



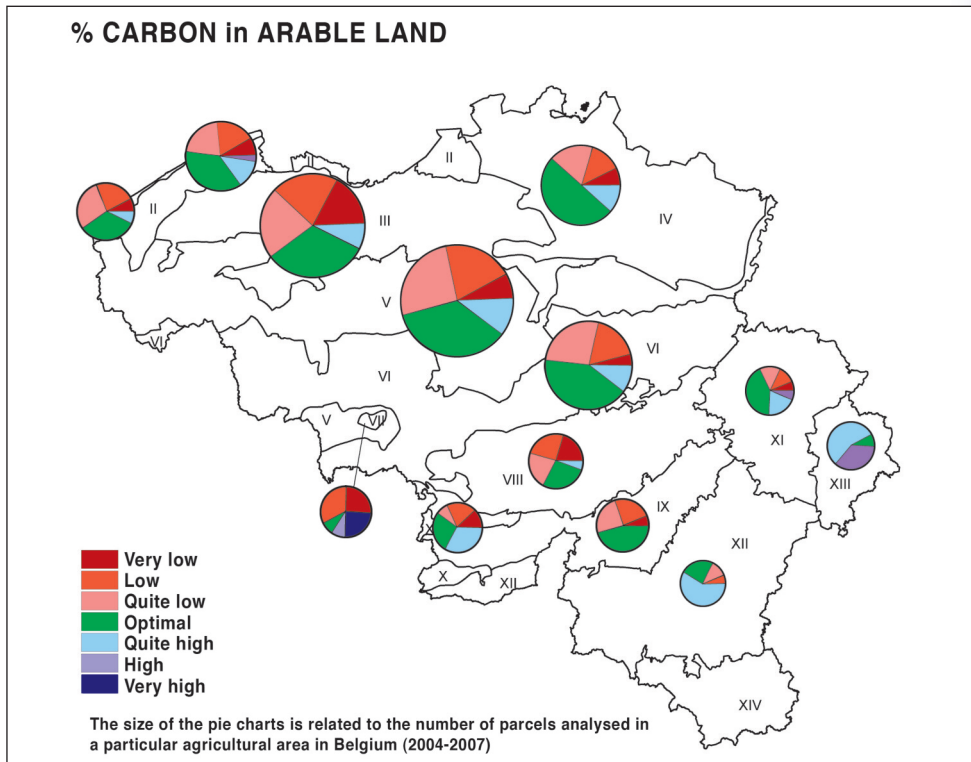
Soil Service of Belgium: Scientific research for agriculture and environment

The Soil Service of Belgium (SSB), the first spin-off of K.U.Leuven, is an independent research and advisory institute for agriculture, horticulture and the environment. SSB is mainly active in soil and water research, fertilisation advice, irrigation management and environmental incidence studies, in both Belgium and France.

SSB can rely on a long-established and broad expertise, acquired in the field of soil fertility, chemical analysis, fertilisation requirements for agricultural and horticultural crops, fertilisation potential of organic fertilisers and fertilisation advice in both agriculture and horticulture. Since the foundation of SSB in 1946, fertilisation research has been carried out empirically as well as through theoretical models. SSB is able to put its research into practice by converting research data into practical advices for agriculturists, horticulturists and other users. Besides applied research SSB is an active player in policy formulation for regional, federal and European authorities, mainly in the agricultural and environmental field.

Based on in-house research, SSB has developed over time its own expert systems/decision support systems in order to deliver crop-specific fertilisation or irrigation advice. The uniqueness of these decision support systems lies in the reputable scientific basis, present at SSB combined with input originating from the applied research. Research is constantly carried out to optimise, actualise and implement these decision support systems taking into account new agricultural needs and requirements.

SSB acquired various homologations by federal, regional, international and other authorities. Its laboratory is BELAC-accredited for soil and fertiliser analyses. For the research activities SSB is ISO9001:2000 certified. Both project research and field research come under this certificate.



In addition, SSB is also a certified Training Centre, a certified Regional Centre for agricultural education and a certified Centre for the sensibilisation of sustainable agriculture. Professional agriculturists, horticulturists, extension workers and teachers are continuously being informed and trained through informative sessions, trainings and visits to experimental field plots.



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