

Lab Support for Soil Science

PRSSS/SWCS Annual Workshop

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History Lesson

- 1840s Justus von Liebig: Agr. Chemistry
Law of the Minimum
- 1900 Milton Whitney vs C.B Hopkins:
Total vs “available”
- 1930s/40s Bear, Morgan, Bray, Olsen:
Birth of modern soil testing
- 1960s+ “*Better Living Through Chemistry*”

Soil Testing in BC

- 1950s: Soil testing for Ag, but ineffective
- 1960s: John, Fletcher and Case, soil test correlation → adapted Illinois system → Kelowna BCMA Soil and Tissue testing Lab

Soil Testing in BC

- 1980s: Progress → SMP Buffer method, Multi-element extractant
- 1988: Social Credit privatized the lab → little R & D progress since
- 1990 – 2007: Private sector labs get the job done, but...

Range of Applications

- Soil Fertility
- Environmental protection
- Contaminated sites
- CSI

Professional Practice and the Labs

- How do I select a lab?
- How do I relate to the lab?
- Quality of the data?
- Data interpretation → recommendations