

Agronomic and environmental effect of soil conservation management practices in field crops production: Crop yield and soil carbon and nitrogen dynamics

Marie-Élise Samson

▶ To cite this version:

Marie-Élise Samson. Agronomic and environmental effect of soil conservation management practices in field crops production : Crop yield and soil carbon and nitrogen dynamics. Soil study. Agrocampus Ouest; Université Laval (Québec, Canada), 2021. English. NNT: 2021NSARC152. tel-03609144

HAL Id: tel-03609144 https://theses.hal.science/tel-03609144v1

Submitted on 15 Mar 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers. L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés. DOCTORAT / ECOLOGIE **BRETAGNE GEOSCIENCES** OIRE AGRONOMIE ALIMENTATION





THESE DE DOCTORAT DE

L'institut national d'enseignement supérieur pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement Ecole interne L'Institut Agro AGROCAMPUS OUEST

ECOLE DOCTORALE N° 600 Ecole doctorale Ecologie, Géosciences, Agronomie et Alimentation Spécialité : « Sciences agronomiques »

Par

Marie-Élise SAMSON

Efficacité agroenvironnementale des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures

Rendement des cultures et dynamique du carbone et de l'azote dans les sols

Thèse en co-tutelle présentée et soutenue à L'Université Laval (Québec), le 8 janvier 2021 Unité de recherche : UMR 1069 SAS Thèse N° : C-152

Rapporteurs avant soutenance :

Assistant professor, School of environmental sciences, University of Guelph Adam Gillespie Sabine Houot Directrice de Recherche, UMR 1402 ECOSYS, INRAe Thiverval-Grignon

Composition du Jury :

Président :	François-P. Chalifour	Professeur titulaire et Directeur des études supérieures, Département de phytologie, Université Laval
Examinateurs :	Christian Walter Jacynthe Dessureault-Rompré	Professeur, UMR SAS, l'institut Agro AGROCAMPUS OUEST Professeure adjointe, Département des sols et de génie agroalimentaire, Université Laval
Dir. de thèse : Dir de thèse :	Anne Vanasse Safya Menasseri-Aubry	Professeure titulaire, Département de phytologie, Université Laval Maître de conférences, UMR SAS, l'institut Agro AGROCAMPUS OUEST



Efficacité agroenvironnementale des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures :

Rendement des cultures et dynamique du carbone et de l'azote dans les sols

Thèse

Marie-Élise Samson

Doctorat en biologie végétale Philosophiae doctor (Ph.D.)

Québec, Canada

© Marie-Élise Samson, 2020

Résumé

1

L'objectif de cette étude était de comparer le rendement des cultures (maïs, soya, blé) et l'impact environnemental (santé du sol et stockage de C et de N) de 20 itinéraires techniques combinant le type de travail du sol (travail réduit, labour), la gestion des résidus de culture (récoltés ou retournés au sol) et cinq différentes sources fertilisantes (organiques et minérales) sur deux sols à texture contrastée (loam sableux et argile limoneuse) sur une période de neuf ans. Après une période de transition de six ans, les rendements sous travail réduit étaient de 8 à 30 % supérieurs qu'avec le labour dans l'argile limoneuse. Dans le loam sableux, l'effet du travail réduit variait (-20 à 13 %), principalement en fonction de la culture et de l'année. La concentration en C organique du sol, la biomasse microbienne et le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats dans les 10 premiers centimètres de sol étaient de 14 à 58 % plus élevés dans le travail réduit que dans le labour, mais le travail réduit du sol n'a eu aucun effet sur les stocks de C et de N lorsque tout le profil était considéré (0-60 cm). Les engrais de ferme permettaient d'obtenir des rendements semblables à l'engrais minéral dans le blé et ont même eu un arrière-effet positif sur le rendement du soya dans le loam sableux. Cependant, dans le maïs, les écarts de rendement observés entre l'engrais minéral et les engrais de ferme étaient parfois très importants, mais aussi très variables (0 à -38 %), en fonction des conditions météorologiques de la saison de croissance. Parmi les engrais de ferme, le lisier de porc donnait généralement de meilleurs rendements, mais le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille avaient des effets positifs plus marqués sur les indicateurs de santé du sol en surface. Le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille favorisaient l'accumulation de C et de N dans la fraction lourde et grossière de la matière organique (coarse-MAOM) des sols à l'étude. Dans l'argile limoneuse, le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille ont également permis l'accumulation de C et de N organique dans la fraction fine et stable de la matière organique du sol, contribuant ainsi à la stabilisation de C et de N sur le long terme dans la couche de surface. Inversement, les résidus de culture avec un rapport C/N plus élevé ont contribué également à la santé du sol, mais principalement via l'accumulation de C dans les fractions grossières de la matière

organique. Lorsque tout le profil était considéré, l'effet des traitements sur les stocks de C était plus faible dans les 15 premiers cm de sol (0,36 à 0,76 kg C m⁻²) que dans les couches sous-jacentes (jusqu'à 2,3 kg C m⁻² pour la couche 30-45 cm). L'effet net des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de C et de N, lorsque tout le profil était considéré (0-60 cm), dépendait donc principalement des changements en profondeur. Dans le loam sableux, ces changements étaient influencés par une interaction triple entre le travail du sol, la gestion des résidus de culture et la source fertilisante. Les stocks de C en profondeur étaient les plus élevés lorsque le labour du sol était combiné au retour des résidus de culture et à l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme liquide. Cependant, sous fertilisation minérale, les stocks étaient plus élevés en profondeur lorsque les résidus étaient récoltés. Les résultats de cette thèse montrent bien que les itinéraires techniques agricoles devraient être adaptés aux caractéristiques culturales et pédoclimatiques propres à chaque site. En plus de fournir une preuve terrain en soutien aux récentes théories expliquant les mécanismes de stabilisation du C dans le sol, cette thèse propose un modèle conceptuel permettant d'intégrer la notion de fertilité du sol à ces concepts émergeants en considérant la coarse-MAOM comme une fraction pivot dans les cycles de C et de N du sol. Elle démontre également l'importancede considérer les stocks de C profond (>30 cm) afin de mesurer avec justesse l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de C du sol, du moins sous des conditions froides et humides. Il faudra donc continuer d'approfondir notre compréhension des mécanismes biogéochimiques impliqués dans les interactions sol-plantes-atmosphère pour faciliter le développement de systèmes de production rentables, durables et résilients, tout en contribuant à la lutte aux changements climatiques.

Abstract

The objective of this study was to compare the crops yield (corn, soybean wheat) and environmental effect (soil health and C and N storage) of 20 different crop management itineraries combining two tillage regimes (minimum tillage, moulboard plowing), crop residue management (harvested or returned to soil) and five different fertilizer sources (organic and mineral) on two soils with contrasting textures (sandy loam and silty clay) over a 9-year period. After a transition period of 6 years, reduced tillage yielded 8-30% more grain, than mouldboard plowing in the silty clay soil. In the sandy loam soil, the benefits of minimum tillage on crop yield varied (-20 to 13%), mainly according to crop type and meteorological conditions. Organic C concentration, microbial biomass and the mean weight diameter of stable aggregates in the first 10 cm of soil were 14-58% higher under reduced tillage than mouldboard plowing, but reduced tillage had no effect on C and N stocks when the entire profile was considered (0-60 cm). Similar wheat grain yields were obtained with the mineral fertilizer and farmyard manures and manures even had a positive legacy effect on soybean yield in sandy loam. For corn, however, the yield differences observed between mineral fertilizer and farmyard manures were highly variable (0-38%) and mostly depended on weather conditions. Among farmyard manures, the use of liquid swine manure generally resulted in greater yields, but cattle and poultry manures had a greater effects on surface soil health indicators. Cattle and poultry manures promoted the accumulation of C and N in the heavy and coarse fraction of soil organic matter (coarse-MAOM) of both soils. In the silty clay soil, cattle and poultry manures also fostered the accumulation of organic C and N in the fine and stable fraction of soil organic matter, thus contributing to the long-term stabilization of C and N in the surface soil layer. Conversely, crop residues with a higher C/N ratio contributed to soil health mainly through the accumulation of C in the coarse fractions of organic matter. When the entire profile was considered, the effect of treatments on C stocks was smaller in the first 15 cm of soil (0.36 to 0.76 kg C m⁻²) than in deeper soil layers (up to 2.3 kg C m⁻² for the 30-45 cm layer). The net effect of farming practices on C and N stocks when the entire profile was considered (0-60 cm) therefore mainly depended on changes at depth. In the sandy loam soil, these changes were influenced by a three-way interaction between tillage, crop residue management and fertilizer source. Deep C stocks were the highest when tillage was combined with crop residue return and the use of liquid farmyard manures. However, under mineral fertilization, deep C stocks were the highest when residues were harvested. This thesis highlights the fact that agricultural combinations of management practices should be adapted to the cultural and pedoclimatic characteristics of each site. In addition to providing field evidence in support of recent theories regarding soil organic matter formation and stabilization processes, this thesis proposes a way to integrate soil fertility concepts to these emerging theories by considering the coarse-MAOM as a pivotal fraction in both C and N cycles. It also demonstrates the importance of considering deep C stocks (>30 cm) to accurately measure the effect of agricultural practices on soil C stocks, at least under cold and humid conditions. It will therefore be necessary to keep deepening our understanding of the biogeochemical mechanisms involved in soil-plant-atmosphere interactions to ensure the profitability, sustainability, and resilience of our production systems while contributing to climate change mitigation.

Table des matières

Résumé	ii
Abstract	iv
Table des matières	vi
Liste des tableaux	X
Liste des figures	XII
Liste des acronymes Romorciomonts	XV vvii
Avant-propos	xvi
Introduction générale	1
Contexte général	
Pratiques de conservation des sols et rendement des grandes cultures	
Influence des pratiques de conservation des sols sur la santé du sol	
Matière organique	
Biomasse microbienne et fongique du sol	
Propriétés physiques du sol	
Pratiques de conservation des sols et stockage de carbone	
Objectifs de recherche	
Hypothèses	
Références	
Chapitre 1 - Crop response to soil management practices is driven by	7
interactions among practices, crop species and soil type	40
Résumé	
Abstract	
Introduction	
Materials and methods	
Experimental Site and Treatments	
Sampling and Analyses	
Results	
Corn	
Wheat	
Soybean	
Discussion	
Corn	
Wheat	
Soybean	
Conclusion	
Acknowledgement	
Funding	

References		58
Tables		64
Figures		69
Supplementary material		72
Chapitre 2 - Management practices differently affect particulate and		
mineral-associated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils	75	
Résumé		76
Abstract		77
Introduction		78
Material and method		80
Experimental Site and Treatments		80
Sampling and Analyses		81
Statistical Analysis		83
Results		84
SOC, stable aggregation and microbial biomass (2010-2015)		84
POM-C, FOM-C, and carbohydrates (2015)		85
Relationships between soil quality indicators, SOC fractions, and mana	igemei	nt
practices		86
Discussion		86
Effects of soil management practices and their interactions on soil qua	lity	
indicators		86
Field-based evidence in support of recent SOM formation models		88
General overview: management effects on SOC fractions and their pred	cursor	s 88
Conclusion		90
Acknowledgement		90
Funding		90
References		91
Tables		96
Figures		98
Supplementary material		102
Chapitre 3 - Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fract	tion	
for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs	104	
Résumé		105
Abstract		106
Introduction		107
Material and method		110
Experimental Site and Treatments		110
Samplings and Analyses		111
Results		113
Characterization of manures and crop residues		113
Whole soil organic C and total N		114

Characteristics of SOM Fractions	114
Carbon and N concentrations in SOM fractions	115
Discussion	115
Residue retention increased C content in whole soil and coarse SOM fra	ctions
	115
Animal manures increased C and N in whole soil and MAOM fractions	116
Particular characteristics and behavior of the coarse-MAOM fraction	118
Conclusion	120
Acknowledgement	120
Funding	120
References	121
Tables	126
Figures	128
Supplementary material	132
Chapitre 4 - Coarse-MAOM: a physical fraction of significance to suppo	rt
simultaneous C storage and N supply soil functions 1	34
Résumé	135
Abstract	136
Introduction	137
Soil as a carbon sink	139
Current paradigm of soil organic matter stabilization processes	139
Particulate organic matter	140
Fine mineral-associated organic matter	141
Pathways of soil organic matter formation	143
Soil as a nitrogen source	143
The coarse-MAOM, an underrated fraction in SOM models	145
An integrative framework	149
Summary, perspectives and challenges	154
Conclusion	155
References	156
Figures	165
Chapitre 5 - Subsoil C and N stocks changes drove whole-soil response to)
different combinations of agricultural management practices 1	70
Résumé	171
Abstract	173
Introduction	174
Material and method	176
Experimental Site and Treatments	176
Sampling and Analyses	177
Statistical Analysis	178
Results	179

C and N stocks of the sandy loam soil	179
C and N stocks of the silty clay soil	180
Discussion	181
Moderate effects of treatments on surface C and N stocks	181
Complex interactive effects of management practices on subsurface	C and N
stocks	182
Subsurface changes determined the response of the whole-soil profi	ile C and N to
management systems	185
Conclusion	186
Acknowledgement	187
Funding	187
References	188
Tables	192
Supplementary material	199
Chapitre 6 - Discussion générale	200
Retour sur les hypothèses	200
Hypothèses 1 à 4, chapitre 1 ó Rendement des cultures	200
Hypothèses 5 à 9, chapitres 2 et 3 ó Santé du sol	204
Hypothèses 10 et 11, chapitres 3 et 4 ó Fertilité du sol	206
Hypothèses 12 à 13, chapitres 5 ó U v q e m c i g " f g " e d	ctdqp20g7"gv"føc
Synthèse des résultats et principales contributions du projet	208
Rendement	208
Santé et fertilité du sol	210
Uvqemu"fg"ectdqpg"gv"føc/qv	g 216
Intégration des chapitres et applications pratiques des résultats	219
Perspectives de recherche	227
Références	231
Conclusion ANNEXE 1	237 239

Liste des tableaux

Table 1-1. Summary of the analysis on variance (F values) for the effects of year, soil type, fertilizer
source, tillage, residue management, and their interactions on crop grain yield, straw/stalk
yield, and NUE64
Table 1-2. Effects of year and fertilizer source ^a on corn grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹), stalk yield (kg MS ha ⁻¹) and
NUE (kg yield ha ⁻¹ kg N applied ⁻¹) combined for both soil types
Table 1-3. Effect of tillage on crop grain (kg ha ⁻¹) and straw/stalk (kg MS ha ⁻¹) yields as influenced by
soil type and year
Table 1-4. Wheat grain yield in a sandy loam and a silty clay soil as influenced by fertilizer source ^a in
2009. 2010. 2013 and 2016
Table 1-5. Wheat straw yield in the sandy loam and the silty clay as influenced by fertilizer source ^a .
Values are averaged for the four years with wheat (2009, 2010, 2013 and 2016)
Table 1-6 (S1) Agronomic practices for each production year and soil type ^a in a field experiment
established in autumn 2008 at Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures. Québec, Canada 72
Table 1-7 (S2) Monthly mean temperature and precipitation recorded in growing seasons 2009 to
2017 and 30-vr (1981-2010) average ^a
Table 1-8 (S3) Selected characteristics and application rates of liquid swipe manure (LSM) liquid
dairy manure (LDM) and solid noultry manure (SPM) for each application year from 2009 to
2017 Fortilizers were not applied on soubcan years
Table 2.1. Average offects of soil tillage, crop residue management and fortilizer source on soil quality
indicators (total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water stable aggregates
(MM/D) migrabial biomass (MBC), particulate erganic matter (DOM, C), fine erganic matter
(NWD), microbial biomass (NBC), particulate organic matter (POM-C), microbial biomass (NBC), particulate organic matter (POM-C), microbial biomass (A)), microbial biomass (A)
(FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), microbially-derived neutral sugars (GM), muramic
acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN)) in the surface (0-10 cm) layer of a sandy loam and a slity
Clay
Table 2-2. Correlation coefficient (R ²) of surface (0-10 cm) soil quality indicators (total soil organic
carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), particulate organic
matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), muramic acid
(MurA) and glucosamine (GluN)) and treatments with the first and second dimensions (Fig. 3) of
the PCA, for a sandy loam and a silty clay
Table 2-3 (S1). Summary of the analysis on variance (p values) for the effects of tillage, fertilizer
source, residue management, and their interactions on total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean
weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), microbial biomass (MBC), particulate
organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX),
microbially-derived neutral surgars (GM), muramic acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN) in the
sandy loam and the silty clay soil102
Table 2-4 (S2). Cumulative (2009-2015) C input to soil (T ha ⁻¹) as crop residues and manures for each
treatment in each soil type103
Table 3-1. Average (2009-2017) soluble organic compounds, hemicellulose, cellulose and lignin
proportions (dry matter basis), lignin:N and C:N ratios as well as N-NH4 concentrations of the
liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure, solid poultry manure applied to soil each spring, and
of plant residues returned to soil at harvest. Concentrations in manures (mean \pm standard
deviation) were determined annually, in triplicates, as per the Van Soest method ;
Concentrations in crop residues were taken from Recous $et a$ /2015)126

