

Know Your Soil

The soils on your property influence the garden you raise, how much and what kinds of forage are available for livestock and what the natural landscape of your property will look like. In British Columbia, soils vary from grassland to forest to wetland and from high elevation to low. Even a small property may contain several different soil types.



Knowing your soil type can help you make decisions about:

- ✓ the type and amount of forage or crops your property can produce
- ✓ how quickly water moves through the soil
- ✓ the ability of the soil to filter human and animal wastes
- ✓ how often and how much water is needed for irrigation
- ✓ how much fertilizer is needed
- ✓ potential problems with building foundations

✓ if the area is subject to occasional flooding

A soil test can help you determine what type of soils you have on your property. A rough idea of the soil type can be determined by feel, as illustrated in the diagram to the left.

Regardless of your soil type, soils are at their best when covered by vegetation. Bare soil is subject to erosion from wind and rain and provides an opportunity for noxious weeds to become established. Vegetation covered soils hold more water than bare soils and prevent slumping on slopes and along streams.

If your property has widespread patches of bare soil, signs of erosion, or widespread weed problems, your soil may need protection and it may be necessary to change one or more of your management practices.

