

# THE SOILED PROFILE



## NEWSLETTER DEPARTMENT OF SOIL SCIENCE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA “bringing you the latest dirt”



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

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Past issues of the Soiled Profile are now on our  
webpage: [umanitoba.ca/afs/soil science/](http://umanitoba.ca/afs/soil%20science/)

29 July 2016

### Upcoming:

Wednesday, Aug 3 – Winnipeg Blue Bomber Game at Investors' Group Field. **Parking restrictions will be in effect for W lot starting at 6:00 p.m.**

### Department Staff Away:

Lynda Closson	July 18-Aug 5
Terri Ramm	Aug 8-10
Tim Stem	July 29
Rob Ellis	Aug 1-8
Bo Pan	Aug 15-26
Tee Boon Goh	Aug 7-22
Don Flaten	July 29-Aug 12

Martha Blouw will be back from vacation on Monday.

Jennifer Henderson will be working the following days during the summer to cover office staff vacation time: July 29 – Friday Aug 2 – Tuesday Aug 5 – Friday Jennifer will return Wed, September 14.

**Important note:** While Lynda is on holidays this summer, Terri will be doing payroll. **Time sheets will need to be in to her on Thursdays by 2 p.m. for the time period of July 18 to Aug 5.**

### News:

*Congratulations to Monica Boudreault*

Monica successfully defended her M.Sc. last Friday.

*Congratulations to Abolfazl Hajihassani*

Abolfazl successfully defended his Ph.D. on Wednesday.

### *Call for CSSS Summer Newsletter Items*

Please send any news items (e.g. events, awards, deaths) you might have for the CSSS summer newsletter to Nate Basiliko (CSSS Eastern Councillor) in the next few weeks. Any ideas you might have for content items for the final 2016 newsletter would be welcome as well. Email Nate at: [nbasiliko@laurentian.ca](mailto:nbasiliko@laurentian.ca).

### *A Tribute to Robert J. Soper, Professor Emeritus, Department of Soil Science, University of Manitoba by Geza Racz and Don Flaten*

Robert J. Soper passed away on July 20, 2016. Bob was a professor in the Dept. of Soil Science at the University of Manitoba from 1958 to 1991. His research career spanned a wide range of topics in soil chemistry, soil fertility and crop production. Of particular note was his outstanding work on nitrogen and phosphorus nutrition in crops.

Bob was one of a team of pioneers to develop and use radioactive phosphorus in crop nutrition studies in the field. This early work showed the benefit of ammonium nitrogen for improving phosphorus uptake in plants and helped establish ammonium phosphate as the best phosphorus fertilizer for the Canadian Prairies. Later, at the University of Manitoba, he elucidated the soil and crop factors that affected the uptake of fertilizer and soil phosphorus responsible for the varying yield response to fertilization by crops commonly grown on the prairies. The information from these studies was and still is used for crop nutrition recommendations.

Bob also became an internationally respected leader in the use of stable isotope-labelled nitrogen to measure nitrogen dynamics in soil and biological nitrogen fixation in legume crops. Bob's contribution to the introduction of soil testing as a means of predicting the need for nitrogen fertilization of crops was extremely important. The test for soil available nitrogen was mainly developed by him and is used for agronomic and environmental purposes in Manitoba and most other regions of the North American Great Plains.

In addition to his work to improve nitrogen and phosphorus nutrition in crops, Bob also led studies on potassium, sulphur and zinc nutrition that are still used to form the basis of fertilizer recommendations for these nutrients.

Beyond his many important research achievements, Bob is also remembered warmly by his colleagues and students for his role as a thought-provoking teacher, mentor and supervisor. He provided students with inspiring ideas on experimental design, treatments, techniques and interpretation of data. In particular, his former graduate students remember him best for the friendly and collegial manner in which he supervised them, his keen mind and professor-student team approach to research.

Bob was recognized for his achievements in several ways. He received Western Canada's Agronomy Merit Award and the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal, and was named a Fellow of the Canadian Soil Science Society. Following his retirement, he was named Professor Emeritus at the University of Manitoba.

Bob will be long remembered and valued for his pioneering work on crop nutrition, soil testing and fertilizer recommendations, as well as his warm, bright and collegial relationships with colleagues and students.

The Winnipeg Free Press obituary for Bob is at the following link:

[http://passages.winnipegfreepress.com/passage-details/id-237330/SOPER ROBERT](http://passages.winnipegfreepress.com/passage-details/id-237330/SOPER%20ROBERT).

## **Opportunities:**

### **Karl Ivarson Agricultural Scholarship**

The Agricultural Institute of Canada Foundation's Karl C. Ivarson Agricultural Scholarship is open for applications. Application guidelines and application form are available here:

<http://www.aicfoundation.ca/ivarson-agricultural-scholarship>.

Deadline: **August 31, 2016.**

## **Events:**

### **MIA Fall BBQ, September 15, Kelburn Farm**

MIA's Fall BBQ will once again be held at Richardson International's crop development and research centre located about 10 minutes south of Winnipeg on highway 75. Save the date.