Table 3-2. Surface (0-5 cm) soil organic carbon (SOC) and total N as influenced by residue
management, fertilizer source and their interactions, and standard error of the means (SEM) for
each variable127
Table 3-3 (S1). Summary of the analysis on variance (p -values) for the effects of fertilizer source,
residue management, and their interactions on LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse
mineral-associated organic matter), fine-MAOM (fine mineral-associate organic matter), SOC
(total soil organic carbon) and Total N (total soil N) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soil 132
Table 3-4 (S2). Interaction between residue management and fertilizer source on N (nitrogen)
concentration of the fine-MAOM in the silty clay soil133
Table 5-1. Analysis of the variance (p values) for the effects of tillage, residue management, fertilizer
source and their interactions on C and N stocks of different soil layers (0-15, 15-30, 30-45 and
45-60 cm) as well as the whole soil profile (0-60 cm) in a Sandy loam and a Silty clay soil after 8
yrs
Table 5-2. Effects of tillage, residue management and fertilizer source on C and N stocks (kg m ⁻²) of
the top layer (0-15 cm) of sandy loam and silty clay soils after 8 yrs. Different uppercase letters
indicate statistical differences in C stocks, whereas different lowercase letters indicate statistical
differences in N stocks
Table 5-3. Interactive effects of fertilizer source and crop residue management on N stocks in the 30-
45 cm layer of the silty clay soil. Different lowescase letters indicate statistical differences in N
45 cm layer of the silty clay soil. Different lowescase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks across treatments
45 cm layer of the silty clay soil. Different lowescase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks across treatments
45 cm layer of the silty clay soil. Different lowescase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks across treatments

Liste des figures

Figure I - 1. Évolution des superficies (ha) en foin cultivé, en pâturage cultivé et en pâturage naturel
pour la province de Québec entre 2001 et 2020. Figure tirée de Thivierge et al. (2020), avec la
permission de l'auteure principale1
Figure I - 2. Schéma simplifié, présentant quelques interactions possibles entre différentes
composantes du système cultural (gestion des résidus, travail su sol, fertilisation) et facteurs
externes (type de sol, climat) ainsi que leur effet direct et croisé sur la santé du sol et la
productivité des cultures. Différentes combinaisons de ces composantes et de ces facteurs
influencent la productivité et la durabilité du système par un effet direct sur le rendement des
cultures, mais également de façon indirecte, en raison de leurs effets sur la santé du sol4
Figure I - 3. Division de la matière organique particulaire (POM) en fractions particulaire légère (LF) et
lourde (Coarse-MAOM) lorsque les méthodes de fractionnement par la taille sont jumelées aux
méthodes de fractionnement par densité14
Figure I - 4. Photo microscopique d'un agrégat montrant la présence d'hyphes fongiques (f)
contribuant à la stabilité des macro-agrégats et de corps bactériens (b) accumulés à la surface
de ces complexes. Cette photo est tirée de Angers et Chenu, (1998), avec la permission de
l'auteurp.rin.c.ip.a.l
Figure I - 5. Stabilité des agrégats en fonction de la labilité des apports de matière organique frais au
sol dans le temps. Figure adaptée de Monier et al. (1965)
Figure I - 6. Évolution du taux de séquestration du carbone (t C ha ⁻¹ année ⁻¹) a près la conversi
solpour l'agriculture sous des pratiques intensiv
après l'atteinte d'un seuil cri…t…i…q…u…e122igure ada
Figure I - 7. Taux annuel du changement du stock de carbone du sol (%) au Canada entre 1971 et
2015. Figure adaptée de Fan et al. (2019)
Figure 1-1. Average (2011, 2014, 2017) corn grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹) as influenced by the interactive effect
of soil type (Silty clay and Sandy loam), fertilizer source (NPK=complete mineral fertilizer,
LSM=liquid swine manure, SPM=solid poultry manure, LDM=liquid dairy manure and
PK=mineral control without N), and residue management (RH=residue harvested, RR=residue
returned). Means with different letters within the same soil type are significantly different at
the P<0.05 confidence level
Figure 1-2. Basic regression tree (2011, 2014 and 2017) performed with year, soils, and management
variables (FertN=amount of available N provided by the fertilizer (kg N ha ⁻¹), Soil_Nmin=soil
mineral N concentration (mg N kg soil ⁻¹), Soil_C=soil organic C, concentration (g C kg soil ⁻¹),
FertC:N= C/N ratio of the fertilizer source) as predictors of corn grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹). Soil bulk
density, soil pH, soil total N, soil water content, and the amount of residues retained in the
previous year were measured in the autumn preceding corn planting and included in this
analysis. Box plots graphically depict the average yield, major quartiles and variability of the
statistical groups defined by the regression tree
Figure 1-3. Average (2012 and 2015) soybean grain and straw yield as influenced by the interactive
effects of soil type (Silty clay and Sandy loam), tillage (MB=moldboard plowing and
MT=minimum till), and the residual effect of previous fertilizer treatments (NPK=complete
mineral fertilizer, LSM=liquid swine manure, SPM=solid poultry manure, LDM=liquid dairy
manure, and PK=mineral control without N). Means with different letters within the same soil
type and the same tillage treatment are significantly different at the $P\!<\!0.05$ confidence level. 71

water-stable aggregates (MWD) and soil microbial biomass (MBC) content in the surface layer	
(0-10 cm) of a sandy loam and a silty clay	
Figure 2-2. Interactive effect (2015) of soil tillage, fertilizer source and residue management on	
particulate organic matter (POM-C), plant-derived carbohydrates (AX) and microbe-derived	
carbohydrates (GM) content of the surface layer (0-10 cm) of a sandy loam and a silty clay 99	
Figure 2-3. Principal components biplots of selected surface soil variables (total soil organic carbon	
(SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), particulate organic matter	
(POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), muramic acid (MurA)	
and glucosamine (GluN)) for the silty clay (a) and the sandy loam (c), and projections of soil	
tillage, fertilizer source and residue management used as supplementary qualitative variables in	
the silty clay (b) and the sandy loam (d)	
Figure 2-4. Graphical sketch of the differential influence of varied management practices on surface	
(0-10 cm) SOC fractions (particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C) and	
their precursors (Plant-derived carbohydrates and microbial amino-sugars) relative to soil	
texture	
Figure 3-1. Scheme of the soil organic matter fractionation adapted from Maillard $et a/2015$.	
LF=light fraction, MAOM=mineral associated organic matter	
Figure 3-2. Carbon concentration (g C kg ⁻¹ soil) and C:N ratio of the LF (light fraction), the coarse-	
MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and the fine-MAOM (fine mineral associated	
organic matter) of silty clay and sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of	
the mean in each fraction	
Figure 3-3. Effect of residue management (a,b,e,f) and fertilizer source (c,d,g,h) on C and N content of	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction 130	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	C
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	С
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	С
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	С
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	С
LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic mater) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction	С

Figure 4-4. Graphical representation of results obtained by Nyiraneza $et \; a$ l(2010) showing a
disproportionate increase in soil nitrogen supply capacity, as compared to total soil nitrogen
increase following 28 years of manure addition to soil and manure additions coupled with the
inclusion of forages in the rotation
Figure 4-5. Conceptual framework that integrates C and N partitioning within the light fraction (LF),
the coarse mineral-associated fraction (coarse-MAOM), the dissolved organic matter fraction
(DOM) and the fine mineral-associated organic-matter fraction (fine-MAOM) as affected by
agricultural management practices and soil type
Figure 5-1. Interactive effects of soil tillage, fertilizer source and crop residue management on C (a)
and N (b) stocks in the sandy loam soil at different detpths (0-15 cm, 15-30 cm, 30-45 cm and
45-60 cm). Different uppercase letters indicate statistical differences in C stocks, whereas
different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks. The dashed lines represent
the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment (2009), when no statistical
differences were found among plots196
Figure 5-2. Interactive effects of soil tillage, fertilizer source and crop residue management on total C
and N stocks in the sandy loam soil. Different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in
N stock. The dashed lines represent the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment
(spring 2009), when no statistical differences were found among plots
Figure 5-3. Interactive effects of fertilizer source and crop residue management on C (a) and N (b)
stocks in the silty clay soil. Different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stock.
The dashed lines represent the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment (spring
2009), when no statistical differences were found among plots
Figure 6-1. Gains ou pertes de rendement (%) avec le travail réduit du sol, lorsque comparé au labour,
selon le type de sol, l'année et la culture. L'a
significatives
Figure 6-2. Représ en tati on ngnée adeporhoisisaquoe seur le dreeed enheńten ofyefnelet de l'a
maïs grain obtenu avec différentes sources fertilisantes.
Figure 6-3. Résumé graphique des différences (%) entre les pratiques de conservation des sols et
leurs homologues conventionnels pour différents indicateurs de santé du sol en surface
(matière organique, biomasse microbienne, diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables). 205
Figure 6-4.Schémamontrant l′évo-NVAvONVIdianoshe soldsueite àlsaama touractioan⊪et¢one:à
la perturbation mécanique de ses agents de stabilisation

Liste des acronymes

AX :	Plant-derived neutral sugars (Sucres neutres végétaux)
C:	Carbon (Carbone)
CoarseMAOM	Coarse mineral-associated organic matter; > 53μ m, > 1.7 g cm ³ (complexes organo- minéraux grossiers)
FineMAOM :	Fine mineral-associated organic matter; < 5 3 μ m , > ³ (tcomplexeg organon minéraux fins)
FOM:	Fine organic matter; < (5natièrenorganique fine)
FOMC :	Fine organic matter carbon concentration (concentration en carbone dans la matière organique fine)
GluN:	Glucosamine (Glucosamine)
GM :	Microbially-derived neutral sugars (Sucres neutres microbiens)
LDM	Liquid dairy manure (lisier de bovin)
LF :	Light fraction; < 1.7 g cm ³ (fraction légère)
LSM :	Liquid swine manure (lisier de porc)
MB:	Mouldboard plowing (labour)
MBC	Microbial biomass carbon (concentration en carbone de la biomasse microbienne)
MT:	Minimum tillage (travail réduit)
MurA	Muramic acid (Acide muramique)
MWD.	Mean weight diameter of water stable aggregates (diametre moyen pondéré des
	agrégats stables à l'eau)
N :	Nitrogen (Azote)
POM	Particulate organic matter; > 53µm (matière organique particulaire)
POMC:	Particulate organic matter carbon concentration (concentration en carbone dans la
	matière organique particulaire)
RH:	Residues harvested (résidus récoltés)
RR:	Residues returned to soil (résidus retournés au sol)
SOC	Soil organic carbon (concentration en carbone organique du sol)
SOM	Soil organic matter (matière organique du sol)
SPM	Solid poultry manure (fumier de volaille)

À Nicolas,

Remerciements

Il y a cinq ans, je retenais mon souffle en sautant à pieds joints dans cette grande aventure, la main de Nicolas dans la mienne. J'étais pleine de doutes et d'appréhensions, mais j'étais déterminée à me donner la chance de me réaliser professionnellement et de peut-être un jour vivre de ma passion; la recherche. Depuis ce temps, l'eau a coulé sous les ponts. On a vu grandir notre Rose et naître notre Flavie. On a vécu la France, les congrès, les déplacements entre Québec et Rivière-du-Loup. On a travaillé fort, on s'est adaptés beaucoup. Il y a eu de grands hauts, et quelques bas, il faut se l'avouer. Cependant, jamais une fois l'un de nous n'a regretté cette décision et je suis certaine que toute notre famille se souviendra de ces années comme étant parmi les plus belles et les plus douces de notre vie. Je suis on ne peut plus reconnaissante d'avoir pu compter sur l'amour et le soutien de mon entourage dans toute cette aventure et je me sens très privilégiée d'avoir pu travailler, pendant ces dernières années, sur un sujet qui me passionne autant, entourée de gens aussi exceptionnels.

Je tiens d'abord à remercier mes directrices de thèse, Anne Vanasse et Safya Menasseri-Aubry. Anne, merci de m'avoir offert l'opportunité d'amorcer mon retour aux études un bel avant-midi de mars 2016. Merci de m'avoir fait confiance et d'avoir investi autant de temps et d'énergie dans ce projet. Merci pour les petites tapes dans le dos aux moments opportuns, qui m'ont encouragée à me dépasser. Votre rigueur scientifique, votre dévouement et votre passion pour l'enseignement m'ont marquée. Ces qualités resteront pour moi un modèle de référence pour le futur. Je suis aussi extrêmement reconnaissante de toutes les opportunités que vous m'avez offertes, pour que je puisse pleinement me réaliser au cours de ces années. La cotutelle, les opportunités d'enseignements et la participation à différents congrès m'ont permis de m'outiller à divers niveaux et de me sentir maintenant prête à prendre des décisions éclairées et à voler de mes propres ailes. Safya, quel bonheur d'avoir eu la chance de collaborer avec vous. Merci de m'avoir ouvert les yeux sur une façon un peu différente d'aborder la recherche, de m'avoir encouragée à conceptualiser, à schématiser. Vous avez toujours le petit commentaire qui me pousse à réfléchir un peu plus loin, ou avec un angle un peu différent. J'espère finalement avoir mérité, à ce terme, ma boîte de crayons couleur! Je m'engage aussi à continuer de développer cette vision intégrée de la recherche dans le futur. À toutes les deux, Anne et Safya, je tiens aussi à vous dire que sur le plan personnel, j'ai

rencontré chez vous deux modèles vibrants de femmes inspirantes et de mères de famille dévouées qui se réalisent également dans le domaine professionnel et arrivent à arrimer brillamment ces différentes sphères de leurs vies. La valeur de ce modèle n'a pour moi aucun égal et je me considère privilégiée d'avoir pu vous côtoyer dans un contexte professionnel et amical.

Maintenant, comment passer sous silence l'implication de Martin et Denis; elle est de celles qui se soulignent et se célèbrent. Martin, outre votre curiosité scientifique et votre intelligence rationnelle hors norme, vous avez été pour moi un pilier sur lequel me reposer dans les moments un peu plus difficiles. Vous avez toujours su déceler les moments plus ardus pour moi et vous êtes assuré que j'arrive à maintenir le cap malgré les embuches grâce à votre intelligence émotionnelle, votre écoute et votre énergie calme et apaisante. Le temps et l'énergie que vous avez investis dans la correction de mes textes pour les articles m'ont également concrètement permis de parfaire mon style de rédaction, un outil qui me sera précieux pour le futur. Denis, quel modèle incroyable de chercheur dévoué, engagé et reconnu, à juste titre. Merci mille fois pour ces heures passées dans votre bureau, ou au téléphone, à discuter avec passion des mécanismes de stabilisation de la matière organique dans les sols. C'est un honneur d'avoir pu évoluer à vos côtés, vous avez été très inspirant pour moi. Votre propension à entretenir avec intérêt et constance vos relations interpersonnelles dans un contexte professionnel ou informel m'a marquée et m'a fait réaliser l'importance du réseau dans une carrière scientifique saine et prolifique. Martin et Denis, je suis incroyablement reconnaissante d'avoir eu la chance de vous côtoyer dans cette période clé de ma formation et j'espère bien pouvoir collaborer de nouveau avec vous dans le futur.

Cela étant dit, cette thèse n'aurait jamais été si agréable, ni même possible, sans le travail au champ et au laboratoire de l'équipe d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada et du personnel de la ferme de recherche ainsi que des professionnels et auxiliaires de recherche de l'Université Laval. Des remerciements tout particuliers sont adressés à Johanne Tremblay, Gabriel Lévesque, Annie Robichaud et Francis Gagnon pour leur travail minutieux et leur précieuse collaboration. Merci aussi aux collègues, Cindy Denoncourt et Julie Forest pour les échanges et les conversations enrichissantes. Je vous souhaite autant de bonheur et de succès dans vos études graduées et dans votre vie professionnelle que j'en ai eu moi-même

jusqu'à maintenant. Je remercie également tous les collègues d'Agrocampus et de l'INRA pour leur accueil chaleureux.

