

Soil Health Producer Highlights Series

My Farm, My Soil, My Story

Luc Tellier—Bar LD Ranch, Bonnyville, AB

- * What does “Soil Health” mean to you and why is it important?

Soil is your starting point. As a rancher, without healthy soils you don't have healthy pastures and if you don't have healthy pastures then you don't have productive cattle. Soil health impacts your overall operation even when you don't realize it.

- * What management practices have you used to improve soil health on your operation?

We extensively graze almost all winter utilizing stockpiled forage, swath grazing, bale grazing and corn grazing. Having multiple systems allows for variances in weather – one year we'll have amazing corn and the next year great swath grazing. We also fence our riparian areas and utilize a variety of watering systems.

- * What changes have you seen?

There have been huge changes on pasture health and productivity – some fields we have bale grazed are 30 years old and are as productive as our younger pastures. We have reduced our feeding costs and are able to support more cows on fewer acres!

- * What are the biggest challenges for soil health in your area?

Some of the biggest challenges are rainfall and variations in winter weather conditions such as snow depth and temperature.

- * How do you advocate for soil health?

Luc is an active board member of the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association. We like to talk – share what we have been doing through producer meetings, pasture tours and field days. We have also conducted multiple projects on the ranch including a 5-year bale grazing trial.

- * Do you have any future plans for improving the Soil Health on your operation?

Continue to utilize extensive winter feeding systems allowing nutrients to be deposited directly onto our pastures. We are always open to new ideas and are willing to try new things, so keeping an open mind is a big part of our future.

- * How has improving your soil health improved other aspects of soil health?

Along with improved pasture land, we have increased the health and productivity of our riparian areas.



Luc ranches with his family on Bar LD Ranch, established in 1929, a few miles south of Bonnyville, AB.



The Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), is a local, producer -directed, not-for-profit applied agricultural research association in the Lakeland region. Based in Bonnyville, we conduct agricultural research, demonstration and extension projects to provide regional, unbiased information to local producers.

