



The Hon. David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia
Deputy Leader of the Nationals

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Wednesday, 16 March 2022

\$54 million to support on-farm soil testing

- **The Australian Government is providing \$54.4 million over two years to support farmers and land managers to access low-cost soil sampling and certified testing in exchange for sharing their data under the Pilot Soil Monitoring and Incentives Program.**
- **Farmers and land managers may be eligible for benefits of up to \$10,000 and receive assistance from Commonwealth-funded soil extension officers to interpret their soil test results.**
- **Southern Cross University (SCU) has been engaged to deliver the Program, including arranging soil sampling and testing for land managers who have successfully applied for assistance.**

Support for soil testing of up to \$10,000 per land manager was launched today and will help Australian farmers improve their agricultural productivity and participate in soil carbon projects under the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF).

Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia, David Littleproud said the two-year, \$54.4 million Pilot Soil Monitoring and Incentives Program was a key part of the \$214.9 million National Soil Package.

“Under the two-year program farmers and land managers can receive up to \$10,000 in subsidies while contributing to a national soil database. Mr Littleproud said.

“Soil health is critical to farm performance, so sampling supported under the program will show up in the farmers bottom line

This support to land managers could underpin emissions reductions in Australian agriculture.

“Soil testing to participate in carbon reduction programs can be expensive but this program will help farmers be part of the solution to climate change,”

Southern Cross University (SCU) will work with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) to administer the program.

Mr Ben Roche, Vice President (Engagement) at SCU said the university was delighted to partner with DAWE.

“Understanding and managing soil properties in deeper soil layers gives the land managers and farmers better tools to preserve their land against changing climatic conditions,” Mr Roche said.

“We are excited to work with farmers and scientific labs to offer a comprehensive suite of soil sampling and testing, as well as putting land managers in touch with soil extension officers and

other grantees from the Smart Farms Small Grants: Soil Extension Activities, to interpret soil test results to better manage their valuable assets and enhance soil productivity, health and resilience.

“Interested land managers can get in contact with SCU to apply.”

Aggregated data collected by farmers and land managers will also be shared to the Australian National Soil Information System to inform government decision-making regarding priorities for Australia’s future soil monitoring and management.

For more information, visit www.awe.gov.au/soils

Fast Facts:

- **The Pilot Soil Monitoring and Incentives Program is a component of the \$214.9 million National Soil Package to implement the National Soil Strategy that sets out how Australia will value, manage, and improve its soil for the next 20 years.**
- **For further information on the National Soil Package visit www.awe.gov.au/soils**
- **Data gathered during the program will be shared with government through the Australian National Soil Information System (ANSIS). Data will be aggregated to ensure privacy is maintained.**

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