Un merci tout spécial est aussi adressé à ceux qui ont accepté de collaborer à la rédaction des articles scientifiques de cette thèse. Isabelle Royer, votre travail dans la mise en place et l'entretien du dispositif ainsi que dans la révision des articles scientifiques a été grandement apprécié. Merci aussi à Francesca Cotrufo, qui a accepté de collaborer avec nous dans la rédaction d'un modèle conceptuel, qui représente pour moi le point culminant de cette thèse. Son attitude favorable face à mon approche et à nos idées m'a donné confiance en mes capacités à établir des contacts pour favoriser la recherche interinstitutionnelle et interdisciplinaire à l'échelle internationale. Cette première expérience positive me donnera la confiance nécessaire pour renouveler l'expérience.

Je désire également remercier Adam Gillespie, Christian Walter, Jacynthe Dessurault-Rompré et Sabine Houot, d'avoir accepté d'évaluer cette thèse et sa soutenance. C'est un réel honneur pour moi d'avoir le privilège d'être lue et évaluée par des chercheurs de votre qualité.

Enfin, un mot pour ceux qui ont pavé la voie à mon chemin. Maman et papa, merci d'avoir, dès le début, investi temps, énergie et argent dans ma formation académique. Je sais que je suis privilégiée d'avoir eu ce parcours scolaire et que celui-ci implique plusieurs sacrifices de votre part. Je vous dois une grande partie de cette réussite. Merci aussi de m'avoir accordé la liberté de choisir ce qui me passionne et de m'avoir toujours encouragée à me réaliser pleinement dans ce que j'entreprends. Merci aussi à Michel Maziade, pour cette complicité, développée au fil du temps. Elle est aujourd'hui très précieuse pour moi et pour notre famille. Merci pour tes conseils et tes impressions sur mon travail, pour tes corrections et tes encouragements.

Rose et Flavie, vous êtes ce que j'ai de plus précieux au monde et je vous promets que malgré ma passion pour mon travail, jamais celui-ci n'entravera mon désir d'être présente pour vous. J'ai voulu vous offrir, du mieux que j'ai pu, le modèle d'une mère aimante et présente, qui prend également les moyens de se réaliser sur le plan professionnel et d'accomplir ses rêves, même s'ils sont parfois un peu fous. Du plus profond de mon cœur, je vous souhaite de vous accorder la même chose dans votre vie future, peu importe la signification que cela prendra pour vous. Rose, merci d'avoir compris, du haut de tes 3 ans, que tu devais quitter tes amis du Québec pour vivre de grandes aventures en France avec ta famille, ou encore que maman doive s'absenter quelques semaines pour des congrès et parfois travailler la fin de semaine pour respecter certains délais. Ma toute petite Flavie, je me suis demandé si ton nom ne devrait pas être inscrit près du mien sur cette thèse...Bien au chaud dans mon bedon, tu m'as accompagnée dans chacun de mes cours gradués et même dans la préparation et le passage de mon examen de doctorat. J'ai rédigé des demandes de bourse, des articles scientifiques et même cette thèse, tout en te nourrissant et en te berçant. Tu auras littéralement été présente à toutes les étapes de ce grand projet. Toi aussi je te remercie d'avoir su partager ta maman et d'avoir vécu de si près avec moi toutes les émotions qu'impliquaient ces grandes étapes de ma vie.

Nicolas, si c'est à toi que j'ai dédié cette thèse c'est parce que sans toi, elle n'aurait jamais eu lieu. Tu es celui qui a toujours cru en moi, plus que je n'aurais su le faire moi-même. Celui qui m'a convaincu que de faire une thèse était ce qu'il y avait de mieux pour moi, mais aussi pour donner l'exemple à nos filles; celui d'une mère qui ose réaliser ses rêves. Tu es celui qui a tout lâché pour me suivre en France, celui qui a mis en pause sa carrière pour que j'investisse du temps dans la mienne. Tu es celui qui partage ma folie, mais qui ne s'arrête pas devant le vertige qu'implique le fait de sauter pieds joints dans des projets qui amènent notre famille hors de sa zone de confort. Chaque fois que j'ai pris ta main pour me donner le courage de sauter dans l'inconnu, j'ai vécu les aventures les plus grandioses et les plus formatrices de ma vie. Comment te remercier assez pour tout ce que tu m'as apporté et que tu m'apportes encore. À tes côtés, rien n'est trop grand, rien n'est trop difficile. Je t'aime.

C'est donc le cœur plein de gratitude pour ces années passées et les yeux remplis d'espoir et de détermination pour le futur que j'entame une nouvelle étape de ma vie professionnelle. Je ne sais pas encore exactement ce que le futur nous réserve, mais comme dirait Nicolas : « peu importe où l'on se retrouvera, il nous suffira d'être ensemble, tous les cinq, pour que le bonheur s'y trouve aussi ».

Une dernière fois, à tous, merci!

Avant-propos

Mes études doctorales ont été réalisées grâce au soutien du programme de bourses d'études supérieures du Canada Vanier, décernées par le Conseil de recherches en Sciences Naturelles et en Génie du Canada (CRSNG). Une partie du financement a également été reçue de la part des Fonds de recherche du Québec - Nature et technologies (FRQNT), d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada ainsi que de l'organisme Équiterre. Un support financier de la part du Programme Européen pour l'éducation, la formation, la jeunesse et le sport (Erasmus +) ainsi que de la Fondation famille Choquette a été reçu pour financer les frais liés à la cotutelle. Le projet dans lequel s'insère cette thèse a été financé par Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada en collaboration avec l'Université Laval. Le projet encore en place aujourd'hui s'intitule « Essai fumier long-terme ». Ma thèse, qui s'intitule « Efficacité agroenvironnementale des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures : Rendement des cultures et dynamique du carbone et de l'azote dans le sol », a permis de valoriser une partie des données issues de ce projet entre les années 2009 et 2017. Cette thèse a été codirigée par la Dre Anne Vanasse, professeure au département de phytologie de l'Université Laval, et la Dre Safya Menasseri-Aubry, enseignante-chercheure à UMR SAS, INRA/Agrocampus Ouest. Le comité d'encadrement était également composé de Dr Martin Chantigny et Dr Denis Angers, tous deux chercheurs scientifiques au Centre de recherche et de développement sur les sols et les grandes cultures d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, à Québec.

Cette thèse comporte cinq principaux chapitres. Ils sont précédés d'une introduction générale, écrite en français, qui présente les principales connaissances scientifiques pertinentes à la thèse et permet de dégager les problématiques, les objectifs et les hypothèses de recherche. Les chapitres 1 à 5 sont rédigés en anglais, sous forme d'articles scientifiques. Pour chaque chapitre, Marie-Élise Samson est l'auteure principale alors que les Drs Anne Vanasse, Safya Menasseri-Aubry, Martin Chantigny et Denis Angers sont coauteurs de tous les chapitres.

Le chapitre 1 aborde les notions agronomiques de rendement en grain, en paille et d'efficacité de la fertilisation azotée. La Dre Isabelle Royer, chercheure scientifique à Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, est aussi coauteure. Le chapitre s'intitule « Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type». Pour ce chapitre, les données ont été récoltées entre 2009 et 2017 par de nombreux étudiants et techniciens. Les manipulations en laboratoire ont été principalement réalisées par des techniciens d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada. Avec l'aide précieuse d'Hélène Crépeau et de Johanne Tremblay, j'ai procédé à l'analyse statistique univariée des données. L'analyse multivariée a été réalisée à forfait, par Benjamin Louis. J'ai ensuite rédigé une première version de l'article scientifique, qui a été relue et commentée par les coauteurs. J'ai retravaillé l'article jusqu'à ce qu'il soit approuvé par tous les coauteurs. Cet article a été accepté dans la revue *Field Crops Research* en septembre 2019.

Le chapitre 2 a pour titre « Management practices differently affect particulate and mineralassociated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils ». La Dre Isabelle Royer, chercheure scientifique à Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, est aussi coauteure. Dans ce chapitre, les données de qualité du sol en surface, ont aussi été récoltées et analysées en laboratoire par les étudiants et les techniciens entre 2009 et 2015. J'ai réalisé les analyses statistiques, incluant l'analyse multivariée et rédigé l'article scientifique. Celui-ci a été relu et commenté par les coauteurs. J'ai retravaillé l'article jusqu'à ce qu'il soit approuvé par tous les coauteurs. L'article a été accepté dans la revue *Soil Biology and Biochemistry* en mai 2020.

Le chapitre 3 s'attarde à la répartition de la matière organique au sein de différentes fractions granulo-densimétriques de la matière organique du sol en surface, sous différentes combinaisons de pratiques agricoles. Il s'intitule « Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fraction for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs ». J'ai développé la méthodologie pour ce chapitre avec l'aide des co-auteurs. L'échantillonnage et les manipulations en laboratoire ont été réalisés à l'automne 2017 par les techniciens et étudiants d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada. J'ai réalisé l'analyse statistique et rédigé l'article scientifique. Celui-ci a été relu et commenté par les coauteurs. J'ai retravaillé l'article jusqu'à ce qu'il soit approuvé par tous les coauteurs. L'article a été accepté dans la revue *Soil Biology and Biochemistry* en juillet 2020.

Le chapitre 4 est un papier d'opinion proposant un modèle conceptuel basé sur les résultats des 3 premiers chapitres et sur une revue exhaustive de la littérature. Il propose de considérer

la coarse-MAOM comme étant une fraction physique et mesurable de la matière organique du sol, qui joue un rôle à la fois dans la stabilisation du carbone et dans la fertilité des sols agricoles. La Dre Francesca Cotrufo, de la Colorado State University est co-auteure de ce chapitre. Il s'intitule « Coarse-MAOM : a physical fraction of significance to support simultaneous C storage and N supply soil functions ». Après de multiples discussions sur le sujet avec les co-auteurs et une revue exhaustive de la littérature, j'ai rédigé l'article, qui a ensuite été relu et corrigé par tous les co-auteurs. L'article a été inclus dans la thèse, mais sera retravaillé au cours de l'automne 2020, avec l'objectif de le soumettre à la revue *Geoderma* en novembre 2020.

Le chapitre 5 évalue les stocks de carbone et d'azote dans tout le profil de sol (0-60 cm) sous différentes combinaisons de pratiques agricoles au début de l'expérimentation (2009) ainsi qu'en 2016, 8 ans après le début des traitements. La Dre Isabelle Royer, est coauteure de ce chapitre qui s'intitule « Subsoil C and N stocks changes drove whole-soil response to different combinations of agricultural management practices ». Les échantillons ont été collectés à l'automne 2009 et à l'automne 2016, puis analysés en laboratoire par les techniciens d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada. J'ai réalisé les analyses statistiques et rédigé l'article, qui a ensuite été relu et corrigé par tous les co-auteurs. L'article a été inclus dans la thèse, mais sera retravaillé au cours de l'automne 2020, avec l'objectif de le soumettre à la revue *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, en novembre 2020.

Finalement, une discussion générale, rédigée en français, revient sur les hypothèses proposées en introduction, souligne l'originalité des travaux et propose des pistes de réflexion pour de futures recherches dans le domaine. En annexe, on retrouve un schéma des dispositifs expérimentaux des deux sites à l'étude (Annexe 1).

Plusieurs présentations orales de mes résultats de recherche ont eu lieu. J'ai participé, lors de mon séjour en France, au 4ème séminaire organisé par le Réseau Matières Organiques, ayant lieu à Trégastel, en février 2018. J'y ai fait une présentation orale intitulée « Est-ce possible pour les sols agricoles d'agir à la fois comme puits de carbone et source d'azote? ». En juin de la même année, j'ai présenté une affiche intitulée «Towards a better understanding of carbon and nitrogen cycling in agricultural soils » dans le cadre du *20th international Nitrogen workshop*, qui se tenait à Rennes. J'ai également présenté une partie de nos résultats

lorsque j'ai participé au Symposium Sols Vivants en tant que conférencière invitée en mars 2019 et en mars 2020. Ces présentations avaient respectivement pour titre « Stocker du carbone dans les sols agricoles : mécanismes, enjeux et défis » et « Sols et changements climatiques; comprendre la base pour propulser le changement ». En octobre 2019, j'ai fait une présentation orale à $n \phi K p v g t p c v k q p c n " U { o r q quit sevten d'it <math>\dot{q} p " U q k n "$ Adéalaïde, en Australie. Pour financer ma participation à ce congrès, j'ai obtenu une bourse de la part du Centre de recherche en sciences du végétal (Centre SÈVE) et de la British Society of Soil Science (BSSS). J'ai également été invitée à présenter une conférence intitulée « Des sols agricoles en santé, une solution aux changements climatiques? » au Colloque Santé des Sols, qui se tenait à St-Hyacinthe en janvier 2020. J'ai aussi offert cette présentation au Congrès annuel des cultivateurs Franco-Ontariens en Ontario, au mois de mars 2020. Finalement, j'ai récemment obtenu un soutien financier de la part de l'Association québécoise des spécialistes en sciences du sol (AQSSS) pour participer au prochain ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meeting. Le résumé soumis ayant été accepté pour une présentation orale à l'évènement virtuel a pour titre « Enhancing particulate and mineral associated soil organic matter by adapting agricultural strategies to soil texture ».

Dans le cadre de ce doctorat réalisé en cotutelle entre le Québec et la France, j'ai eu la chance de réaliser une partie de mes études à Rennes, au sein de l'UMR SAS situé à Agrocampus Ouest. Supervisée par Safya Menasseri-Aubry, j'ai travaillé à la rédaction de mes articles scientifiques et multiplié les opportunités d'échanges avec les collègues au sein de l'unité de recherche. J'y ai également suivi une formation sur la filière d'intégration de la valorisation des matières résiduelles fertilisantes (SYST'MO) à Rennes, en février 2018 ainsi qu'un stage d'initiation à STICS offert par l'INRA à Avignon en mars 2018. Finalement, en mai 2020, je devais suivre un stage de quelques semaines à la Colorado State University dans le laboratoire de la Dre Francesca Cotrufo afin de travailler avec elle sur le modèle conceptuel inclus dans cette thèse. Étant donné les circonstances exceptionnelles liées à la COVID-19, ce stage a dû être annulé et la collaboration a plutôt été amorcée de façon virtuelle. Si la situation se stabilise dans la prochaine année, je reconsidérerai la possibilité de reconduire ce stage à plus tard.

Introduction générale

Contexte général

Au Québec, 55 % des terres agricoles étaient dédiées aux grandes cultures (céréales, oléagineux, protéagineux et pommes de terre) en 2011 (Statistique Canada, 2020). Au cours des dernières décennies, la province a noté une diminution des superficies en foin et en pâturage (Figure I -1) au profit des cultures annuelles. Les agriculteurs réagissent à un environnement de plus en plus concurrentiel en se tournant vers les cultures à haute valeur économique, telles que le maïs et le soya (Statistique Canada, 2020). Cependant, ce changement graduel dans le paysage agricole québécois n'est pas sans conséquence. En effet, un inventaire des sols agricoles du Québec a montré que plus de la moitié des terres sous monoculture de maïs et de céréales présentent des signes importants de dégradation depuis déjà quelques décennies (Tabi *et al.*, 1990). Les pratiques intensives de production des grandes cultures, telles que le labour et le faible niveau de matière organique retournée au sol, peuvent contribuer à l'appauvrissement de la matière organique des sols, ce qui engendre de nombreuses conséquences néfastes à la fois sur l'environnement et sur la capacité de production et sur la santé des sols arables (Reeves, 1997; Govaerts *et al.*, 2009).



Figure I - 1. Évolution des superficies (ha) en foin cultivé, en pâturage cultivé et en pâturage naturel pour la province de Québec entre 2001 et 2020. Figure tirée de Thivierge et al. (2020), avec la permission de l'auteure principale.

Bien que le terme « santé du sol » soit courramment utilisé dans la littérature scientifique, il n'existe pas de définition concensuelle pour ce terme. La définition et l'interprétation de ce terme varie donc selon le contexte et l'utilisateur. Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada définit la santé des sols comme étant la capacité des sols « à soutenir la croissance des cultures sans se dégrader, ni nuire à l'environnement » (Acton et Gregorich, 1995) alors que le NRCS aux États-Unis, définit plutôt la santé des sols comme étant la capacité des sols à « continuer de fonctionner comme un écosystème vivant et vital qui soutient les végétaux, les animaux et les humains ». Puisque les différentes fonctions des sols ne peuvent être directement mesurées, on utilise des indicateurs chimiques, physiques et biologiques pour mesurer la santé du sol (Paul, 2014). Il existe donc une grande quantité d'indicateurs qui peuvent être utilisés pour caractériser la santé du sol des différents systèmes agricoles. Puisqu'elle joue un rôle central dans la régulation de l'activité microbiologique, la matière organique des sols (et/ou la concentration en C organique) est souvent considérée comme un indicateur de choix de la santé des sols, puisqu'elle influence à la fois les propriétés physiques, chimiques et biologiques des sols. Augmenter de façon significative la matière organique des sols agricoles pourrait non seulement assurer la productivité de nos terres à long terme (Oldfield et al., 2019) et augmenter la résilience de nos systèmes face aux aléas climatiques (UNCCD, 2017), mais également contribuer à la lutte aux changements climatiques en permettant de stocker dans le sol des quantités significatives de carbone (Minasny et al., 2017).

