



New Mexico

## Healthy Soil Initiative

*A community collective & state-level program supporting farmers and ranchers in the quest to improve soil health*



The New Mexico Healthy Soil Initiative is a community collective & statewide program w/ the **objective** to engender healthy soils across boundaries, especially on rangeland & farmland.

The **problem** this initiative seeks to address is degraded soils, as illustrated by the National Resources Inventory, characterized by low levels of organic matter, carbon, micro-biology and water, and exacerbated by weather trends such as prolonged drought, high winds and higher year round temperatures.

The **solution** is widespread soil health stewardship propelled by education, investment and a robust network of human and natural resources.

### The Pillars of Soil Stewardship

**Engender biodiversity ~> multiple crops, cover cropping, native grass variety, herd diversity, species/animal interaction, integrating crops w/ livestock, perennial crops, microbial stimulation**

**Nurture the soil ~> through activity and rest, compost application, strategic grazing, crop rotation, mulching, striving for no till agriculture (at minimum reduced till or conservation tillage)**

**Minimize unhealthy influences ~> reduce / overtime eliminate harmful external inputs  
Embrace grassroots solutions ~> w/ self determination & all readily available natural resources**

Strategies for **implementation** include doing local soil assessments, facilitating rancher to rancher & farmer to farmer trainings, sharing success stories, expanding the Soil Health Champions program and tapping the Soil & Water Conservation Districts along with other key partners to advance the ethic & practice of soil stewardship regionally & statewide.

Soil stewardship on working lands fosters triple bottom line **co-benefits** including economic advancement in the form of profitability & sustained yields for participating farmers and ranchers, ecological restoration in the form of increased water retention, ecosystem resiliency and carbon sequestration, and social well being in the form of greater health.

### WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- Take our survey [New Mexico Healthy Soil Survey](#) (for NM residents)
- Learn from the leading groups: [Kiss the Ground & Rodale Institute](#).
- Read up on the vital connection between healthy soils & climate stability: [Can Dirt Save the Earth?; Agriculture & Climate Change; Carbon Farming](#).
- Endorse the NM Healthy Soil Act & join us by emailing: [ccli@takeresponsibility.us](mailto:ccli@takeresponsibility.us).