



## The Importance of Healthy Soils

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# What is NYFC?



We are young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. We're tackling the barriers young farmers face through:

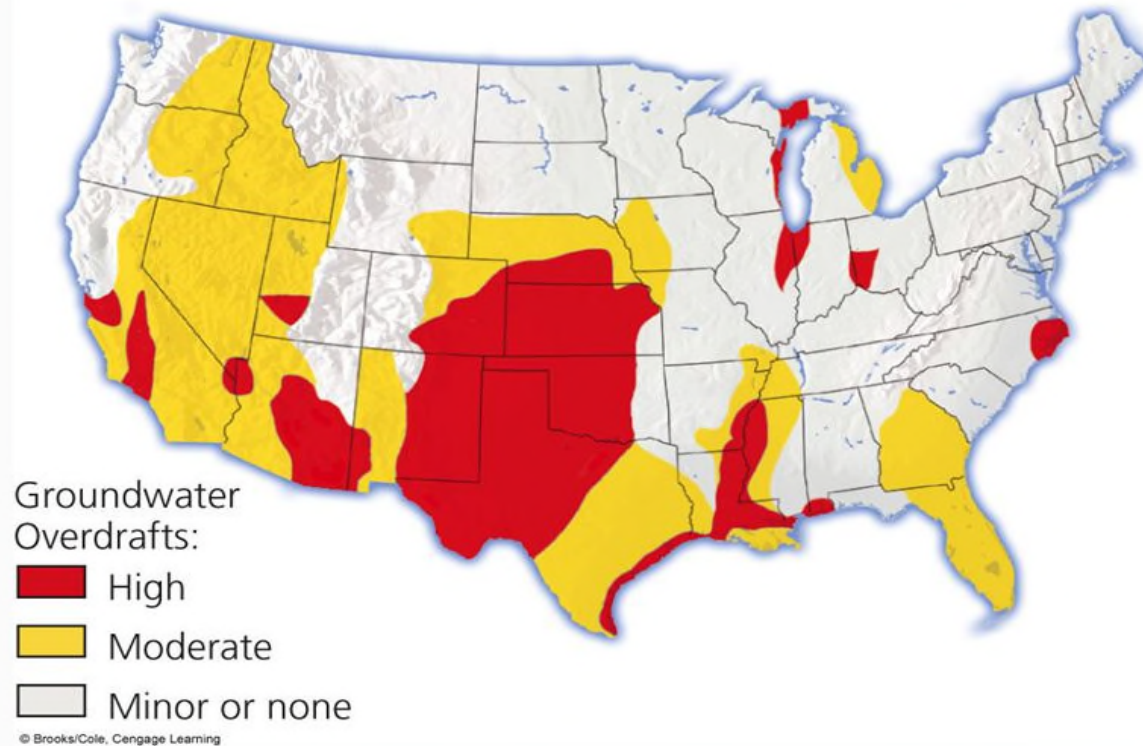
Policy change, local chapters, business services

