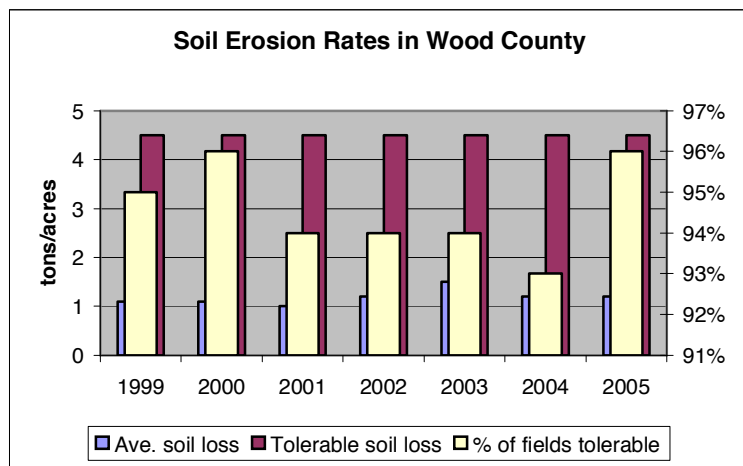


96% of Wood County Fields Tested in 2005 Had Acceptable Erosion Control



Key Facts

- The Wood County Land Department conducts annual random sampling of crop fields throughout the county for soil erosion rates.
- The acceptable soil loss rate on county fields is 4.5 tons of soil per acre.
- The actual soil loss rate since 1999 has averaged 1.2 tons per acre. This suggests that area farmers are doing an acceptable job of controlling erosion.
- In 2005, 4% of the fields tested had unacceptable soil erosion control practices necessary for these areas.

Why is this Information Important?

Soil erosion impacts the productivity of crops grown in Wood County, and contributes to the degradation of rivers, lakes and streams. Good erosion control practices benefit the county’s economy, recreational pursuits and quality of life.

Soil Erosion

Wood County presently has over 126,000 acres of land involved in crop production. Agricultural activities, if not managed to minimize impacts, can lead to substantial erosion losses.

Erosion from cropland is troubling because it is the fertile soil at the surface that is washed away, taking with it the valuable nutrients and organic matter that provide the field with its productivity for crop growth. These same nutrients and organics can lead to problems in the water bodies to which they are carried.

Farmers use various practices to minimize soil loss and reduce environmental impacts. For example, conservation tillage residue roughens the surface of the soil, reduces rainwater impact on soil particles, and adds to the organic matter content of the soil when decomposed. These changes reduce the erosion potential of the cropland.

Source: Wisconsin DNR