

PERMANENT TAME FORAGE AS SOIL PROTECTION

Soil erosion and salinity can present major issues in terms of the productivity, economics, and development in certain areas for agricultural uses. This, in turn, can contribute to sedimentation in water sources, contamination, unstable areas that could pose a risk to livestock or people, and reduces the lands ability to produce vegetation which helps hold the soil together with root systems and retain water.

Perennial tame grass and legume species help mitigate soil erosion, reduce salinity, sequester carbon, hold topsoil in place and use available moisture in a more effective way than annual crop land does. In the Farm Stewardship Program, under the new Canadian Agricultural Partnership, beneficial management practices such as seeding permanent tame forage aims to protect soils from erosion and improve resilience to climate change through the conversion of environmentally sensitive cultivated lands to perennial forage cover. Not only does this benefit the environment, but it can also increase grazing potential, feed supply, and economic value of land that may have been under producing due to salinity or erosion issues.

The Farm Stewardship Program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) has funding available for a variety of projects aimed at implementing beneficial management practices that ensure that the quality of water, soils, and biodiversity are improved or maintained. This program falls under the CAP division of Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change and funding includes pre-approval and rebate projects. To prevent soil erosion and improve resilience to climate change, the seeding permanent tame forage beneficial management practice is available as a pre-approval application.

To have eligible project land under this beneficial management practice, applicants must earn a minimum of \$50,000 gross farm income in Saskatchewan, have a Premises Identification Number, land must be annually cropped for at the least the last two years, soil qualification assessment meets the criteria for erodible or saline land, and the forage blend must be approved by a Ministry of Agriculture Agri-Environmental Specialist before seeding. Funding is available at 50% of eligible project costs up to a Maximum of \$10,000.

Information, applications, and premises identification numbers can be found at: www.saskatchewan.ca/CAP or by calling the Agricultural Knowledge Centre at **1-866-457-2377**.

Agri-Environmental Services can also be obtained in your regional watershed areas. For **Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards please contact 306-770-4606**.