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Australia invests $9.3 million in soil technology to boost agricultural drought resistance

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Australia is investing $9.3 million in soil technology that could help Australian farmers increase soil carbon in cropping systems, improve soil health and resilience, and diversify farm income.

Regional company Loam Bio is developing technology to store carbon in agricultural soils.The Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) is funding the innovation. The CEFC has already invested $5.8 million in Loam, taking its total investment to $15.1 million.

Increased soil carbon helps soil to retain more water and improves plantsâ?? ability to take up nutrients, resulting in better agricultural productivity and resilience.

One of the major challenges for soil carbon storage is that carbon naturally reacts with oxygen and water, releasing it back into the atmosphere. Loamâ??s Carbonbuilder microbial technology works with the root system of crops, enhancing a plantâ??s natural ability to store carbon in the soil. The technology helps lower emissions and improve soil carbon storage, enabling farmers to participate in valuable carbon markets.

Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen said, â??Australia is equipping farmers with the tools to combat the climate crisis under extreme and intense weather events. By boosting water retention in soils, the Loam technology has the potential to help Australian farms to become more drought resistant and more sustainable.â?

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon Murray Watt said, â??Government finance will support the development of this crucial soil technology that will support regional jobs and development while benefiting Australian farmers.â?•