

31. FARMER CENTRIC COMPOSITE SOIL HEALTH ASSESSMENT APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In an effort to promote sustainable agriculture, the farming community in developed and emerging nations, such as India, is the target audience for the "Composite Soil Health Assessment." This is an easy-to-use method of spreading knowledge about the value of healthy soil and sustainable soil management. Additionally, it provides information on how to lessen the negative effects of using chemical fertilizers excessively. The approach includes the tools soil health assessment methods, composite soil health assessment card and snake and ladder game on soil health along with good agricultural practices. The methodology is being developed with the aim to spread the concept of healthy soil and sustainable agriculture to the farming communities or the target population through understandable means.

Key words: Soil health assessment, snakes and ladders game, score, farming community, composite

Introduction

Soil health is an important component that is often overlooked in modern society. We take soil for granted, but it is the foundation of life on Earth. Healthy soil is essential for growing food, providing habitat for wildlife, and protecting water quality. It is also a major factor in climate change, as healthy soils store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The concept of soil health is restricted to research, and not much familiar to the common man.

From last few years only soil testing considering soil chemical parameters has been in focus. However, soil physical and biological components are also as much important as chemical one. Therefore, the testing of physical, chemical and biological soil parameters offers a complete information on the alive form of soil.