

surface and groundwater quality, water quantity management, sustainable management of wildlife habitat, air quality and climate change, energy efficiency, pollution and waste management, and conservation of genetic resources.

In support of Chapter 14 objectives, the Canadian approach works to

- preserve the natural resources (soil, water, biodiversity) at the base of agricultural production
- integrate the goal of environmental sustainability with attainment of sustainable growth
- foster rural opportunities and economic security through diversification
- maintain a safe and nutritious food supply

A Shared Responsibility for Results

The responsibility for meeting these objectives is shared between governments, producers, agri-food businesses, consumers, and environmental and other non-governmental organizations. As a result, partnerships have been key to addressing sustainability issues.

Industry and public advisory committees play a key role in working with governments to determine priorities and establish programs. Farm organizations, conservation groups, and the larger agricultural extension community are driving forces behind the sector's achievement of environmental objectives. Producers are developing environmental farm plans and adopting best management practices that reduce environmental impacts, such as using pesticides more efficiently and shifting to conservation tillage practices. NGOs are working to accelerate development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices and to promote awareness of the need for an agriculture based on sustainable principles.

The sector has made progress in achieving its environmental objectives. For example, in 1991, low-till and no-till practices accounted for nearly one-third of the seeded cropland in Canada compared to negligible amounts 20 years ago. Summer fallow has decreased almost 30 percent in the last two decades. Through federal and provincial efforts aimed at reducing toxics, some 29 compounds affecting more than 2000 agriculture-related products have been controlled or eliminated. Also, the sector is working toward meeting the terms of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer by reducing production and use of methyl bromide, a fumigant. The sector has demonstrated a willingness and an ability to adapt to its environmental challenges.

Examples of Actions to Date

Some examples of the activities that have been undertaken to promote environmental sustainability show the range of issues and types of actions.

Through the sustainable agriculture component of the Green Plan, the federal government is providing \$138 million over six years (1991/92–1996/97) to help the sector continue to

Less intensive use of fertilizers and pesticides in Canadian agriculture means less pollution of the resource base and surrounding ecosystem, and lower input costs. In Quebec and Ontario, for example, provincial targets of 50 percent reduction in agricultural use of pesticides have been established for the years 2000 and 2002 respectively.