



Science  
Societies

# Riekman receives L.B. Thomson Conservation Award

July 31, 2025



*Alan Kruszel, CCA and Eastern Producer Director with the Soil Conservation Council of Canada, presents CCA Marla Riekman with the L.B. Thomson Conservation Award during*

*the Soils for Our Future conference in Winnipeg, MB, Canada, July 20–25, 2025. Riekman is a Soil Management Specialist with Manitoba Agriculture's Ag Resource Branch.*

Marla Riekman, CCA and Soil Management Specialist with Manitoba Agriculture's Ag Resource Branch, received the L.B. Thomson Conservation Award during the Soils for Our Future conference in Winnipeg, MB, Canada, July 20–25, 2025. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding soil care achievements, adoption, and advocacy by individuals or groups that have had a strong regional impact anywhere in Canada.

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Marla Riekman, CCA and Soil Management Specialist with Manitoba Agriculture's Ag Resource Branch, received the L.B. Thomson Conservation Award during the Soils for Our Future conference in Winnipeg, MB, Canada, July 20–25, 2025. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding soil care achievements, adoption, and advocacy by individuals or groups that have had a strong regional impact anywhere in Canada.

Riekman grew up on a farm near Rosthern, SK, Canada where her connection to the land first took root. She began her undergraduate education at the University of Saskatchewan and went on to earn a master of science in Soil Science from the University of Manitoba.

Throughout her career, Riekman has demonstrated unwavering dedication to soil health and sustainable land management. Her professional journey has included

leadership roles such as Manager of the Manitoba Zero-Till Research Farm, Soil Conservationist with the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, and Land Management Specialist with Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives. In every role, she has brought vision, integrity, and a deep commitment to the stewardship of soil.

Across the northern Great Plains, Riekman has been a powerful advocate for soil protection and improvement, engaging farmers, students, professionals, and policymakers alike. She has been instrumental in organizing events focused on soil conservation from grassroots gatherings to high-profile international conferences. Her skill as a communicator and educator has been widely recognized, earning her accolades such as the University of Manitoba Introductory Soils Class "Teacher of the Year" award and the "Friend of the Soil" award from the Northern USA Conservation Tillage Conference. Her impact has even extended internationally with contributions to soil improvement in East Africa and reports presented to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. She currently serves as Co-Chair of the Prairie Provinces CCA Exam Committee.

### **About the award**

The L.B. Thomson Conservation Award was introduced in 1988 by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) Alumni and was named after Dr. Leonard Baden Thomson who was Director of PFRA from 1948 through 1956. Under his leadership, PFRA developed and promoted soil conservation practices that minimized the severe wind erosion that plagued the Canadian Prairies in the 1930s.

Until 2010, all award recipients were from the Canadian Prairies. When the PFRA was rolled into the Agri-Environmental Services Branch of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, all Canadians became eligible to win this award. In 2016, it was entrusted to

the Soil Conservation Council of Canada.

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