Les pratiques de conservation des sols sont des pratiques que l'agriculteur peut adopter pour prévenir la dégradation des sols et assurer leur santé à long terme. Le travail réduit du sol, la rétention des résidus de culture, et la fertilisation organique sont considérés comme les piliers de l'agriculture durable (Hobbs et al., 2008). Toutes ces pratiques influencent directement le rendement des cultures par leur impact sur les propriétés physiques, chimiques et biologiques des sols. En effet, il est estimé que l'adoption de pratiques dites de conservation (ex. travail réduit du sol, retour des résidus de culture, utilisation d'engrais de ferme, etc...) au Canada puisse permettre d'augmenter les stocks de carbone du sol d'environ 0,1 à 0,5 tonnes de carbone par hectare par année (VandenBygaart et al., 2003 ; 2008) tout en favorisant le maintien ou l'amélioration de la santé de ces sols. Ces pratiques, mises en œuvre seules ou de manière combinée, ont des effets agronomiques (rendement et capacité à fournir de l'azote

aux cultures) et des effets environnementaux (indicateurs de santé des sols) qui varient selon le contexte pédoclimatique et cultural. Le développement d'une compréhension intégrée des systèmes agricoles et des mécanismes biogéochimiques qui les sous-tendent est donc nécessaire afin d'identifier les combinaisons de pratiques à privilégier dans différents contextes. Dans les prochaines sections, nous réviserons donc l'état actuel des connaissances concernant l'effet de différentes pratiques de conservation des sols sur le rendement des grandes cultures, la santé et la fertilité du sol, ainsi que sur la capacité du sol à agir en tant que puits de carbone.

Pratiques de conservation des sols et rendement des grandes cultures

Le rendement des cultures dépend d'une myriade de facteurs. Parmi ceux-ci, les pratiques de conservation des sols, seules ou en combinaison, peuvent avoir une influence directe sur le rendement, ainsi qu'une influence indirecte sur la productivité à court et à long terme en raison de leur impact sur la santé du sol (Figure I -2). L'effet attendu de l'adoption d'une pratique de conservation des sols sur le rendement des cultures reste toutefois largement imprévisible en raison des nombreux autres facteurs (ex. climat, type de sol, etc.) susceptibles d'influencer la réponse du sol et de la plante à ces pratiques. Une revue exhaustive de la littérature peut toutefois permettre de tirer quelques conclusions générales concernant l'effet seul ou combiné de certaines pratiques de conservation des sols sur le rendement des grandes cultures.



Figure I - 2. Schéma simplifié, présentant quelques interactions possibles entre différentes composantes du système cultural (gestion des résidus, travail du sol, fertilisation) et facteurs externes (type de sol, climat) ainsi que leurs effets directs et croisés sur la santé du sol et la productivité des cultures. Différentes combinaisons de ces composantes et de ces facteurs influencent la productivité et la durabilité du système par un effet direct sur le rendement des cultures, mais également de façon indirecte, en raison de leurs effets sur la santé du sol.

Le travail réduit, qui consiste à minimiser les perturbations du sol et à maximiser sa couverture par la présence de résidus en surface, est l'un des piliers des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures (Hobbs *et al.*, 2008). En plus de protéger le sol contre l'érosion, cette pratique permet de mieux conserver l'humidité du sol et de généralement réduire les coûts de production liés à la machinerie, à la main-d'œuvre et au carburant (Holland, 2004). Il existe un nombre élevé de publications dans la littérature concernant l'effet du travail du sol sur le rendement. Toutefois, les résultats varient en fonction des conditions pédoclimatiques et des différentes combinaisons de pratiques agricoles (Van Den Putte *et al.*, 2010; Ogle *et al.*, 2012; Toliver *et al.*, 2012). Une récente méta-analyse a révélé que les principaux facteurs influençant le rendement des cultures sous travail réduit du sol sont le climat, la texture du sol ainsi que l'espèce cultivée (Toliver *et al.*, 2012). En climat sec, un travail réduit du sol peut permettre d'augmenter le rendement des cultures, notamment en raison d'une meilleure rétention de l'eau dans le sol (Ogle *et al.*, 2012). En climat froid et humide, toutefois, le travail réduit du sol peut diminuer légèrement

le rendement par rapport au labour (Soane et al., 2012), particulièrement sur les sols lourds présentant un drainage insuffisant (Ziadi et al., 2014). Sous ces conditions, le semis direct ou le travail réduit du sol peuvent induire un ralentissement du réchauffement du sol au printemps (Johnson and Lowery, 1985), ce qui peut avoir des effets considérables sur le développement et le rendement de la culture (Hussain et al., 1999). Plusieurs études soulignent toutefois le fait qu'une période de transition de 6 à 10 ans soit nécessaire, après l'adoption du semis direct, pour évaluer ses effets réels sur les propriétés du sol (Stubbs et al., 2004) et sur le rendement (Soane et al., 2012). Certains auteurs ont effectivement démontré que malgré une diminution initiale des rendements sous semis direct, des rendements égaux ou supérieurs à ceux du labour pouvaient être obtenus après quelques années de transition (Soane et al., 2012). Ceci s'explique notamment par la formation de macroporosités formées par les réseaux racinaires laissés intacts sous semis direct (Angers et Caron, 1998; Fengyun et al., 2011) et par l'influence bénéfique du semis direct sur la présence de lombrics dans le profil de sol (Johnson-Maynard et al., 2007). Ces deux phénomènes ont pour effet d'augmenter la proportion de macro-porosités ainsi que le taux d'infiltration et la conductivité hydraulique du sol (Johnson-Maynard et al., 2007). Selon certains auteurs, il serait aussi possible de contrebalancer certains effets négatifs du semis direct sur le rendement pendant la période de transition en faisant un choix judicieux au niveau des combinaisons de pratiques. Par exemple, il a été observé que l'augmentation de la fertilisation azotée puisse contrebalancer l'effet négatif du semis direct sur le rendement, lorsque comparé au labour (Malhi et Nyborg, 1990; Grigoras et al., 2013). L'efficacité d'utilisation de l'azote par la culture serait d'ailleurs généralement équivalente ou supérieure pour le semis direct que pour le travail conventionnel (Malhi and Nyborg, 1990; Dalal et al., 2011), mais elle serait également influencée par d'autres pratiques agricoles telles que la gestion des résidus (Dalal et al., 2011).

La gestion des résidus de culture peut influencer le rendement des cultures de différentes manières. Après la récolte, la paille peut être laissée au champ ou récoltée pour la litière des animaux de ferme. Elle peut donc avoir une valeur commerciale intéressante si elle est vendue pour la litière ou, dans certains cas, pour la production de biocarburants (Stumborg *et al.*, 1996). Une exportation de la paille implique une exportation d'éléments minéraux et

de matière organique qui pourrait nuire à la fertilité du sol à long terme (Warren Raffa *et al.*, 2015). En revanche, leur retour au sol peut engendrer une immobilisation de l'azote, étant donné leur rapport C/N généralement élevé (Recous *et al.*, 2015). Certains auteurs suggèrent toutefois que l'effet négatif de l'immobilisation de l'azote sur les cultures soit transitoire et qu'à long terme, cette pratique mène à une augmentation de la matière organique du sol et à une meilleure efficacité de la fertilisation azotée (Malhi and Nyborg, 1990; Govaerts *et al.*, 2006). Par ailleurs, dans certains cas, le retour des résidus au sol peut entraîner une accumulation d'eau en surface ou une diminution de la température moyenne du sol (Nyborg *et al.*, 1995; Turmel *et al.*, 2015) ainsi qu'une augmentation de l'inoculum des pathogènes en surface, contribuant ainsi à une plus grande occurrence de maladies et de certains ravageurs, particulièrement dans les climats froids et humides (Sturz *et al.*, 1997). Les facteurs culturaux et pédoclimatiques ont donc une influence décisive sur la réponse des cultures à la gestion des résidus (Turmel *et al.*, 2015; Warren Raffa *et al.*, 2015). Dans leurs travaux, Hao *et al.* (2001) suggèrent d'ailleurs l'existence d'une interaction complexe entre la gestion des résidus, le travail du sol et la fertilisation azotée.

L'azote est considéré comme l'un des principaux facteurs limitant la productivité agricole (Bloom, 1997). La disponibilité de l'azote pour la plante dépend de sa forme (Mengel, 1996; Webb *et al.*, 2013). Ainsi, les engrais minéraux présentent l'avantage d'offrir de l'azote sous forme directement assimilable à la culture en quantité précise et à un moment déterminé, ce qui favorise un rendement élevé. Toutefois, le prix croissant de ces intrants et les impacts environnementaux liés à leur fabrication suggèrent l'utilisation des engrais de ferme afin d'améliorer la durabilité des systèmes de production (Jawson et Bull, 2002). Les engrais de ferme (fumiers et lisiers) ont pour avantage d'avoir un temps de résidence plus élevé dans le sol et de contribuer à la fertilité édaphique à court, moyen et long terme (Webb *et al.*, 2013). Il est reconnu qu'une application répétée d'engrais de fermes engendre un certain arrière-effet qui se traduit les années subséquentes par une capacité accrue du sol à fournir de l'azote à la plante lors de sa croissance (Schröder *et al.*, 2007; Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2010; Webb *et al.*, 2013; Riley, 2016). L'efficacité de la fertilisation azotée l'année de l'application et sa contribution à l'arrière-effet dépendent alors de la nature de la fumure utilisée. Ainsi, un engrais de ferme à rapport C/N élevé (≥ 20) risque de contribuer assez peu à la fertilisation

de la culture en cours, mais pourrait contribuer davantage à la fertilité du sol à plus long terme (CRAAQ 2010). Le taux de minéralisation de l'engrais de ferme appliqué au sol à court et à plus long terme est également influencé par plusieurs autres facteurs biotiques et abiotiques ainsi que par la combinaison de différentes pratiques culturales sur un même sol (Watts *et al.*, 2007; Webb *et al.* 2013; Thomas *et al.*, 2015). La problématique s'en trouve ainsi complexifiée.

En effet, plusieurs auteurs ont noté un effet combiné du type de travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus de culture (récoltés ou retournés au sol) et de la fertilisation azotée sur le rendement des grandes cultures. Les résultats obtenus selon différentes combinaisons de pratiques semblaient toutefois varier selon les facteurs pédoclimatiques à l'étude. Par exemple, dans une étude à très long terme (40 ans) menée en Australie, Dalal et al. (2011) ont étudié les effets principaux et combinés du type de travail de sol, de la gestion des résidus (retournés ou exportés) et de différentes doses d'azote minéral sur l'efficacité de la fertilisation azotée sous une production continue de blé. Après 40 ans, les chercheurs ont constaté que l'efficacité de la fertilisation azotée était similaire en travail conventionnel et en travail réduit du sol, mais qu'une dose faible d'azote combinée au retour des résidus provoquait une augmentation de l'efficacité de la fertilisation azotée peu importe le type de travail du sol. Les auteurs attribuent ce phénomène au rapport C/N élevé des résidus de céréales qui contribue à la rétention de l'azote en raison du phénomène d'immobilisation. Dans un contexte pédoclimatique plus rapproché du Québec, Malhi et al. (2006) ont eux aussi mené une expérience combinant le type de travail du sol, la gestion des résidus (retournés ou exportés) et différentes doses d'azote minéral. Cette étude menée sur 4 ans en Saskatchewan sur un loam argileux soumis à une rotation orge-pois-blé-canola n'a relevé aucun effet des facteurs étudiés sur les trois premières années de l'étude. Or, la quatrième année, les rendements en canola ont été significativement plus élevés en semis direct qu'en labour. Un effet positif du retour des résidus sur les rendements a aussi été noté, particulièrement lorsque jumelé au semis direct. Les auteurs ont associé ces effets aux conditions très sèches de la quatrième année. Le semis direct et le retour des résidus auraient alors permis une meilleure rétention de l'eau dans le sol, favorisant les rendements du canola. Une étude semblable menée par Malhi et al. (2011) en Alberta sur une période de 17 ans et sous un climat froid et

sec, a permis de comparer l'effet du travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus et de différentes doses de fertilisation azotée (0, 50 et 100 kg N ha⁻¹, pour les traitements avec paille seulement) sur deux types de sols contrastés (loam et loam limono-argileux) sous une rotation blé-canola-triticale-pois. L'effet des traitements a été semblable pour les deux types de sol, avec un avantage du travail conventionnel du sol sur le rendement, même en cas d'années sèches et aux doses d'azote les plus élevées. La gestion des résidus, quant à elle, n'a eu aucun impact significatif sur les rendements. Les auteurs expliquent toutefois que l'absence d'effet de la rétention des résidus puisse être attribuable au fait que ces traitements n'aient pu être comparés que pour une dose d'azote de 0 kg ha⁻¹. Pour les deux types de travail du sol, l'augmentation des doses d'azote jusqu'à 100 kg N ha⁻¹ a résulté en une augmentation des rendements. Ces résultats variés, obtenus dans différents contextes pédoclimatiques, montrent bien qu'il sera nécessaire de développer une compréhension intégrée des interactions entre les facteurs pédoclimatiques et les différents itinéraires techniques de production, ainsi que des mécanismes qui les sous-tendent, pour pouvoir prédire l'impact du choix d'une pratique sur le rendement des cultures. À ce jour, aucune étude dans la littérature n'a encore permis d'évaluer l'effet combiné du travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus de culture et de cinq sources fertilisantes incluant trois engrais de ferme aux propriétés biochimiques différentes, sur des sols à texture contrastée.

Influence des pratiques de conservation des sols sur la santé du sol

Matière organique

Les concepts conventionnels de la formation de la matière organique dans le sol assument que la structure chimique complexe de la matière organique formée par humification soit le principal mécanisme limitant sa dégradation et assurant sa stabilisation dans le sol sur le long terme (Achard, 1786; Waksman, 1936; Olk *et al.*, 2019). De nouvelles théories ont toutefois émergé au cours des dernières décennies, mettant en évidence différents mécanismes de stabilisation de la MO depuis la préservation sélective des molécules récalcitrantes, jusqu'à l'interaction des molécules avec les argiles et les ions métalliques en passant par l'inaccessibilité spatiale de ces molécules au sein des agrégats (Kögel-Knabner *et al.* 2008). De récentes études ont d'ailleurs démontré que plus le carbone organique du sol est âgé, moins il est composé de groupements aromatiques complexes (Kleber *et al.*, 2011). La stabilité de ces molécules dans le sol serait donc plutôt majoritairement co-déterminée par les mécanismes d'adsorption aux surfaces minérales ainsi que par la protection physique des substances minérales au sein des agrégats (Schmidt *et al.*, 2011; Dungait *et al.*, 2012).

Un modèle conceptuel visant à décrire les processus de formation et de stabilisation de la matière organique dans les sols récemment proposé par Cotrufo *et al.* (2013) suggère que l'efficacité d'utilisation des substrats organiques joue un rôle important sur la formation de matières organique stable dans le sol. Selon ces auteurs, un substrat utilisé de façon efficace par les microorganismes du sol favorisera la proportion de substrat assimilée par les micoorganismes et utilisée pour leur croissance et/ou leur activité métabolique et limitera la quantité de carbone respiré. Ainsi, les composés métaboliques simples, tels que le glucose, présentent typiquement une efficacité d'utilisation beaucoup plus élevée que les composés structuraux complexes, tels que la lignine. Toujours selon ces auteurs, les sous-produits microbiens issus de la dégradation de matière organique fraîche sont la principale source de matière organique stable dans le sol.

Selon Knicker (2011), le lien direct entre les surfaces minérales et la matière organique stable serait principalement assuré par des molécules peptidiques très simples et riches en azote, liant de façon étroite le cycle de l'azote à celui du carbone. Dans ce contexte, les constituants labiles des résidus végétaux seraient la source dominante de produits de dégradation microbienne dans le sol (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013) et la matière organique stable du sol serait un amalgame de polymères microbiens et végétaux et de leurs produits de dégradation (Miltner *et al.*, 2012; Cotrufo *et al.*, 2015; Kallenbach *et al.*, 2015; Lavallee *et al.*, 2019) associés avec des structures minérales par des liens covalents, des ponts hydrogènes et/ou des liaisons de van der Walls (Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008; Schmidt *et al.*, 2011). La quantité et la force des liens organo-minéraux contrôleraient alors la stabilisation de la matière organique dans différentes fractions du sol (Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008). Un modèle proposé par Guggenberger et Kaiser (2003) suggère aussi que la localisation de la matière organique ait un rôle majeur et décisif à jouer dans la stabilité des composés organiques. Selon ces auteurs,

la stabilité de la matière organique à l'intérieur des micropores serait assurée par l'adsorption sélective des molécules carbonées aux surfaces minérales et à l'inaccessibilité physique de ces sites d'adsorption aux microorganismes et à leurs enzymes. La protection de ces complexes au sein des macro-agrégats aurait donc également un rôle important dans la stabilité à long terme de ces complexes puisqu'elle contribuerait à diminuer l'accès des microorganismes (Six *et al.*, 2000; Grandy and Neff, 2008; Schweizer *et al.*, 2019).

