

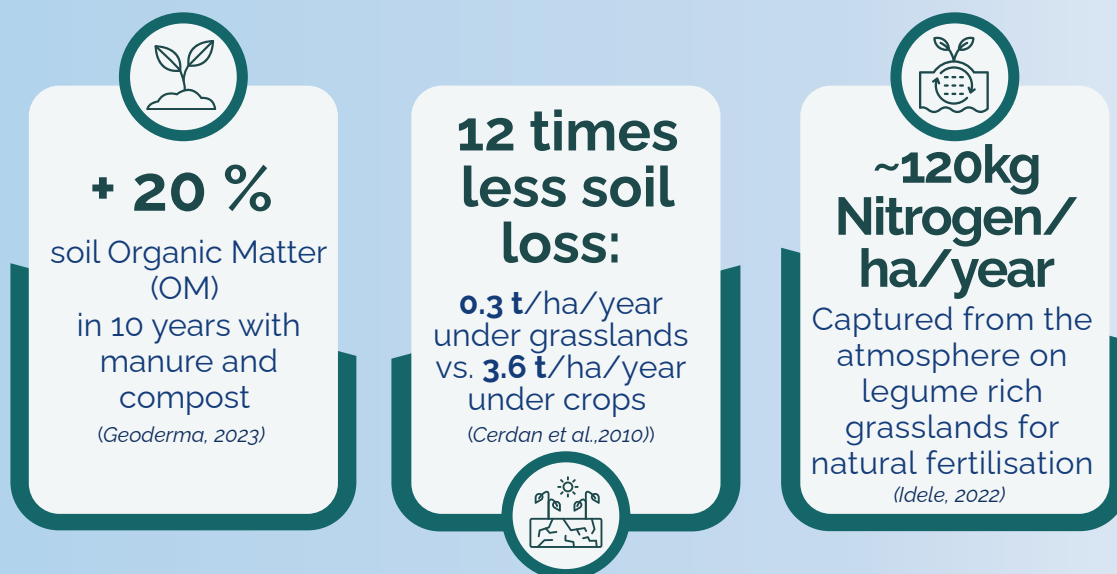
Soil Fertility & Quality in Dairy Farming



Soil health is defined as "the ability of the soil to sustain the productivity, diversity, and environmental services of terrestrial ecosystems". (FAO & ITPS, 2020)

On European dairy farms, the combination of **diverse crops, grasslands, and manure improves soil quality** by increasing organic matter and supporting biological activity.

This matters: **over 60%** of European soils have already deteriorated. (EU Soil Strategy 2030)



Why Organic Matter matters: 3 core benefits*

*Organic Matter is a key quality indicator because it affects the physical, chemical and biological functions of soils.

1. Increase organic matter in soil

Manure spreading **improves the biological quality and organic matter content** in soil. It is an important organic fertilizer that **increases soil carbon stock** and reduces the need for synthetic fertilizers, helping to close nutrient loops on the farm. (Petitjean et al., 2018)

European **dairy farmers lead in soil-friendly practices** that prevent pollution.

2. Increase soil biodiversity

Grasslands improve soil biodiversity and soil structure.

3. Reduce erosion

On dairy farms, **soil erosion is reduced** due to the use of manure and grasslands.

