

Adaptation and Response and Mitigation Working Group Recommendations from the 2017 Report to the Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Healthy Soils and Carbon Sequestration:

- An analysis of both current and additional practices should be undertaken to identify those practices appropriate to Maryland that increase soil health, as well as the co-benefits, including carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas mitigation, water quality improvement, ecological resilience, nutrient content, health impact, crop or animal yield, and economic profitability.
- The MWG, in concert with the ARWG, supports incentivizing a menu of Best Management Practices that improve soil health. In addition, co-benefits should be considered when developing strategies and allocating new resources for existing and planned programs.
- Within their respective roles and charges, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC) and its four working groups should support the efforts of the Healthy Soil Consortium to inform Maryland farmers of not only the benefits of soil health, but also the programs and incentives that can be accessed to further the adoption of such practices.
- A determination should be made of the tools and metrics available for use in quantifying the potential for carbon sequestration and GHG reduction that can be achieved through the adoption of healthy soil practices.
- A cross-agency inventory should be conducted of Maryland programs that could prioritize and incentivize healthy soil practices for all scales of farming, including the home gardener.
- The MWG and ARWG support the development of pilot and/or demonstration projects to test innovative soil health practices, monitor results over time, and provide educational site locations.
- Alternative funding sources, such as RGGI, social/environmental impact bonds, or public/private partnerships, should be explored; and new funding, when available, should advance programs and practices that prioritize improved soil health.