La recherche des dernières décennies a donc mené à un changement de paradigme associant maintenant la stabilité du carbone dans le sol à sa protection physique plutôt qu'à sa récalcitrance biochimique (Kleber *et al.*, 2011; Schmidt *et al.*, 2011; Dungait *et al.*, 2012; Kleber et Lehmann, 2019). S'en est suivi un intérêt renouvelé pour le fractionnement physique de la matière organique du sol dans le but de la séparer en fractions mesurables qui soient relativement homogènes et qui puissent être associées à des fonctions spécifiques dans le sol (Elliott and Cambardella, 1991; Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Poeplau *et al.*, 2018; Lavallee *et al.*, 2019). Les méthodes de fractionnement physique les plus couramment utilisées comprennent des méthodes basées sur la taille des fragments organiques, sur leur densité ou encore sur des méthodes combinant un mélange de taille et de densité.

Bien qu'imparfaite à certains égards (Wander, 2004; Gosling *et al.*, 2013), la méthode divisant la matière organique du sol sur la base de la taille a été largement utilisée au cours des dernières décennies (Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006; Cotrufo *et al.*, 2019; Lavallee *et al.*, 2019). Dans sa plus simple expression, elle divise la matière organique totale du sol en deux composantes (POM et FOM). Elle se base sur la prémisse que la matière organique particulaire (POM; >50-63 µm) soit majoritairement composée de matière organique fraîche ayant un taux de résidence dans le sol relativement faible (Gregorich et Beare, 2008) et que la matière organique de taille plus fine (FOM; <50-63 µm) soit plutôt constituée de résidus de la dégradation microbienne (Miltner *et al.*, 2012; Kallenbach *et al.*, 2015). Ces produits organiques alors enrichis en azote auraient la capacité de s'associer solidement aux surfaces minérales réactives du sol (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke *et al.*, 2018), conférant ainsi à la FOM un taux de résidence beaucoup plus élevé dans le sol. Si l'augmentation de la FOM se traduit pas un stockage du carbone dans le sol sur le long terme
grâce aux liens organo-minéraux stables formés au sein de ces complexes très fins, la stabilisation de la POM est majoritairement assurée par son inclusion au sein des agrégats via des agents de stabilisation organiques temporaires et transitoires, tels que des racines, des hyphes fongiques et des polysaccharides microbiens (Tisdall and Oades, 1982). La stabilité de ces agrégats est donc sujette aux facteurs influençant la destruction physique et/ou l'oxydation de ces agents de stabilisation, ce qui fait en sorte que la POM comprise dans ces complexes présente généralement un taux de résidence relativement faible dans le sol (Cambardella and Elliott, 1994; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006; Lavallee *et al.*, 2019). Plusieurs auteurs se sont donc intéressés aux fractions grossières de la matière organique du sol comme étant le principal site de minéralisation de l'azote (Schimel et Bennett, 2004; Bosshard *et al.*, 2008; Bu *et al.*, 2015; Luce *et al.*, 2016). Cependant, jusqu'à maintenant, les méthodes pour isoler en laboratoire une fraction de la matière organique du sol étant directement reliée à sa fertilité ont été développées de manière à être adaptées au contexte cultural et pédoclimatique de l'étude (Luce *et al.*, 2011; Ros, 2012).

La mise en culture d'un sol entraîne une diminution rapide de la quantité de matière organique associée à la POM dans la couche de surface et dans une moindre mesure, à la FOM (Cambardella and Elliott, 1992). En modifiant les conditions d'humidité et d'oxygénation dans la couche de surface (Johnson and Lowery, 1985), le travail continu du sol contribue à l'oxydation des agents de stabilisation des macro-agrégats (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000), ce qui mène à la minéralisation de la matière organique du sol et augmente la proportion de complexes organo-minéraux plus fins (Grandy et Neff, 2008). Cela a donc pour effet d'augmenter la proportion de matière organique stable avec un cycle de vie plus lent par rapport à la fraction plus labile (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000; Grandy and Neff, 2008). Ainsi, bien que le labour puisse transitoirement augmenter la fertilité du sol en favorisant l'oxydation et la minéralisation d'une certaine proportion de la matière organique labile, ultimement, cette pratique agricole peut aussi mener à l'épuisement des ressources du sol qui permettent d'entretenir sa fertilité à long terme (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000).

La gestion des résidus de culture risque elle aussi d'avoir un impact sur la quantité de matière organique du sol. En effet, la décomposition et la transformation des résidus végétaux aériens

et souterrains sont les principaux procédés par lesquels la matière organique du sol est formée. Après leur retour au sol, les résidus végétaux sont décomposés avec une efficacité reliée à leur qualité biochimique, ce qui influence leur répartition au sein de différentes fractions de la matière organique du sol (Cotrufo et al., 2013). Les résidus ayant une concentration élevée de composés labiles et un rapport C/N relativement faible présenteraient une efficacité d'utilisation microbienne élevée. Ainsi, ils seraient rapidement décomposés et/ou incorporés dans la biomasse microbienne, génèreraient peu de pertes de carbone par respiration et contribueraient à la formation de FOM (Cotrufo et al., 2013; Cotrufo et al., 2015). D'autre part, les résidus ayant de fortes concentrations de composés structuraux produiraient moins de FOM et auraient plutôt tendance à s'accumuler dans la POM. Ainsi, plus l'efficacité de dégradation microbienne des résidus est élevée, plus la formation de matière organique stable est importante et plus les pertes de CO₂ vers l'atmosphère sont réduites (Cotrufo et al., 2013). Cependant, l'effet du retour des résidus sur la matière organique du sol peut considérablement varier en fonction du type de travail du sol effectué. En effet, alors que le semis direct ou le travail réduit du sol tend à concentrer la matière organique en surface, le labour a pour effet de diluer les apports de matière organique sur la profondeur de sol travaillée et de favoriser l'accumulation de matière organique sous la couche de labour, particulièrement en climats froids et humides (Angers et al., 1997; Angers et Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Gregorich et al., 2009).

En contexte agricole, la fertilisation a également un rôle important à jouer dans le cycle de la matière organique du sol. L'ajout de N dans le système peut contribuer à la transformation des résidus végétaux en sous-produits microbiens, favorisant ainsi la formation de FOM (Gillespie *et al.*, 2014). Cependant, l'utilisation d'engrais de synthèse pourrait également favoriser la présence de populations de bactéries opportunistes qui consomment rapidement les agents de liaison organiques associés à la formation des macro-agrégats tels que les polysaccharides microbiens ou encore nuire au développement de certaines communautés fongiques (Le Guillou *et al.*, 2012). Inversement, les engrais de ferme ont l'avantage de fournir un apport additionnel de matière organique lors de la fertilisation qui peut s'avérer utile pour améliorer ou maintenir les niveaux de matière organique du sol (Maillard and Angers, 2014). En effet, l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme pourrait non seulement favoriser

l'activité microbienne et l'accumulation de matière organique dans les complexes organominéraux stables (Gillespie et al., 2014), mais elle pourrait également contribuer à la stabilité des macro-agrégats (Gerzabek et al., 1995; Yagüe et al., 2016). Il est d'ailleurs reconnu qu'une application répétée d'engrais de ferme au sol favorise l'accumulation de C et de N dans certaines fractions labiles de la matière organique du sol, ce qui pourrait contribuer à l'arrière-effet des engrais de ferme (Nyiraneza et al., 2010). En effet, Maillard et al. (2015) ont noté une augmentation préférentielle de la matière organique particulaire et lourde (Coarse-MAOM) dans les sols fertilisés avec des fumiers. Bien que très peu d'études en fassent mention, la POM est constituée à la fois de matière organique légère (LF) et de complexes organo-minéraux grossiers et lourds (coarse-MAOM), formés par des fragments organiques partiellement dégradés et recouverts de particules minérales fines (Figure I -3). Cette fraction, de taille grossière (\geq 50-63 µm) et de poids élevé (\geq 1.6-1.8 g cm⁻³) peut être isolée en laboratoire par une dispersion des agrégats suivie d'un fractionnement granulodensimétrique de la matière organique du sol (Figure I -3). Certains auteurs ont déjà proposé que cette fraction puisse avoir un rôle à jouer dans la fertilité du sol (Robertson et al., 2019), mais cette hypothèse n'a pas encore été explorée, ni vérifiée dans la littérature.

La qualité biochimique de l'engrais de ferme (Obriot *et al.*, 2016) ainsi que l'écart stœchiométrique entre la matière organique indigène et l'apport frais de matière organique au sol (Mooshammer *et al.*, 2014) peuvent aussi influencer la répartition de la matière organique fraîche au sein de fractions plus ou moins stables de la matière organique du sol (Finn *et al.*, 2016). Par exemple, dans une étude canadienne, en climat continental humide, l'application de lisier de porc sur une période de 20 ans n'a occasionné aucune accumulation de carbone dans un loam limoneux argileux (Angers *et al.*, 2010). Les auteurs ont suggéré qu'une minéralisation très rapide de certains composés, comme les acides gras volatils, et la haute disponibilité de l'azote aient pu accélérer la minéralisation de la matière organique native du sol, ce qui aurait annulé l'accumulation à partir des composés organiques du lisier de porc.



Figure I - 3. Division de la matière organique particulaire (POM) en fractions particulaire légère (LF) et lourde (Coarse-MAOM) lorsque les méthodes de fractionnement par la taille sont jumelées aux méthodes de fractionnement par densité.

Biomasses microbienne et fongique du sol

Les communautés microbiennes du sol influencent le cycle de la matière organique et la stabilité des agrégats non seulement via la décomposition des produits carbonés, mais aussi puisque les produits microbiens sont eux-mêmes les plus importants constituants de la matière organique édaphique après les résidus végétaux (Kögel-Knabner, 2002). On peut retrouver jusqu'à 10^7 à 10^{12} cellules microbiennes par gramme de sol (Watt *et al.*, 2006). Leur localisation est toutefois majoritairement restreinte à des micro-habitats spécifiques représentant au plus 1 % du volume total du sol (Young *et al.*, 2008). Au niveau de ces sites, les microorganismes sont plus nombreux et plus actifs, ce qui fait en sorte que les procédés microbiens opèrent à un taux beaucoup plus élevé que dans la matrice de sol en général

(Kuzyakov and Blagodatskaya, 2015). Se localisant majoritairement près des sites qui reçoivent des apports élevés de nutriments, d'eau et de substrats organiques, on les retrouve principalement au niveau de la rhizosphère, de la lithosphère, des biopores, des chemins d'écoulement préférentiels ainsi qu'à la surface des agrégats (Guggenberger and Kaiser, 2003; Kleber *et al.*, 2015; Kuzyakov and Blagodatskaya, 2015).

Pour adhérer aux surfaces minérales, les microorganismes du sol produisent des substances polymériques extracellulaires principalement composées de polysaccharides et de protéines menant à la formation de biofilms (Badireddy et al., 2008). Les bactéries étant sensibles à la sécheresse, elles s'accumulent préférentiellement à la surface des minéraux ou des résidus hydratés (Kleber et al., 2015). À l'inverse, en raison du diamètre important des hyphes fongiques et de leur structure filamenteuse, les champignons édaphiques se retrouvent principalement au niveau des pores interconnectés et bien aérés situés entre les agrégats (Otten et al., 1999; Harris et al., 2003) (Figure I -4). Ce faisant, les champignons sont reconnus comme des agents importants de la macro-agrégation des sols (Chantigny et al., 1997) puisqu'ils collaborent au soutien physique des agrégats par leur réseau mycélien en plus de favoriser l'agglomération des particules à la surface des hyphes par la production de substances extracellulaires collantes (Chenu et Cosentino, 2011). Les substances hydrophobiques qu'ils sécrètent pourraient par ailleurs considérablement diminuer la mouillabilité des agrégats et ainsi augmenter leur résistance à l'eau (Ritz and Young, 2004; Rillig, 2005). La prévalence de champignons par rapport aux bactéries dans un écosystème est influencée par plusieurs paramètres, mais de façon générale, la proportion de champignons tend à être plus élevée dans les sols plus légers à pH plus acides alors que les bactéries sont plus compétitives dans les milieux humides à pH neutre (Babin et al., 2013; Khan et al., 2016). Parmi la très grande diversité d'espèces de champignons et de bactéries retrouvée dans les sols agricoles, certaines sont connues pour être particulièrement bénéfiques à la croissance des végétaux et au cycle de la matière organique. En effet, les champignons glomeromycètes sont susceptibles de former une symbiose avec la grande majorité des plantes d'intérêt agricole. Ces champignons endomycorhiziens sont aptes à la dissolution de certains minéraux du sol lorsqu'ils s'associent à des bactéries partenaires. Ils collaborent donc à la nutrition phosphatée de leurs plantes hôtes, mais également à la résistance de ces plantes aux maladies, à la sécheresse, aux ravageurs et au stress (Fortin *et al.*, 2016). Les champignons mycorhiziens collaborent également davantage que les champignons saprophytiques à la stabilisation de matière organique dans le sol (Khan *et al.*, 2016). Plusieurs bactéries édaphiques jouent aussi un rôle important dans la croissance des végétaux. Certaines espèces de bactéries comme le *Rhizobium* peuvent fixer l'azote atmosphérique en association avec les légumineuses par la formation de nodules à la surface des racines alors que d'autres bactéries ont la capacité de stimuler directement la croissance végétale des plantes y étant associées en induisant la production de phytohormones (Fortin *et al.*, 2016). Un nombre élevé de facteurs biotiques et abiotiques est toutefois susceptible d'influencer le génotype et l'expression phénotypique du microbiome édaphique et les processus y étant liés. Bien que la nature et l'importance de ces différentes interactions soient encore relativement méconnues, de plus en plus d'études s'intéressent à leur compréhension étant donné leur rôle fondamental dans la fertilité des sols, la stabilisation du carbone et la préservation de l'environnement.



Figure I - 4. Photo microscopique d'un agrégat montrant la présence d'hyphes fongiques (f) contribuant à la stabilité des macro-agrégats et de corps bactériens (b) accumulés à la surface de ces complexes. Cette photo est tirée de Angers et Chenu, (1998), avec la permission de l'auteur principal.

Dans un contexte agricole, l'ensemble des pratiques culturales risque d'influencer les populations microbiennes édaphiques. Une méta-analyse menée par Zuber et Villamil (2016) révèle que le semis direct engendre généralement une biomasse microbienne ainsi qu'une activité enzymatique plus élevée dans le sol que les pratiques de travail conventionnel. Le labour est effectivement susceptible d'influencer la dynamique des microorganismes du sol en perturbant la structure des agrégats, en modifiant le microclimat à la surface du sol, en diminuant l'humidité de la matrice et en augmentant la surface de contact entre le sol et les résidus de culture (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000; Martens, 2001). L'effet du travail du sol sur la stratification des stocks de carbone influence également de façon importante la distribution et la structure des communautés microbiennes selon la profondeur (van Capelle *et al.*, 2012). Selon une revue de la littérature, il semblerait effectivement que les champignons, et particulièrement les mycorhizes à arbuscules, aient une moins grande prévalence dans les sols labourés en raison de la destruction du réseau mycélien et du transport des propagules en profondeur (Kabir, 2005).

La gestion des résidus a elle aussi une grande importance sur la prévalence de certains groupements microbiens dans le sol, puisque la nature et la durée des ajouts de matières organiques dictent en partie la structure des communautés microbiennes (Kuzyakov et Blagodatskaya, 2015). L'ajout de résidus végétaux au sol crée des moments forts d'activité microbienne qui engendrent une succession des communautés ainsi qu'une intense compétition intra et interspécifique ayant ultimement un impact important sur le cycle du carbone, son efficacité d'utilisation et donc, sur la structure du sol (Kuzyakov et Blagodatskaya, 2015). Ainsi, l'ajout de composés organiques labiles dans le milieu engendre rapidement une augmentation de la stabilité des agrégats grâce aux polysaccharides exsudés lors de l'activité microbienne stimulée par la présence de molécules relativement simples et facilement dégradables (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Abiven *et al.*, 2007). Il semble toutefois que les champignons soient plus compétitifs que les bactéries pour la dégradation des composés organiques structuraux plus récalcitrants, ce qui expliquerait leur présence majoritaire dans les stades avancés de décomposition ainsi que leur rôle à plus long terme

dans la stabilité des agrégats du sol (Le Guillou *et al.*, 2012) dans des systèmes de culture générant des résidus de cultures à C/N élevé (>100) et riches en lignine.

