

How-to guide:

Completing the Farmland Health Check-Up with Producers

For Participating Certified Crop Advisors, Professional Agrologists, and Technical Advisors Supporting Delivery of the FHCU.

The Farmland Health Check-Up (FHCU) is a unique educational opportunity for producers to work directly with a CCA or P.Ag to assess soil health and identify Best Management Practices (BMPs) for their farm. The involvement of technical specialists ensures that producers receive tailored, practical recommendations that fit their operation.

The digital workbook offers a streamlined approach to targeted BMP planning, while also improving the overall quality and consistency of the long-term planning tool. Without changing the integrity of the FHCU, the digital format allows for updates to content and usability, ensuring the tool remains relevant to today's agricultural practices.

Benefits of the digital FHCU

Key benefits include:

- ✓ Bilingual access - the website and workbook can be accessed seamlessly in either English or French.
- ✓ Streamlined online format with drop-down menus for geographic data such as counties, townships, and watersheds.
- ✓ Automatic saving after each question, so progress is never lost and a progress bar to track completion
- ✓ Immediate scoring results upon completion and highlights to low ratings, making it easier to tailor BMP recommendations.
- ✓ Easy exporting, enabling Advisors to generate a PDF for producer's record keeping.
- ✓ Easily revisit workbooks to assist with client's BMP implementation or re-assessment in the future.

By simplifying the completion process and offering optimal functionality, the digital FHCU improves both the quality of data collected and the experience for producers and Advisors.

Preparing for the FHCU

Effective preparation by the CCA or P.Ag, with support from the producer, ensures the FHCU workbook can be completed smoothly and the information collected is accurate.

Producer Preparation Checklist

Encourage producers to have the following materials ready before starting the FHCU Workbook:

- ☐ Verified Environmental Farm Plan (EFP); if one has been completed
- ☐ Soil test results for all three fields being assessed
- ☐ Yield data or other production records
- ☐ Field maps or sketches, including crop history, drainage features, and soil types
- ☐ Any additional records that reflect field management (e.g., fertilizer applications, tillage practices, cover crop use, etc.)

Advisor Preparation Checklist

Advisors should prepare by ensuring they have access and tools ready for the session:

- ☐ Where possible, visit your client on-farm to familiarise yourself with the chosen fields and their history
- ☐ Confirm that the producer has gathered the necessary field information (soil tests, yield data, maps, etc.) in advance of the session
- ☐ Confirm login access to the FHCU website at <https://www.farmlandhealthcheckup.net/ca-en/login/>
- ☐ Review the workbook sections in advance to anticipate discussion points
- ☐ Have reference materials on hand to help guide Workbook completion

- Farmland Health Check-Up Guide for details about workbook sections
- BMP Selection Guide for BMP recommendation suggestions

Completing the FHCU

The digital FHCU can be completed in-person or remotely, depending on what works best for the Advisor and producer. Built-in features like auto-save and exporting ensure that whichever approach is chosen, results can be recorded and shared.

In-Person Completion

The digital workbook is completed live together, using the producer's preparation materials as reference.

- Access the digital Workbook using the Advisor's or producer's electronic device
- Entries are saved automatically throughout the session
- Discuss field scores and BMP recommendations together
 - Refer to the BMP Selection Guide for suggested recommendations
- At the end of the session, the Advisor can export a PDF copy to share with the producer for their records.

Remote Completion

- A video call with screen sharing is set up between the Advisor and producer
- The Advisor leads the producer through the digital workbook online, filling out sections together
- The workbook saves progress automatically, even during long sessions
- Discuss field scores and BMP recommendations together
- Once complete, the Advisor exports the workbook as a PDF and sends it to the producer.

Low-Connectivity Option

- If reliable internet access is not available, the producer and Advisor can work through a hardcopy or offline notes during the session, ensuring all necessary information is recorded.
- Once connectivity is restored, the Advisor can enter the collected information into the digital workbook.
- Make sure to reconnect with the producer on the phone or in person to discuss their field scores and BMP recommendations. A printed PDF copy of the completed Workbook could be given to the producer for their records during an in-person visit.

Sharing Results

Exporting and sharing results:

- Note that at any time, each section of the Workbook can be printed, or the entire workbook can be exported as a PDF.
 - Find the helpful “Print” or “Download Workbook” buttons located on the My Workbooks pages on the FHCU website.
- An email with a link to download the completed digital FHCU workbook as a PDF will be sent to the Advisor and to the producer at the time of digital FHCU submission.
- Confirm with the producer they have a copy of the completed Workbook for their records.

Receiving Compensation

Advisors are eligible to claim \$600 per completed FHCU Workbook. To receive payment, find the claim form on the [Advisor Certification](#) page on the FHCU website. Complete the form and submit to [fhcu@ontariosoilcrop.org](mailto:fhcure@ontariosoilcrop.org).

List your travel time as zero, if the FHCU was completed remotely with the producer. This will not affect your compensation rate but does aid in our data collection.

Ensure to regularly submit claim forms as you complete FHCU Workbooks.