

Subject: Statement of support for Bill C-203, An Act respecting soil conservation and soil health

Dear Member of Parliament,

On behalf of the Agriculture Carbon Alliance (ACA), we are writing to express our support for Bill C-203, *An Act respecting soil conservation and soil health*. We hope that we can count on your support to move this important bill forward to committee review as it approaches second reading.

The Agriculture Carbon Alliance (ACA) is a coalition of 15 national farm organizations committed to meaningful and collaborative dialogue with the federal government concerning the role of farmers and ranchers as climate solutions providers. Our membership encompasses major agriculture commodities including grains, oilseeds, pulses, cattle, sheep, pork, fruit and vegetables, dairy, forage and grasslands, seed, and poultry. Collectively, we represent more than 190,000 farm businesses that generated more than \$76 billion in farm market receipts in 2021. Canada's farmers are the heart of our agri-food value chain contributing more than \$140 billion annually to our economy and providing 1 in 9 Canadian jobs.

Bill C-203 looks to develop a national strategy to promote efforts across Canada to conserve and improve the health of soil. Soil health is a crucial topic in Canadian agriculture and affects every agricultural producer in Canada. Soil health is integral to the long-term viability of Canadian agricultural production and has an important part to play in the fight against climate change through practices such as carbon sequestration, flood plane management, and a range of other ecosystem services.

Soil health has always been critically important to agriculture and Canada as a whole, but for many years this critical resource has been largely ignored and taken for granted. In 2011, it was estimated that the cost of soil degradation in terms of lost crop yield alone, with no other consideration of additional consequences, was \$3 billion.

The Government of Canada continues to demonstrate a clear focus on the importance of the environment and climate change, and the ACA believes this Bill will have long-lasting benefits for Canada in both of those areas. Techniques that increase soil health can not only mitigate the impacts of climate change and protect our agricultural productive capacity, but they can also directly aid in the fight against climate change by sequestering carbon in the soil itself.

At the ACA we know agriculture can be a natural climate solutions provider that has a positive impact in the fight against climate change, and a national soil strategy represents a critical step in ensuring



that farmers, other landowners and policy-makers have an enhanced understanding of the data and science around soil health. A strategic focus on soil health is a critical step forward in ensuring we are all adopting an evidence-based approach to protecting agricultural land and productivity, but also to mitigate and combat climate change.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed By]

Dave Carey
Co-Chair, Agriculture Carbon Alliance

Scott Ross
Co-Chair, Agriculture Carbon Alliance