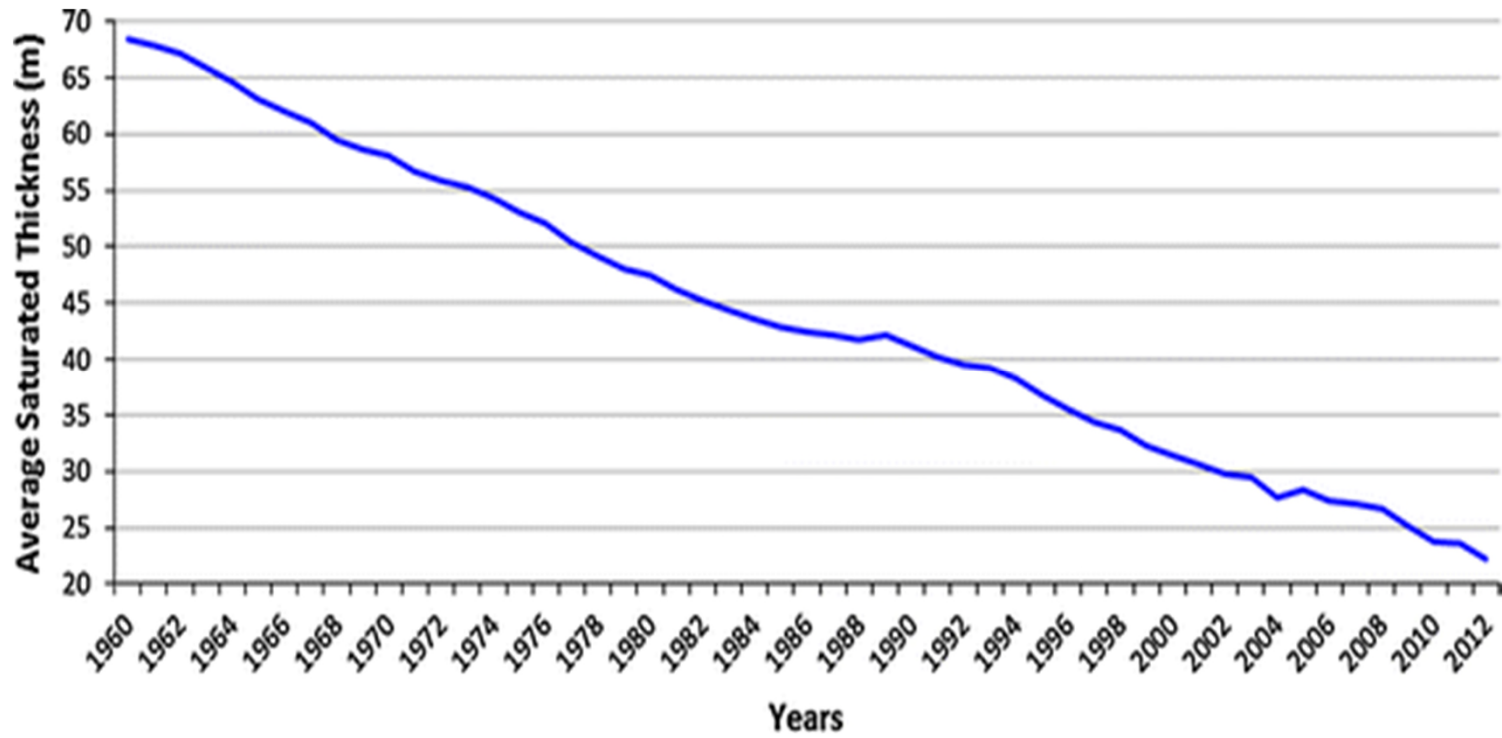
# What is Soil Health?

- Healthy soil = active, alive, microbial and carbon-rich
- 80% of consumptive water use in U.S. is used for agriculture
- 90% of consumptive water use in the West is used for agriculture
- So agriculture must be a priority for water resources management



