



ADVANTAGES OF HEALTHY SOILS

1. Higher soil organic matter and soil carbon.
2. Improved water infiltration, with reduced impacts from water, soil and nutrient runoff from high-precipitation events.
3. Increased plant-available water storage to sustain plant growth during dry periods in the growing season.
4. Higher level of soil biodiversity to cycle nutrients, which improves plant uptake and reduces losses from leaching.
5. Better soil retention and less compaction, crusting and erosion.
6. Improved stress tolerance and crop productivity during variable weather and precipitation patterns.
7. Filtering and buffering of nutrients, pesticides and other substances.
8. Increased physical stability of soils to allow for timely field operations.
9. Greenhouse gas mitigation from CO₂ being taken from the air by plants and converted to soil-stored organic carbon.
10. Potentially higher asset value when leasing or selling land.

Sources:

Iowa State University Extension: **Iowa Soil Health Management Manual, Building Soil Health**
Natural Resources Conservation Services: **Soil Health Webpage, Soil Health Practices**