Si le retour de résidus au sol est généralement bénéfique pour la vie microbienne, l'effet de la fertilisation semble plus difficile à prévoir. Une récente méta-analyse a révélé que l'ajout d'azote minéral au sol augmentait à long terme la biomasse microbienne et que cet effet était principalement dû à l'augmentation du carbone organique du sol en raison d'une croissance végétale accrue (Geisseler and Scow, 2014). Cette même étude a également décelé un changement dans la composition des communautés microbiennes après un ajout d'azote minéral au sol, mais l'effet de cet apport sur la prévalence de certains groupes dépendrait de plusieurs autres facteurs environnementaux et culturaux. Plusieurs études ont d'ailleurs démontré que l'effet de la fertilisation sur l'efficacité de l'utilisation des résidus de culture par les microorganismes et sur la structure des communautés microbiennes dépendait de la stœchiométrie initiale du sol et notamment de son ratio C/N (Mooshammer et al., 2014; Finn et al., 2016). Lorsque comparés aux engrais minéraux, les engrais de ferme auraient un effet positif encore plus important sur la biomasse microbienne et la diversité du microbiome édaphique (Zhong et al., 2010). Sous certaines conditions, le semis direct jumelé à la fertilisation organique aurait également un effet synergique sur la biomasse et la diversité microbienne du sol en surface (Viaud et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2011).

Propriétés physiques du sol

Les propriétés physiques du sol intègrent un ensemble de variables telles que la structure, la conductivité hydraulique, la capacité de rétention en eau et la densité apparente (Dexter, 1988). Ainsi, comparativement à un sol dégradé, un sol ayant des propriétés physiques adéquates présente généralement une meilleure résilience face aux aléas climatiques, une meilleure capacité à soutenir la croissance des plantes ainsi qu'une meilleure résistance à la battance et à l'érosion (Le Bissonnais, 1996).

Depuis plusieurs années, le semis direct est largement recommandé comme pratique de conservation des sols et de l'eau (Triplett and Dick, 2008). Cependant, les différentes revues

de littérature et méta-analyses sur le sujet suggèrent que les effets positifs du semis direct sur les propriétés physiques du sol soient largement influencés par le climat, la texture du sol ainsi que les autres pratiques culturales inhérentes au système. Bien qu'on retrouve dans la littérature de grandes divergences concernant l'effet du semis direct sur la densité apparente du sol (Fengyun et al., 2011), la majorité des études suggère tout de même que cette pratique améliore la porosité et la capacité de rétention en eau de la couche superficielle du sol (Derpsch et al., 2010). En plus des macroporosités formées par les réseaux racinaires laissés intacts par le semis direct en fin de saison (Angers et Caron, 1998), cette pratique favorise également la présence de lombrics dès les premières années de conversion (Johnson-Maynard *et al.*, 2007). Ces deux phénomènes ont donc pour effet d'augmenter la proportion de macroporosité, ainsi que le taux d'infiltration et la conductivité hydraulique du sol. En association avec le retour des résidus au sol, le semis direct peut également augmenter la rugosité de surface, prévenir la battance et améliorer la conductivité porale, ce qui contribue ultimement à limiter l'érosion et le ruissellement de surface (Armand et al., 2009; Blanco-Canqui and Lal, 2009; Kahlon et al., 2013). Dans une méta-analyse proposée par Sun et al. (2015), le semis direct permettrait une réduction du ruissellement de 27,2 % lorsque comparé aux pratiques conventionnelles. Les pertes de sol par érosion seraient également diminuées en moyenne de 60 % en semis direct et l'effet positif de cette pratique serait encore plus marqué pour les sols légers et les climats tempérés (Mhazo et al., 2016). La stabilité accrue des agrégats du sol favorisée en semis direct par l'accumulation de composés carbonés dérivés des résidus de culture et de l'activité microbienne (Blanco-Canqui, 2011) serait également un facteur déterminant dans la résistance du sol à la battance et à l'érosion (Le Bissonnais, 1996).

L'agrégation du sol influence plusieurs propriétés physiques du sol incluant la structure, la porosité, la capacité de rétention en eau, la conductivité hydraulique, l'aération et la susceptibilité à l'érosion (Dexter, 1988). De façon générale, le travail du sol diminue le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats lorsque comparé au semis direct ou au travail réduit du sol (Sheehy *et al.*, 2015). Ce phénomène est influencé par l'action physique directe du travail du sol sur les agrégats, par leur exposition aux cycles d'humectation-dessiccation et de gel-dégel à la surface du sol (Paustian *et al.*, 1997), mais également par la structure des

communautés microbiennes et la concentration de matière organique en surface (Holland and Coleman, 1987). La stabilité accrue des agrégats du sol est favorisée en semis direct par l'accumulation en surface de composés carbonés dérivés des résidus de culture et de l'activité microbienne (Holland and Coleman, 1987; Blanco-Canqui, 2011). En effet, la matière organique est reconnue pour agir dans la stabilisation des agrégats en augmentant la cohésion entre les particules à l'intérieur de l'agrégat et en augmentant leur hydrophobicité (Abiven et al., 2009). Villamil et al. (2015) ont mené une étude aux États-Unis testant l'effet du travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus et de différents niveaux de fertilisation azotée sur les propriétés d'un loam argileux soumis à une culture de maïs en continu. Après huit ans, une interaction significative sur la stabilité des agrégats à l'eau a été observée entre les trois facteurs à l'étude. La stabilité des agrégats de surface la plus élevée a été observée avec le retour des résidus au sol combiné au semis direct et au plus faible taux de fertilisation azotée. Pour leur part, Malhi et al. (2006) ont noté une augmentation respective du diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats de 72 % pour le semis direct lorsque comparé au labour et de 23 % lorsque les résidus de culture étaient retournés au sol. Le traitement présentant le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats le plus élevé était celui combinant le semis direct et le retour des résidus alors que le plus faible était celui combinant le labour et l'exportation des résidus.

Plusieurs études ont par ailleurs démontré que la quantité et la nature de la matière organique apportée au sol peuvent avoir un effet considérable sur le degré d'agrégation et sur la stabilité de la structure du sol. Selon un modèle proposé par Monnier (1965) et testé par Abiven *et al.* (2009), les produits organiques labiles auraient un effet intense, mais très transitoire sur l'agrégation alors que les matières organiques plus récalcitrantes auraient un effet moins intense, mais plus soutenu sur la stabilité des agrégats (Figure I -5). Ainsi, des résidus de culture avec des teneurs élevées en composés structuraux favoriseraient la longévité de macro-agrégats stables comparativement à des résidus avec une plus grande proportion de composés labiles et un rapport C/N plus faible (Martins and Angers, 2015). Selon une logique semblable, l'ajout de fumier de bovin favoriserait à long terme un diamètre moyen pondéré plus élevé des agrégats qu'un sol témoin non fertilisé alors qu'un sol fertilisé à long terme avec des engrais minéraux aurait pour effet de diminuer le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats, lorsque comparé à ce même témoin (Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2009).



Figure I - 5. Stabilité des agrégats dans le temps en fonction de la labilité des apports de matières organiques apportées au sol. Figure adaptée de Monier et al. (1965).

Pratiques de conservation des sols et stockage de carbone

Les sols représentent la plus grande réserve de carbone de la biosphère continentale (Post *et al.*, 1982) et peuvent donc à la fois agir comme une importante source et un important puits de carbone atmosphérique. Lorsqu'un milieu naturel est converti en terre arable, le sol peut perdre de 20 à 70 % de son carbone en raison d'une minéralisation accrue de la matière organique indigène et d'une diminution des apport annuels de matières organiques au sol (Lal, 2001). Cela fait en sorte que les sols agricoles ont été d'importantes sources de dioxyde de carbone au cours des derniers siècles (Lal, 2001). Cependant, en changeant nos pratiques de production, il pourrait être possible de retourner une partie de ce carbone vers les sols (Minasny *et al.*, 2017) (Figure I -6). Stocker du carbone sous forme de matière organique dans les sols pourrait donc non seulement contribuer à la durabilité et la résilience de nos systèmes agricoles, mais pourrait également jouer un rôle dans la lutte aux changements climatiques (Lal *et al.*, 2011).



Figure I - 6. Évolution du taux de séquestration du carbone (t C ha⁻¹ année⁻¹) après la conversion d'un sol pour l'agriculture sous des pratiques intensives, puis l'adoption de pratiques de conservation après l'atteinte d'un seuil critique. Figure adaptée de Minasny et al. (2017).

En raison de sa très grande prévalence dans les sols et de son taux de résidence élevé (Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008; Cotrufo *et al.*, 2019), la FOM est souvent considérée comme étant la fraction clé dans laquelle stocker du carbone pour maximiser les bénéfices environnementaux. Toutefois, certaines études suggèrent que le sol dispose d'une quantité limitée de sites actifs pour l'adsorption des composés organiques, ce qui implique qu'un sol donné disposerait d'une capacité maximale à préserver le carbone organique au sein des complexes fins et stables de la FOM (Hassink, 1997). Selon cette hypothèse, la capacité du sol à agir en tant que puits de carbone à long terme serait influencée par son contenu en surfaces minérales réactives ainsi que par le degré de saturation des sites d'adsorption (Hassink et Whitmore, 1997; Six *et al.*, 2002a). Plus le déficit de saturation d'un sol est élevé, plus sa capacité à stabiliser de la nouvelle matière organique au sein de la FOM sera élevée alors qu'un déficit de saturation faible devrait procurer un moins grand potentiel pour la formation de matière organique stable (Castellano *et al.*, 2015). Inversement, la POM ne constitue qu'environ 15 % de la matière organique dans les sols arables et son taux de résidence est beaucoup plus faible que celui de la FOM (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006). Cependant, la POM est une fraction de la matière organique qui réagit très rapidement aux changements de pratiques agricoles (Cambardella et Elliott, 1992; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006; Lambie *et al.*, 2019) et qui n'est théoriquement pas soumise aux concepts de saturation (Lavallee *et al.*, 2019).

Un des facteurs principaux influençant le stockage de carbone dans les sols agricoles est l'utilisation des terres. Ainsi, la conversion d'une prairie ou d'un pâturage vers la production des grandes cultures engendre généralement d'importantes pertes de carbone dans le sol (Guo et Gifford, 2002), tel qu'observé dans la province de Québec au cours des dernières décennies (Statistiques Canada, 2015; Figure I -7). La diminution de la biomasse racinaire et de la diversité des systèmes racinaires sous des régimes de grandes cultures contribue à ces changements de stocks observés. En effet, de plus en plus d'études soulignent le rôle majeur des systèmes racinaires dans le stockage de matière organique dans le sol (Johnson *et al.*, 2006; Crews et Rumsey, 2017). En fonction de leurs traits physionomiques, les racines des plantes peuvent contribuer au stockage de carbone dans les sols de différentes façons : par leur présence dans le sol pendant la croissance et après la sénescence de la plante, par la rhizodéposition de composés métaboliques près des surfaces minérales, ainsi que par l'effet positif du réseau racinaire sur la stabilisation physique des agrégats (Poirier et al., 2018). Dans les systèmes de grandes cultures, les sols contiennent généralement beaucoup moins de biomasse racinaire, comparativement aux milieux naturels (Crews et Rumsey, 2017). Cependant, en adoptant certaines pratiques de conservation sur ces terres appauvries, il peut être possible d'augmenter considérablement leurs stocks de carbone (Minasny et al. 2017).

Puisque la majorité des études en science du sol se sont jusqu'à maintenant principalement intéressées à la couche de surface, il était généralement reconnu que le travail réduit et le semis direct permettent de stocker du carbone dans les sols, lorsque comparé au labour (West et Post, 2002). Selon de récentes méta-analyses, il semble toutefois que le type de travail du sol n'engendre simplement qu'un déplacement de la matière organique le long du profil (Angers et Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Luo *et al.*, 2010). En effet, le semis direct augmente la proportion de carbone organique dans la couche de surface alors que les sols labourés

présentent une quantité plus élevée de matière organique dans les couches plus profondes (Angers and Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Luo et al., 2010; Viaud et al., 2011). Sous semis direct, on observe donc une accumulation de POM à la surface du sol, puisque les résidus végétaux aériens et des racines sont laissés à la surface du sol (Wander et al., 1998). Inversement, lorsque le sol est labouré, les résidus végétaux sont partiellement incorporés en profondeur, ce qui favorise l'accumulation de POM sous la couche de labour (Wander et al., 1998), où sa dégradation est ralentie, particulièrement en conditions froides et humides (Angers et al., 1997). En surface, le labour engendre le bris mécanique et l'oxydation des agents de stabilisation organiques tels que les racines, les hyphes fongiques et les polysaccharides microbiens, ce qui favorise la dispersion des macro-agrégats, expose la matière organique y étant contenue, favorise sa minéralisation et mène ultimement à la formation de complexes organo-minéraux plus fins (Grandy et Neff, 2008). Ainsi, lorsque l'ensemble du profil est considéré, les gains en surface observés en semis direct sont compensés par des apports plus importants en profondeur avec le labour, ce qui fait en sorte que le travail du sol a généralement peu d'impact sur les stocks totaux de carbone du sol lorsqu'on considère l'ensemble du profil (Angers et Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Luo et al., 2010).

Ainsi, il semble que l'apport régulier de matières organiques fraîches au sol soit souvent nécessaire pour maintenir ou augmenter les stocks de carbone du sol (Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2009; Warren Raffa *et al.*, 2015). Cet apport de matières organiques au sol peut être assuré notamment par une augmentation de la couverture du sol dans le temps et dans l'espace (cultures intercalaires, cultures de couverture, engrais verts, etc.) et/ou en retournant au sol les résidus végétaux aériens ou d'autres amendements organiques, tels que les engrais de ferme. Le coefficient de rétention moyen du carbone appliqué au sol par le retour des résidus de culture varie typiquement entre 6 à 14 % (Campbell *et al.*, 1991; Buyanovsky and Wagner, 1998; Thomsen and Christensen, 2004; Kong *et al.*, 2005) alors que celui des engrais de ferme est plutôt de l'ordre de 8 à 37 % (Bhogal *et al.*, 2007; Maillard and Angers, 2014). La composition biochimique de l'apport influence également sa répartition au sein de différentes fractions de la matière organique du sol. Par exemple, les apports labiles ayant une faible concentration en lignine et une quantité d'azote relativement élevée favorisent l'efficacité d'utilisation microbienne et contribuent davantage à la formation de FOM, et donc à la

stabilisation du carbone dans le sol sur le long terme (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). Inversement, les apports organiques contenant une forte proportion de composés structuraux et une faible quantité d'azote risquent de contribuer de façon moins importante à la formation de FOM (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013), mais peuvent tout de même créer une accumulation de POM dans le sol et favoriser la macro-agrégation (Abiven *et al.*, 2009; Le Guillou *et al.*, 2012). Ultimement, la répartition des apports de matières organiques fraîches au sein de ces fractions dépend également du type de sol et de sa texture (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013; Castellano *et al.*, 2015).



Figure I - 7. Taux annuel du changement du stock de carbone du sol (%) au Canada entre 1971 et 2015. Figure adaptée de Fan et al. (2019).

Tel que mentionné précédemment, la majorité des études évaluant l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de carbone du sol s'est surtout intéressée à la couche de surface, puisqu'on croyait alors que le carbone profond était très stable (Wang *et al.*, 1999; Chabbi *et al.*, 2009; Hobley *et al.*, 2017). Cependant, de récentes études démontrent que sous certaines conditions, une partie du carbone profond (> 30 cm) peut s'avérer réactive (Baisden et Parfitt, 2007; Chabbi *et al.*, 2009; Don *et al.*, 2011) et même être affectée par certaines pratiques agricoles sur une échelle de temps décennale (Harrison *et al.*, 2011; Shahbaz *et al.*, 2017). Puisque le carbone profond représente plus de la moitié des stocks de carbone totaux à l'échelle globale (Jobbágy et Jackson, 2000; Harrison *et al.*, 2011; Balesdent *et al.*, 2018), le

sol des couches profondes a été récemment identifié comme étant l'un des compartiments clés à privilégier pour le stockage de carbone stable (Lorenz et Lal, 2005; Chen *et al.*, 2018; Bertrand *et al.*, 2019). Toutefois, les conditions environnementales et les mécanismes de stabilisation prévalents varient selon la profondeur (Poirier *et al.* 2020), ce qui fait en sorte que l'on connaît encore assez peu le cycle du carbone profond (Rumpel et Kögel-Knabner, 2011). Plus d'études seront donc nécessaires afin de comprendre si, et comment, il est possible d'influencer les stocks de carbone profond grâce aux pratiques agricoles.

