



May 2022

Pilot Soil Monitoring Incentives Program

Information for participants



About the pilot Soil Monitoring Incentives Program

Under the pilot Soil Monitoring Incentives Program, farmers and land managers can share their data and access low-cost soil sampling and testing. The data will be uploaded into the Australian National Soil Information System (ANSIS). Personal information will be de-identified to maintain confidentiality, and the intellectual property for the data remains with the land manager. Southern Cross University (SCU) will appoint soil sampling providers to assist land managers select testing sites and conduct soil sampling.

Getting involved

Land managers can register interest in the program on the [SCU website](#). Successful applicants will be required to sign the program data sharing agreement and complete a survey. Unsuccessful applicants can reapply to the program should their eligibility change.

Program eligibility

To participate in the program, land managers must:

- agree to have soil sampling and analysis done by the soil sampling provider (land managers cannot collect their own samples)
- sign a data sharing agreement and complete a survey before sampling commences
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- be an eligible entity type
- be a permanent resident of Australia if applying as an individual entity type; and
- have an account with an Australian financial institution.

Soil sampling

Soil sampling must be conducted by an approved soil sampling provider. SCU will engage a soil sampling provider to work with you on a sampling plan. Each sampling site is composed of a cluster of 7 cores. One core is used for bulk density at 0 to 10cm, 10 to 20cm and 20 to 30cm layers, and 6 cores are aggregated at 0 to 10cm, 10 to 20cm and 20 to 30cm layers and used for soil analysis. A minimum of 4 sites per business will be sampled and analysed.

Land managers can receive \$275 per site towards sampling and testing costs and a total benefit of up to \$10,000 per business towards the cost of soil sampling, testing, and sharing data on ANSIS.

Soil testing

SCU will coordinate soil testing for chemical, physical and biological soil properties. The Environmental Analysis Laboratory (EAL), an Australasian Soil and Plant Analysis Council accredited laboratory, will conduct the soil chemical analysis. Land managers may also choose to undertake optional biological testing (microbial biomass, 0 to 10cm), which may be outsourced through other laboratories. Soil will be analysed at three layers (0 to 10cm, 10 to 20cm and 20 to 30cm) for bulk density, texture, total organic carbon (TOC), electrical conductivity (EC), pH, ammonium nitrogen, nitrate and available phosphorus (0 to 10cm only) and soil microbial biomass (0 to 10cm only).

Additional soil analysis

Additional soil analysis can be provided as a commercial arrangement between EAL and the land manager. Phospholipid fatty acid analysis (PLFA) microbiological testing is optional and more detailed testing can be done to suit your requirements. Sampling costs will vary between location, provider and the quantity of sites sampled, as does freight. SCU will source the best value from soil samplers and the final cost will be confirmed prior to soil sampling.

Getting your results

SCU will invoice the land manager as per the pre-approved agreement for services provided (less the Australian Government contribution) and the land manager will pay the invoice. Land managers will then receive the soil test results and can liaise with an Australian Government-funded regional soil coordinator or soil extension officer to assist with interpreting the soil test results. Land managers can alternatively use their preferred farm advisor to help interpret the soil test results and provide advice on soil management practices.

Emissions Reduction Fund

Land managers interested in participating in the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) can have testing conducted to meet [ERF participation requirements](#). You will need to either have already applied to register a project under the ERF, or have an existing registered project under the ERF. Check [ERF eligibility criteria](#) on the Clean Energy Regulator website. Soil testing and analysis can be conducted as per the ERF requirements. Soil sampling costs vary with depth, location and quantity, as does freight. These will be confirmed prior to commencement of soil sampling.

More information

Direct program enquiries to:

Email soiltest@scu.edu.au

Program phone number 02 6620 3489

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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