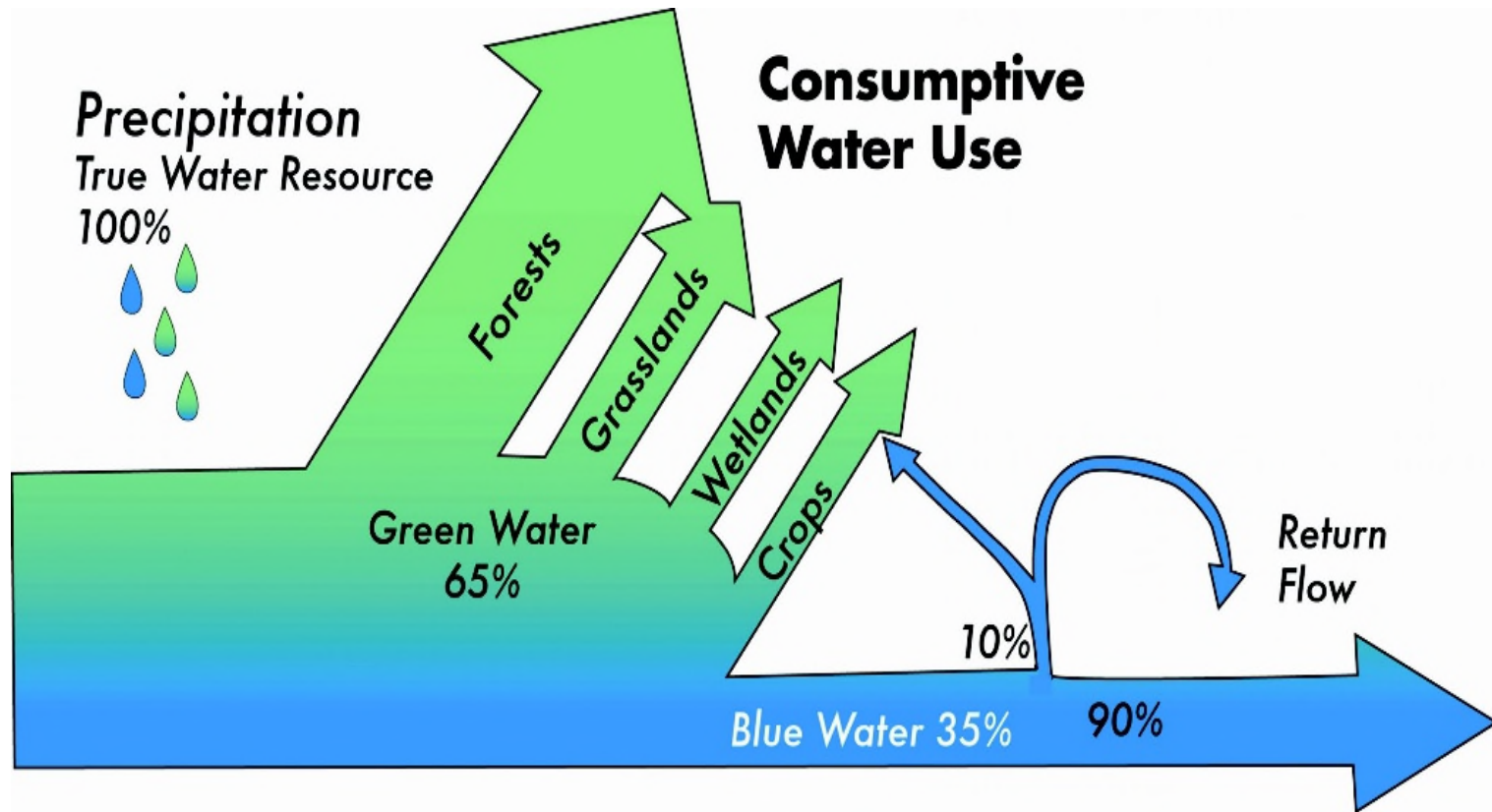
## Natural Capital Degradation: Areas of Greatest Aquifer Depletion in the U.S.