Objectifs de recherche

Cette revue de littérature démontre que les réponses du sol et des plantes aux pratiques de conservation en grandes cultures dépendent des interactions entre les pratiques agricoles et les facteurs pédoclimatiques du site à l'étude. Pour mettre en œuvre des systèmes de production plus durables en grandes cultures, il faudra donc approfondir notre compréhension des mécanismes biogéochimiques et physiques en jeu et des différents facteurs biotiques et abiotiques susceptibles de les influencer. Ce projet de recherche est basé sur un essai de long terme situé à la station de recherche agronomique de l'Université Laval à St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, près de Québec, au Canada. Le dispositif a été mis en place à l'automne 2008. Il est répété sur une argile limoneuse et sur un loam sableux. Chaque site expérimental prend la forme d'un plan factoriel en tiroirs subdivisés comprenant trois répétitions en blocs complets et combinant différents régimes de travail du sol (travail réduit vs labour), de gestion des résidus de culture (résidus récoltés vs laissés au sol) et cinq différentes sources fertilisantes (fumier de volaille, lisier de bovin, lisier de porc, engrais minéral complet et engrais minéral sans azote) (Annexe I). Les sites ont été cultivés en blé en 2009 et en 2010, puis ils ont suivi une rotation maïs-blé-soya de 2010 à 2016 (une culture par saison de croissance). Ce dispositif expérimental, permettant d'évaluer l'effet de 20 itinéraires techniques différents sur deux Brunisols à texture contrastée sur le long terme (9 ans), nous a permis de fixer les objectifs suivants :

 Vérifier s'il existe une relation ou des interactions entre le type de sol, le travail du sol, la gestion des résidus, la source fertilisante (lisier de porc, lisier de bovin, fumier de volaille ou engrais minéral), les conditions météorologiques de la saison de croissance et le rendement des cultures de blé, de maïs et de soya.

- (2) Évaluer, dans deux Brunisols à texture contrastée, les effets (simples et croisés) du travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus et de la source fertilisante (lisier de porc, lisier de bovin, fumier de volaille ou engrais minéral) sur différents indicateurs de la santé des sols (concentration en C organique, biomasse microbienne, diamètre des agrégats, sucres neutres, sucres aminés, fractions granulo-densimétriques de la matière organique du sol) et sur l'importance respective de chaque facteur en fonction de la texture du sol.
- (3) Évaluer, dans deux Brunisols à texture contrastée, les effets de la quantité et de la qualité biochimique de différents apports organiques (résidus de cultures, lisier de porc, lisier de bovin, fumier de volaille) sur la concentration en carbone et en azote de différentes fractions granulo-densimétriques de la matière organique de surface (0-5 cm) sous travail réduit du sol.
- (4) Dans un modèle conceptuel, tenter d'intégrer le cycle de l'azote des sols agricoles aux connaissances actuelles concernant les mécanismes biogéochimiques impliqués dans le cycle du carbone, en considérant la coarse-MAOM comme site actif dans la fertilité des sols.
- (5) Évaluer, dans deux Brunisols à texture contrastée, les effets (simples et croisés) du travail du sol, de la gestion des résidus et de la source fertilisante (lisier de porc, lisier de bovin, fumier de volaille ou engrais minéral) sur les stocks de carbone et d'azote jusqu'à une profondeur de 60 cm.

Hypothèses

En nous basant sur la revue de littérature présentée dans l'introduction, nous avons posé plusieurs hypothèses en lien avec nos objectifs de recherche. Ces hypothèses ont été divisées en quatre grands groupes, soit : 1) rendement des cultures, 2) santé du sol, 3) fertilité du sol et 4) stocks de carbone et d'azote du sol. Dans ces hypothèses, le terme « pratiques de conservation des sols » réfère au travail réduit du sol, au retour des résidus de culture et à l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme.

Rendement des cultures

- Le rendement des cultures est fortement influencé par l'interaction des pratiques de conservation, ainsi que par le type de sol et les conditions météorologiques de la saison de croissance.
- (2) En travail réduit, les rendements sont inférieurs si les résidus sont retournés au sol, peu importe la texture de sol et particulièrement lors des premières années de transition.
- (3) L'engrais minéral complet permet d'obtenir de meilleurs rendements de maïs et de blé dans les premières années, mais une utilisation répétée d'engrais de ferme permet de diminuer cet écart après quelques années.
- (4) Parmi les engrais de ferme, le lisier de porc produit de meilleurs rendements que le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille en raison de sa plus forte proportion en azote facilement assimilable et de son faible rapport C/N.

Santé du sol

- (5) Les pratiques de conservation du sol améliorent les indicateurs de santé du sol (concentration en C organique, biomasse microbienne, diamètre des agrégats, sucres neutres, sucres aminés, fractions granulo-densimétriques de la matière organique du sol) en surface, peu importe la texture du sol.
- (6) Le retour des résidus de culture et l'utilisation des engrais de ferme ont un effet positif sur les indicateurs de santé du sol en surface, particulièrement lorsque combinés au travail réduit du sol.
- (7) Comme en milieu naturel, la matière organique particulaire (POM) des sols arables est associée aux résidus végétaux alors que la matière organique fine (FOM) est majoritairement associée aux produits issus de l'activité microbienne.
- (8) Les résidus de culture améliorent la stabilité des agrégats, mais ont des effets bénéfiques modérés sur l'accumulation de carbone et d'azote dans les fractions fines et stables de la matière organique du sol.

(9) Les engrais de ferme favorisent l'accumulation de carbone et d'azote à la fois dans les fractions grossières et labiles et dans les fractions fines et stables de la matière organique du sol.

Fertilité du sol

- (10) L'utilisation d'engrais de ferme favorise l'accumulation préférentielle de matière organique au sein de la coarse-MAOM en surface.
- (11) La coarse-MAOM est une fraction clé dans le cycle de l'azote des sols agricoles et contribue au phénomène d'arrière-effet des engrais de ferme.

Stocks de carbone et d'azote

- (12) Lorsque tout le profil est considéré (0-60 cm), le travail du sol n'a aucun effet sur le stock total de carbone et d'azote du sol, mais le retour des résidus et l'utilisation d'engrais organiques favorisent le stockage de carbone et d'azote dans le sol.
- (13) Dans un horizon temporel décennal, les effets des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de C et de N des couches profondes sont faibles par rapport aux effets sur les couches de surface.

Le dispositif expérimental susmentionné a permis de tester ces hypothèses. Les données issues de ce dispositif entre 2008 et 2017 ont fait l'objet des chapitres 1, 2 et 5 alors qu'un échantillonnage et des analyses supplémentaires en 2017, ont fait l'objet du chapitre 3. Finalement, le chapitre 4 est basé sur les connaissances acquises dans les trois premiers chapitres de la thèse ainsi que sur une revue exhaustive de la littérature. La méthodologie liée à chacun des chapitres est décrite en détail dans les sections matériel et méthodes. Les dispositifs expérimentaux de l'expérience principale et de l'expérience secondaire sont décrits en détail dans le chapitre 1 et un schéma est fourni à l'annexe I.

Références

- Abiven, S., Menasseri, S., Angers, D., Leterme, P., 2007. Dynamics of aggregate stability and biological binding agents during decomposition of organic materials. European Journal of Soil Science 58, 239-247.
- Abiven, S., Menasseri, S., Chenu, C., 2009. The effects of organic inputs over time on soil aggregate stability A literature analysis. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 41, 1-12.
- Achard, F., 1786. Chemische untersuchung des torfs. Crell's Chem. Ann 2, 391-403.
- Acton, D.F., Gregorich, L., 1995. The health of our soils: toward sustainable agriculture in Canada.
- Angers, D., Bolinder, M., Carter, M., Gregorich, E., Drury, C., Liang, B., Voroney, R., Simard, R., Donald, R., Beyaert, R., 1997. Impact of tillage practices on organic carbon and nitrogen storage in cool, humid soils of eastern Canada. Soil and Tillage Research 41, 191-201.
- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 86, 225-229.
- Angers, D., Eriksen-Hamel, N., 2008. Full-inversion tillage and organic carbon distribution in soil profiles: a meta-analysis. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 1370-1374.
- Angers, D.A., Caron, J., 1998. Plant-induced changes in soil structure: processes and feedbacks. Biogeochemistry 42, 55-72.
- Armand, R., Bockstaller, C., Auzet, A.-V., Van Dijk, P., 2009. Runoff generation related to intra-field soil surface characteristics variability: Application to conservation tillage context. Soil and Tillage Research 102, 27-37.
- Babin, D., Ding, G.-C., Pronk, G.J., Heister, K., Kögel-Knabner, I., Smalla, K., 2013. Metal oxides, clay minerals and charcoal determine the composition of microbial communities in matured artificial soils and their response to phenanthrene. FEMS microbiology ecology 86, 3-14.
- Badireddy, A.R., Korpol, B.R., Chellam, S., Gassman, P.L., Engelhard, M.H., Lea, A.S., Rosso, K.M., 2008. Spectroscopic characterization of extracellular polymeric substances from Escherichia coli and Serratia marcescens: suppression using sub-inhibitory concentrations of bismuth thiols. Biomacromolecules 9, 3079-3089.
- Baisden, W.T., Parfitt, R.L., 2007. Bomb 14 C enrichment indicates decadal C pool in deep soil? Biogeochemistry 85, 59-68.
- Balesdent, J., Basile-Doelsch, I., Chadoeuf, J., Cornu, S., Derrien, D., Fekiacova, Z., Hatté, C., 2018. Atmosphere–soil carbon transfer as a function of soil depth. Nature 559, 599-602.
- Balesdent, J., Chenu, C., Balabane, M., 2000. Relationship of soil organic matter dynamics to physical protection and tillage. Soil and tillage research 53, 215-230.
- Bertrand, I., Viaud, V.r., Daufresne, T., Pellerin, S., Recous, S., 2019. Stoichiometry constraints challenge the potential of agroecological practices for the soil C storage. A review. Agronomy for Sustainable Development: Official journal of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) 39.

- Bhogal, A., Chambers, B., Whitmore, A., Powlson, D., 2007. The effects of reduced tillage practices and organic material additions on the carbon content of arable soils. Defra, London.
- Blanco-Canqui, H., Lal, R., 2009. Crop Residue Removal Impacts on Soil Productivity and Environmental Quality. Critical Reviews in Plant Sciences 28, 139-163.
- Bloom, A.J., 1997. Nitrogen as a Limiting Factor: Crop Acquisition of. Ecology in Agriculture, 145.
- Bolinder, M.A., Angers, D., Gregorich, E., Carter, M., 1999. The response of soil quality indicators to conservation management. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 79, 37-45.
- Bosshard, C., Frossard, E., Dubois, D., Mader, P., Manolov, I., Oberson, A., 2008. Incorporation of nitrogen-15-labeled amendments into physically separated soil organic matter fractions. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 72, 949-959.
- Bu, R., Lu, J., Ren, T., Liu, B., Li, X., Cong, R., 2015. Particulate organic matter affects soil nitrogen mineralization under two crop rotation systems. PLoS One 10, e0143835.
- Cambardella, C., Elliott, E., 1992. Particulate soil organic-matter changes across a grassland cultivation sequence. Soil science society of America journal 56, 777-783.
- Cambardella, C., Elliott, E., 1994. Carbon and nitrogen dynamics of soil organic matter fractions from cultivated grassland soils. Soil Science Society of America Journal 58, 123-130.
- Castellano, M.J., Mueller, K.E., Olk, D.C., Sawyer, J.E., Six, J., 2015. Integrating plant litter quality, soil organic matter stabilization, and the carbon saturation concept. Global change biology 21, 3200-3209.
- Chabbi, A., Kögel-Knabner, I., Rumpel, C., 2009. Stabilised carbon in subsoil horizons is located in spatially distinct parts of the soil profile. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 41, 256-261.
- Chantigny, M.H., Angers, D.A., Prévost, D., Vézina, L.-P., Chalifour, F.-P., 1997. Soil aggregation and fungal and bacterial biomass under annual and perennial cropping systems. Soil Science Society of America Journal 61, 262-267.
- Chen, S., Martin, M.P., Saby, N.P., Walter, C., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., 2018. Fine resolution map of top-and subsoil carbon sequestration potential in France. Science of the Total Environment 630, 389-400.
- Chenu, C., Cosentino, D., 2011. Microbial regulation of soil structural dynamics. The architecture and biology of soils: life in inner space, 37-70.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Ranalli, M.G., Haddix, M.L., Six, J., Lugato, E., 2019. Soil carbon storage informed by particulate and mineral-associated organic matter. Nature Geoscience, 1-6.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Soong, J.L., Horton, A.J., Campbell, E.E., Haddix, M.L., Wall, D.H., Parton, W.J., 2015. Formation of soil organic matter via biochemical and physical pathways of litter mass loss. Nature Geoscience 8, 776-779.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Wallenstein, M.D., Boot, C.M., Denef, K., Paul, E., 2013. The M icrobial E fficiency-M atrix S tabilization (MEMS) framework integrates plant litter decomposition with soil organic matter stabilization: do labile plant inputs form stable soil organic matter? Global Change Biology 19, 988-995.
- CRAAQ, 2010. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- Crews, T.E., Rumsey, B.E., 2017. What agriculture can learn from native ecosystems in building soil organic matter: A review. Sustainability 9, 578.

- Dalal, R.C., Wang, W., Allen, D., Reeves, S., Menzies, N., 2011. Soil Nitrogen and Nitrogen-Use Efficiency under Long-Term No-till Practice. Soil science society of america journal 75, 2251-2261.
- Derpsch, R., Friedrich, T., Kassam, A., Li, H., 2010. Current status of adoption of no-till farming in the world and some of its main benefits. International Journal of Agricultural and Biological Engineering 3, 1-25.
- Dexter, A.R., 1988. Advances in characterization of soil structure. Soil & Tillage Research 11, 199-238.
- Don, A., Schumacher, J., Freibauer, A., 2011. Impact of tropical land-use change on soil organic carbon stocks–a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 17, 1658-1670.
- Dungait, J.A., Hopkins, D.W., Gregory, A.S., Whitmore, A.P., 2012. Soil organic matter turnover is governed by accessibility not recalcitrance. Global Change Biology 18, 1781-1796.
- Elliott, E., Cambardella, C., 1991. Physical separation of soil organic matter. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment 34, 407-419.
- Fengyun, Z., Pute, W., Xining, Z., Xuefeng, C., 2011. The effects of no-tillage practice on soil physical properties. African Journal of Biotechnology 10, 17645-17650.
- Finn, D., Page, K., Catton, K., Kienzle, M., Robertson, F., Armstrong, R., Dalal, R., 2016. Ecological stoichiometry controls the transformation and retention of plant-derived organic matter to humus in response to nitrogen fertilisation. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 99, 117-127.
- Fortin, J.A., Plenchette, C., Piché, Y., 2016. Les mycorhizes: l'essor de la nouvelle révolution verte. 163 p.
- Geisseler, D., Scow, K.M., 2014. Long-term effects of mineral fertilizers on soil microorganisms–A review. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 75, 54-63.
- Gerzabek, M.H., Kirchmann, H., Pichlmayer, F., 1995. Response of soil aggregate stability to manure amendments in the Ultuna long-term soil organic matter experiment. Zeitschrift für Pflanzenernährung und Bodenkunde 158, 257-260.
- Gillespie, A., Diochon, A., Ma, B., Morrison, M., Kellman, L., Walley, F., Regier, T., Chevrier, D., Dynes, J., Gregorich, E., 2014. Nitrogen input quality changes the biochemical composition of soil organic matter stabilized in the fine fraction: a long-term study. Biogeochemistry 117, 337-350.
- Gosling, P., Parsons, N., Bending, G., 2013. What are the primary factors controlling the light fraction and particulate soil organic matter content of agricultural soils? Biology and Fertility of Soils 49, 1001-1014.
- Govaerts, B., Sayre, K., Ceballos-Ramirez, J., Luna-Guido, M., Limon-Ortega, A., Deckers, J., Dendooven, L., 2006. Conventionally Tilled and Permanent Raised Beds with Different Crop Residue Management: Effects on Soil C and N Dynamics. Plant and Soil 280, 143-155.
- Govaerts, B., Verhulst, N., Castellanos-Navarrete, A., Sayre, K.D., Dixon, J., Dendooven, L., 2009. Conservation agriculture and soil carbon sequestration: between myth and farmer reality. Critical Reviews in Plant Science 28, 97-122.
- Grandy, A.S., Neff, J.C., 2008. Molecular C dynamics downstream: the biochemical decomposition sequence and its impact on soil organic matter structure and function. Science of the Total Environment 404, 297-307.
- Gregorich, E., Beare, M., 2008. Physically uncomplexed organic matter. Soil sampling and methods of analysis, 607-616.

