



The Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC) bestows a national award on a soil conservation champion.



Andrew Graham the Executive Director of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) has led the delivery of many education and stewardship programs that helped countless Canadian farmers to sustain and improve the health of their soils.

Andrew Graham is this year's recipient of the L.B. Thomson Award that recognized the significant contributions of individuals and organizations in keeping Canada's soil healthy.

He received the award September 13 at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, held at the Glacier FarmMedia Discovery Farm (Discovery Farm) near Woodstock.

The L.B. Thomson Award is named for the first head of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, which is credited with helping Prairie farmers turn back the "Dust Bowl" of the 1930s.

Graham's career has spanned 43 years, starting at Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in London, and then the Oxford County office of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in Woodstock. In 1990, Graham's career in soil and water conservation shifted to the OSCIA, where he worked for many years, primarily in the design and delivery of many stewardship education and incentive programs and special projects for the farm community. He has been executive director for the last eight years.

At the awards ceremony, Ian Boyd, Chair of the Soil Conservation Council of Canada, said "Andrew Graham embodies the spirit of the L.B. Thomson Award through his lifelong work promoting soil health and conservation in Canada. His contributions to building practical approaches to improving soil health reached thousands of farmers in Ontario and across Canada, enabling them to take action to maintain and improve the health of their soils. Andy's work continues as a member of the recently announced by the SCCC on the formation of the Soil Champions Committee.

This committee will provide a forum for soil health care with farmers, consumers, food processors, researchers and policy makers and engage in projects that can help build broad societal appreciation for soils, and bolster support from the farm community and government. The "Soil Champions" committee was established by a significant financial donation and the vision of Rev. Ruth Butt and support by Glacier FarmMedia owners of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show and Discovery Farm Woodstock.

John Butt, speaking on behalf of the Butt Family, said "Ruth and her family congratulate and honour Andrew Graham. They are very pleased to support the work of the Soil Champions Committee, as it moves forward promoting soil health through education, awareness, and the promotion of sound soil-management practices."

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