Neto et al. 2015

# Green Water v. Blue Water



Falkenmark & Rockstrom 2010

# Practices that Improve Soil Health

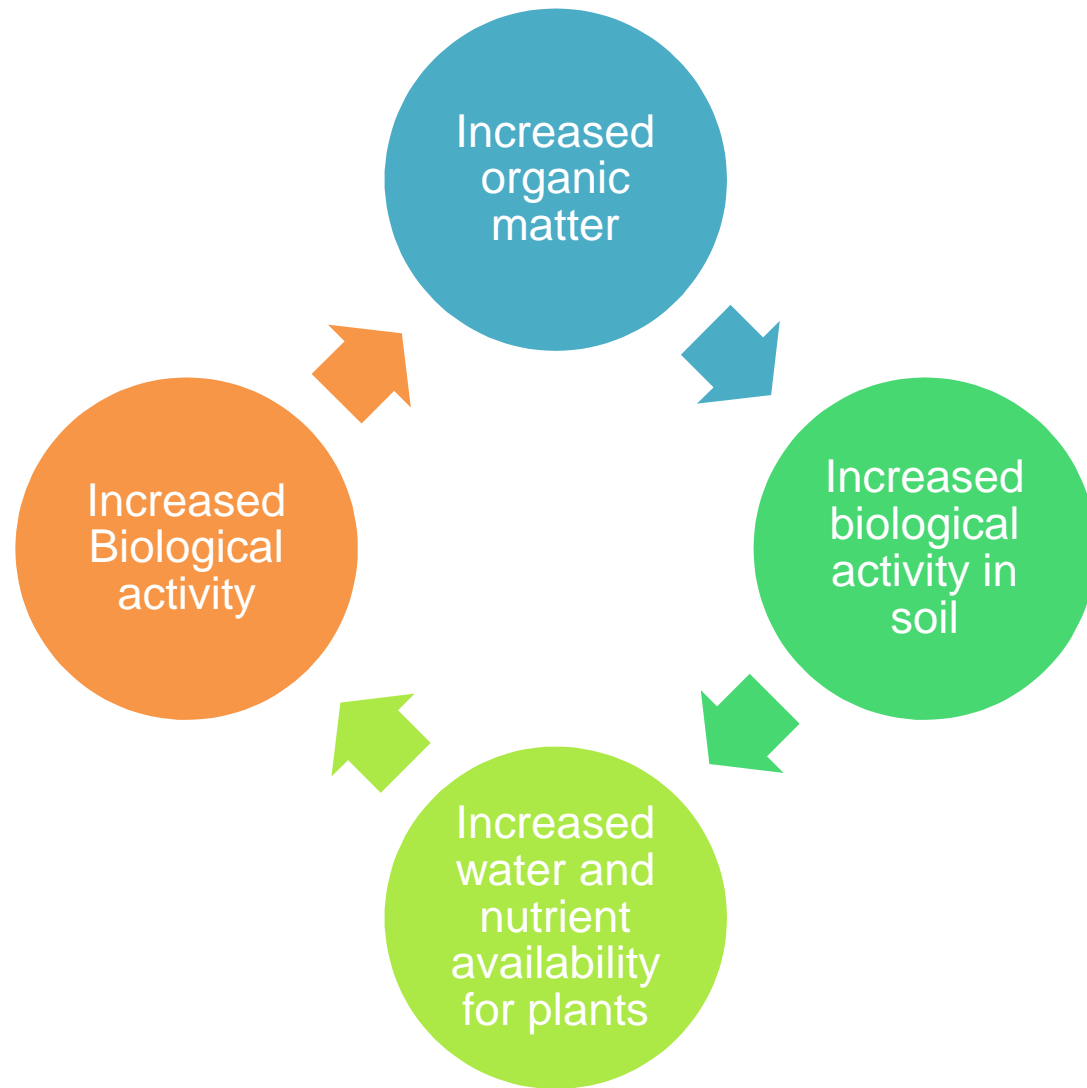
- No-Till
- Increasing Organic Matter
- Cover Cropping
- Composting
- Rotational Grazing
- And More!



- **Just a 1% increase** in organic matter = **27,000 gallons** of increased water holding capacity per acre
- 10 million acres cropland in Colorado = **270 billion gallons** water available for agricultural use



