNITY


LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

# 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

LAND STEWARDSHIP ACTION FUND

# Incentivize 100% Soil-Healthy Farming

**50% of farmers by 2030 | 100% of farmers by 2035 | 100% of acres by 2040**

*Farmers are stewards of the land, recognizing the inherent value of the soil, plants, livestock, and people. When farms thrive, rural economies thrive - and our entire state is prosperous. Farmers are uniquely positioned to both mitigate and build community resilience from the climate crisis, yet are on the front lines of managing extreme weather events, emerging pests and disease, degrading topsoil, altered planting and harvesting timing, dwindling pollinator populations, and more.*

*At the same time, thousands of farmers are weathering financial crisis, industry consolidation, and insufficient processing, markets, and land access. These barriers limit creativity and innovation on the land. When hundreds of LSP members came together in 2020 to reimagine how our systems work, the lesson was clear. We need landscape-scale solutions. That's why we're fighting to provide all the resources farmers need to achieve 100% Soil-Healthy Farming: 50% of Minnesota farmers employing soil-healthy practices by 2030, 100% of Minnesota farmers employing soil-healthy practices by 2030, and 100% of tillable and grazable acres employing soil-healthy practices by 2040.*

## Elements of the Bill:

*HF 701(Lippert)*
*SF 1113 (Eken)*

- Setting a state-wide goal.
- Launch new practices with accessible grants.
- Providing up to 5 years of direct payments.
- Prioritizing "socially disadvantaged" and small and mid-sized farmers.
- Tracking Soil Health

## Soil-Healthy Practices:

- Managed Rotational Grazing
- Perennial Cropping
- No Till
- Diverse Rotations
- Organic
- Cover Cropping *including interseeding & roller crimping*
- Farm-Generated Compost

**Modeling shows that integrating soil-healthy practices, like managed rotational grazing, on just 50% of land can make agriculture a stable net carbon sink in North America.**

## Resources

**Soil Health, Water Quality, and Climate: A Pocket Guide to What You Need to Know.** http://landstewardshipproject.org/smartsoil

**Farming to Capture Carbon & Address Climate Change Through Building Soil Health.** https://landstewardshipproject.org/carbonfarming

**30-75%**
The amount of carbon soils have lost since tillage began.

**25,000 gal**
The amount of water per acre that 1% of organic matter can hold in the top 6 inches of soil.

**90%**
The percentage of soil functions organic matter controls.

**8-10%**
The annual percentage of greehouse gas emissions reductions needed to avoid climate catastrophe.

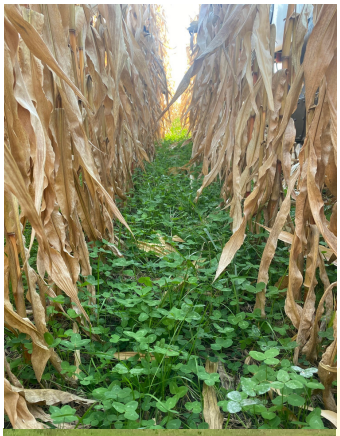
**5-15%**
The annual percentage of greenhouse gases soil organic matter has the potential to sequester.

## Testimony:

*Southeastern MN farmer Rory Beyer was troubled by the erosion he saw on his family's land in 2008. In all, 17 inches of rain was dumped on the area in under 24 hours. "So, there was massive washing of soil," he recalls.*

*Beyer decided he needed to find a better way to keep his fields covered year-round in order to protect the land, or he wouldn't have any topsoil left to plant crops in. About seven years ago, he started growing cover crops before and after his regular corn growing season. Beyer also uses managed rotational grazing of perennial pastures to produce milk and beef. It has paid off: a recent six-inch rainstorm caused devastating erosion in his neighborhood, but Beyer's soil remained in place.*

*It isn't just the soil's surface that has benefited from his use of continuous living cover. All those living roots have helped build soil organic matter. In one of Beyer's fields, organic matter increased from 1.7% to 4.4% in approximately 7 years. "That is pretty astronomical to increase that amount of organic matter in that number of years... it has to do with the soil microbiology—the soil is beginning to hold better and biological life is beginning to come back," said Beyer.*



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