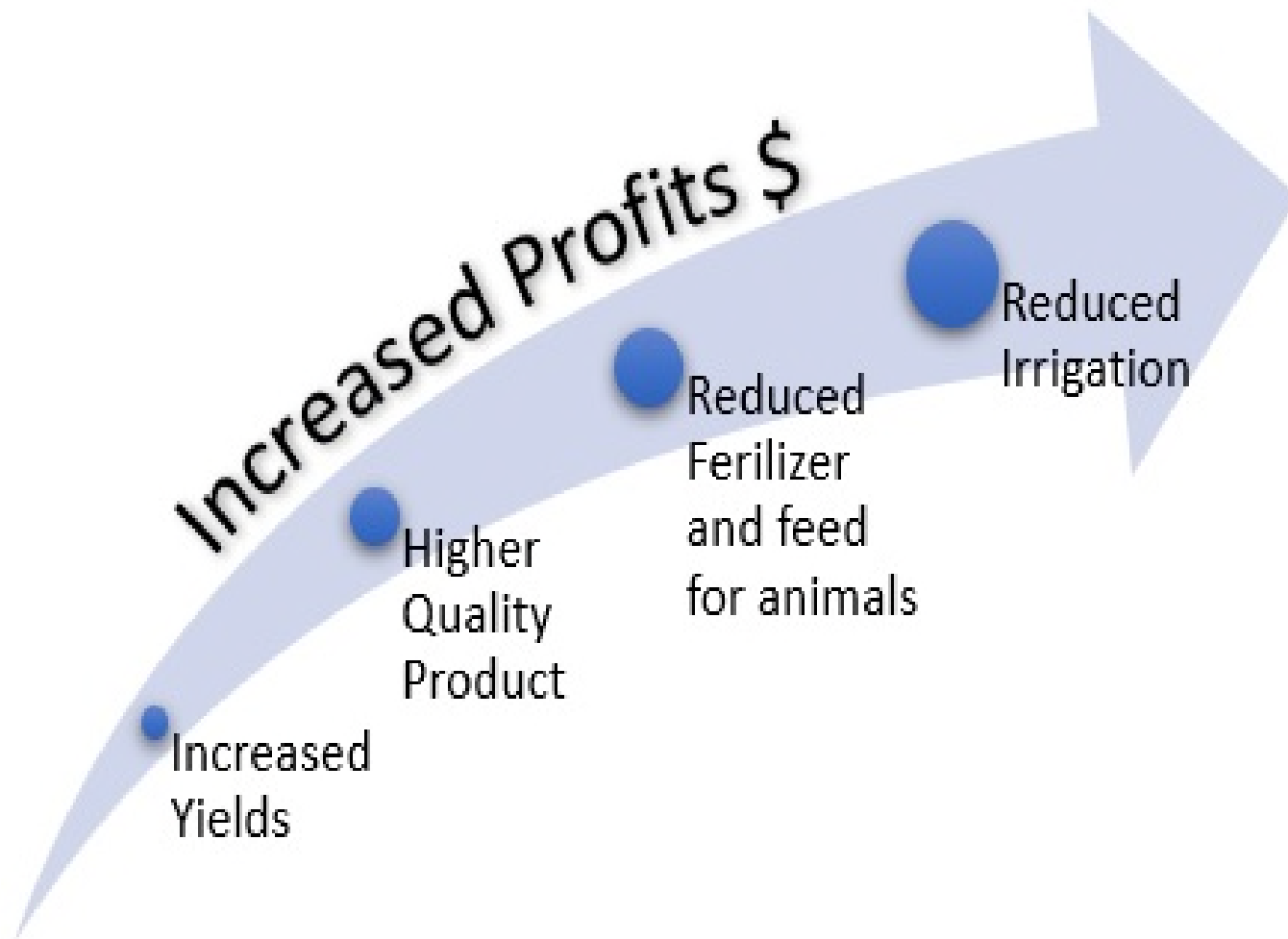




# What Does This Look Like at Ahavah Farm?



# What Does This Look Like at Ahavah Farm?



# So Now What?

- The problem is here, now
- We know what works
- We must get the tools in the hands of farmers and ranchers





**Mike Nolan**  
Mountain Roots Produce  
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Rockey Farms  
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# How can the legislature help?

- Strengthen the soil health task force bill
- Introduce new soil health legislation
  - Farmer education
  - Technical and financial assistance
- Continue the conversation