- Gregorich, E., Beare, M., McKim, U., Skjemstad, J., 2006. Chemical and biological characteristics of physically uncomplexed organic matter. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 70, 975-985.
- Grigoras, M., Popescu, A., Negrutiu, I., Gidea, M., Ioan, H., Pamfil, D., 2013. Effect of Notillage System and Fertilization on Wheat Production. Notulae Botanicae Horti Agrobotanici Cluj-Napoca 41, 208-212.
- Guggenberger, G., Kaiser, K., 2003. Dissolved organic matter in soil: challenging the paradigm of sorptive preservation. Geoderma 113, 293-310.
- Guo, L.B., Gifford, R., 2002. Soil carbon stocks and land use change: a meta analysis. Global change biology 8, 345-360.
- Hao, X., Chang, C., Carefoot, J.M., Janzen, H.H., Ellert, B.H., 2001. Nitrous oxide emissions from an irrigated soil as affected by fertilizer and straw management. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 60, 1-8.
- Harris, K., Young, I.M., Gilligan, C.A., Otten, W., Ritz, K., 2003. Effect of bulk density on the spatial organisation of the fungus Rhizoctonia solani in soil. FEMS Microbiology Ecology 44, 45-56.
- Harrison, R.B., Footen, P.W., Strahm, B.D., 2011. Deep soil horizons: contribution and importance to soil carbon pools and in assessing whole-ecosystem response to management and global change. Forest Science 57, 67-76.
- Hassink, J., 1997. The capacity of soils to preserve organic C and N by their association with clay and silt particles. Plant and Soil 191, 77-87.
- Hassink, J., Whitmore, A.P., 1997. A model of the physical protection of organic matter in soils. Soil Science Society of America Journal 61, 131-139.
- Hassink, J., Whitmore, A.P., Kubát, J., 1997. Size and density fractionation of soil organic matter and the physical capacity of soils to protect organic matter. European Journal of Agronomy 7, 189-199.
- Hobbs, P.R., Sayre, K., Gupta, R., 2008. The role of conservation agriculture in sustainable agriculture. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences 363, 543-555.
- Hobley, E., Baldock, J., Hua, Q., Wilson, B., 2017. Land-use contrasts reveal instability of subsoil organic carbon. Global Change Biology 23, 955-965.
- Holland, E., Coleman, D.C., 1987. Litter placement effects on microbial and organic matter dynamics in an agroecosystem. Ecology 68, 425-433.
- Holland, J.M., 2004. The environmental consequences of adopting conservation tillage in Europe: reviewing the evidence. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 103, 1-25.
- Horn, R., Baumgartl, T., 2002. Dynamic properties of soils. Soil physics companion 389.
- Hussain, I., Olson, K.R., Ebelhar, S.A., 1999. Impacts of tillage and no-till on production of maize and soybean on an eroded Illinois silt loam soil. Soil and Tillage Research 52, 37-49.
- Jawson, M.D., Bull, C.T., 2002. USDA research into organic farming. American Journal of Alternative Agriculture 17, 201-202.
- Jobbágy, E.G., Jackson, R.B., 2000. The vertical distribution of soil organic carbon and its relation to climate and vegetation. Ecological applications 10, 423-436.
- Johnson-Maynard, J., Umiker, K., Guy, S., 2007. Earthworm dynamics and soil physical properties in the first three years of no-till management. Soil and Tillage Research 94, 338-345.

- Johnson, J.F., Allmaras, R., Reicosky, D., 2006. Estimating source carbon from crop residues, roots and rhizodeposits using the national grain-yield database. Agronomy journal 98, 622-636.
- Johnson, M., Lowery, B., 1985. Effect of three conservation tillage practices on soil temperature and thermal properties. Soil Science Society of America Journal 49, 1547-1552.
- Kabir, Z., 2005. Tillage or no-tillage: impact on mycorrhizae. Canadian Journal of Plant Science 85, 23-29.
- Kahlon, M.S., Lal, R., Ann-Varughese, M., 2013. Twenty two years of tillage and mulching impacts on soil physical characteristics and carbon sequestration in Central Ohio. Soil and Tillage Research 126, 151-158.
- Kallenbach, C., Grandy, A.S., Frey, S., Diefendorf, A., 2015. Microbial physiology and necromass regulate agricultural soil carbon accumulation. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 91, 279-290.
- Khan, K.S., Mack, R., Castillo, X., Kaiser, M., Joergensen, R.G., 2016. Microbial biomass, fungal and bacterial residues, and their relationships to the soil organic matter C/N/P/S ratios. Geoderma 271, 115-123.
- Khan, S.A., Mulvaney, R., Ellsworth, T., Boast, C.W., 2007. The myth of nitrogen fertilization for soil carbon sequestration. Journal Of Environmental Quality 36, 1821-1832.
- Kleber, M., Eusterhues, K., Keiluweit, M., Mikutta, C., Mikutta, R., Nico, P.S., 2015. Mineral–organic associations: formation, properties, and relevance in soil environments. Advances in agronomy. Elsevier, pp. 1-140.
- Kleber, M., Lehmann, J., 2019. Humic substances extracted by alkali are invalid proxies for the dynamics and functions of organic matter in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Journal of Environmental Quality 48, 207-216.
- Kleber, M., Nico, P.S., Plante, A., Filley, T., Kramer, M., Swanston, C., Sollins, P., 2011. Old and stable soil organic matter is not necessarily chemically recalcitrant: implications for modeling concepts and temperature sensitivity. Global Change Biology 17, 1097-1107.
- Knicker, H., 2011. Soil organic N-An under-rated player for C sequestration in soils? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 1118-1129.
- Kögel-Knabner, I., 2002. The macromolecular organic composition of plant and microbial residues as inputs to soil organic matter. Soil biology and biochemistry 34, 139-162.
- Kögel-Knabner, I., Guggenberger, G., Kleber, M., Kandeler, E., Kalbitz, K., Scheu, S., Eusterhues, K., Leinweber, P., 2008. Organo-mineral associations in temperate soils: Integrating biology, mineralogy, and organic matter chemistry. Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science 171, 61-82.
- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Kuzyakov, Y., Blagodatskaya, E., 2015. Microbial hotspots and hot moments in soil: concept & review. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 83, 184-199.
- Lal, R., 2001. World cropland soils as a source or sink for atmospheric carbon. Advances in Agronomy. 71, 145-191.

- Lal, R., Delgado, J., Groffman, P., Millar, N., Dell, C., Rotz, A., 2011. Management to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Journal Of Soil And Water Conservation 66, 276-285.
- Lambie, S.M., Ghani, A., Mudge, P.L., Stevenson, B.A., 2019. Decadal Changes in Soil Organic Matter Due to Microaggregate and Hot Water Extractable Pools. Soil Science Society of America Journal 83, 78.
- Lavallee, J.M., Soong, J.L., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Conceptualizing soil organic matter into particulate and mineral-associated forms to address global change in the 21st century. Global change biology.
- Le Bissonnais, Y.l., 1996. Aggregate stability and assessment of soil crustability and erodibility: I. Theory and methodology. European Journal of soil science 47, 425-437.
- Le Guillou, C., Angers, D., Maron, P., Leterme, P., Menasseri-Aubry, S., 2012. Linking microbial community to soil water-stable aggregation during crop residue decomposition. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 50, 126-133.
- Lorenz, K., Lal, R., 2005. The depth distribution of soil organic carbon in relation to land use and management and the potential of carbon sequestration in subsoil horizons. Advances in agronomy 88, 35-66.
- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., 2011. Nitrogen dynamics and indices to predict soil nitrogen supply in humid temperate soils. Advances in agronomy. Elsevier, pp. 55-102.
- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., 2016. Net nitrogen mineralization enhanced with the addition of nitrogen-rich particulate organic matter. Geoderma 262, 112-118.
- Luo, Z., Wang, E., Sun, O.J., 2010. Can no-tillage stimulate carbon sequestration in agricultural soils? A meta-analysis of paired experiments. Agriculture, ecosystems & environment 139, 224-231.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Bittman, S., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Hunt, D., Parent, L.-É., 2015. Carbon accumulates in organo-mineral complexes after long-term liquid dairy manure application. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 202, 108-119.
- Malhi, S.S., Lemke, R., Wang, Z.H., Chhabra, B.S., 2006. Tillage, nitrogen and crop residue effects on crop yield, nutrient uptake, soil quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Soil & Tillage Research 90, 171-183.
- Malhi, S.S., Nyborg, M., 1990. Effect of tillage and straw on yield and N uptake of barley grown under different N fertility regimes. Soil & Tillage Research 17, 115-124.
- Malhi, S.S., Nyborg, M., Solberg, E.D., Dyck, M.F., Puurveen, D., 2011. Improving crop yield and N uptake with long-term straw retention in two contrasting soil types. Field Crops Research 124, 378-391.
- Martens, D.A., 2001. Nitrogen cycling under different soil management systems. Advances in Agronomy 143-192.
- Martins, M.D.R., Angers, D.A., 2015. Different plant types for different soil ecosystem services. Geoderma 237-238, 266-269.
- Mengel, K., 1996. Turnover of organic nitrogen in soils and its availability to crops. Plant and Soil 181, 83-93.

- Mhazo, N., Chivenge, P., Chaplot, V., 2016. Tillage impact on soil erosion by water: Discrepancies due to climate and soil characteristics. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 230, 231-241.
- Miltner, A., Bombach, P., Schmidt-Brücken, B., Kästner, M., 2012. SOM genesis: microbial biomass as a significant source. Biogeochemistry 111, 41-55.
- Minasny, B., Malone, B.P., McBratney, A.B., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., Chambers, A., Chaplot, V., Chen, Z.-S., Cheng, K., Das, B.S., 2017. Soil carbon 4 per mille. Geoderma 292, 59-86.
- Monnier, G., 1965. Action des matieres organiques sur la stabilite structurale du sol. African Soils 10, 5-42.
- Mooshammer, M., Wanek, W., Hämmerle, I., Fuchslueger, L., Hofhansl, F., Knoltsch, A., Schnecker, J., Takriti, M., Watzka, M., Wild, B., 2014. Adjustment of microbial nitrogen use efficiency to carbon: nitrogen imbalances regulates soil nitrogen cycling. Nature communications 5, 3694.
- Nyborg, M., Solberg, E.D., Izaurralde, R.C., Malhi, S.S., Molina-Ayala, M., 1995. Influence of long-term tillage, straw and N fertilizer on barley yield, plant-N uptake and soil-N balance. Soil & Tillage Research 36, 165-174.
- Nyiraneza, J., Chantigny, M., N'Dayegamiye, A., Laverdiere, M., 2009. Dairy Cattle Manure Improves Soil Productivity in Low Residue Rotation Systems. AGRONOMY JOURNAL 101, 207-214.
- Nyiraneza, J., Chantigny, M., N'Dayegamiye, A., Laverdiere, M., 2010. Long-Term Manure Application and Forages Reduce Nitrogen Fertilizer Requirements of Silage Corn-Cereal Cropping Systems. Agronomy Journal 102, 1244-1251.
- Obriot, F., Stauffer, M., Goubard, Y., Cheviron, N., Peres, G., Eden, M., Revallier, A., Vieublé-Gonod, L., Houot, S., 2016. Multi-criteria indices to evaluate the effects of repeated organic amendment applications on soil and crop quality. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 232, 165-178.
- Ogle, S.M., Swan, A., Paustian, K., 2012. No-till management impacts on crop productivity, carbon input and soil carbon sequestration. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 149, 37-49.
- Oldfield, E.E., Bradford, M.A., Wood, S.A., 2019. Global meta-analysis of the relationship between soil organic matter and crop yields. Soil, pp. 15-32.
- Olk, D., Bloom, P., Perdue, E., McKnight, D., Chen, Y., Farenhorst, A., Senesi, N., Chin, Y.-P., Schmitt-Kopplin, P., Hertkorn, N., 2019. Environmental and agricultural relevance of humic fractions extracted by alkali from soils and natural waters. Journal of Environmental Quality 48, 217-232.
- Otten, W., Gilligan, C.A., Watts, C., Dexter, A., Hall, D., 1999. Continuity of air-filled pores and invasion thresholds for a soil-borne fungal plant pathogen, Rhizoctonia solani. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 31, 1803-1810.
- Paul, E., 2014. Soil microbiology, ecology and biochemistry. Academic press.
- Paustian, K., Collins, H., Paul, E.A., 1997. Management controls on soil carbon. Soil organic matter in temperate agroecosystems: Long-term experiments in North America., 15-49.
- Poeplau, C., Don, A., Six, J., Kaiser, M., Benbi, D., Chenu, C., Cotrufo, M.F., Derrien, D., Gioacchini, P., Grand, S., 2018. Isolating organic carbon fractions with varying turnover rates in temperate agricultural soils–A comprehensive method comparison. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 125, 10-26.

- Poirier, V., Basile-Doelsch, I., Balesdent, J., Borschneck, D., Whalen, J.K., Angers, D.A., 2020. Organo-Mineral Interactions Are More Important for Organic Matter Retention in Subsoil Than Topsoil. Soil Systems 4, 4.
- Poirier, V., Roumet, C., Munson, A.D., 2018. The root of the matter: linking root traits and soil organic matter stabilization processes. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 120, 246-259.
- Post, W.M., Emanuel, W.R., Zinke, P.J., Stangenberger, A.G., 1982. Soil carbon pools and world life zones. Nature 298, 156-159.
- Recous, S., Chabbi, A., Vertes, F., Thiebeau, P., Chenu, C., 2015. Fertilité des sols et minéralisation de l'azote: sous l'influence des pratiques culturales, quels processus et interactions sont impliqués? Fourrages, 189-196.
- Reeves, D., 1997. The role of soil organic matter in maintaining soil quality in continuous cropping systems. Soil and Tillage Research 43, 131-167.
- Riley, H., 2016. Residual value of inorganic fertilizer and farmyard manure for crop yields and soil fertility after long-term use on a loam soil in Norway. Nutrient cycling in agroecosystems 104, 25-37.
- Rillig, M.C., 2005. A connection between fungal hydrophobins and soil water repellency? Pedobiologia 49, 395-399.
- Ritz, K., Young, I.M., 2004. Interactions between soil structure and fungi. Mycologist 18, 52-59.
- Robertson, A.D., Paustian, K., Ogle, S., Wallenstein, M.D., Lugato, E., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Unifying soil organic matter formation and persistence frameworks: the MEMS model. Biogeosciences 16, 1225-1248.
- Ros, G.H., 2012. Predicting soil N mineralization using organic matter fractions and soil properties: A re-analysis of literature data. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 45, 132-135.
- Rumpel, C., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2011. Deep soil organic matter—a key but poorly understood component of terrestrial C cycle. Plant and Soil 338, 143-158.
- Schimel, J.P., Bennett, J., 2004. Nitrogen mineralization: challenges of a changing paradigm. Ecology 85, 591-602.
- Schmidt, M.W., Torn, M.S., Abiven, S., Dittmar, T., Guggenberger, G., Janssens, I.A., Kleber, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Lehmann, J., Manning, D.A., 2011. Persistence of soil organic matter as an ecosystem property. Nature 478, 49.
- Schröder, J., Uenk, D., Hilhorst, G., 2007. Long-term nitrogen fertilizer replacement value of cattle manures applied to cut grassland. Plant and soil 299, 83-99.
- Schweizer, S.A., Bucka, F.B., Graf-Rosenfellner, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2019. Soil microaggregate size composition and organic matter distribution as affected by clay content. Geoderma 355, 113901.
- Shahbaz, M., Kuzyakov, Y., Maqsood, S., Wendland, M., Heitkamp, F., 2017. Decadal nitrogen fertilization decreases mineral-associated and subsoil carbon: a 32-year study. Land degradation & development 28, 1463-1472.
- Sheehy, J., Regina, K., Alakukku, L., Six, J., 2015. Impact of no-till and reduced tillage on aggregation and aggregate-associated carbon in Northern European agroecosystems. Soil & Tillage Research 150, 107-113.
- Six, J., Conant, R.T., Paul, E.A., Paustian, K., 2002a. Stabilization mechanisms of soil organic matter: implications for C-saturation of soils. Plant and soil 241, 155-176.
- Six, J., Elliott, E., Paustian, K., 2000. Soil macroaggregate turnover and microaggregate formation: a mechanism for C sequestration under no-tillage agriculture. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 32, 2099-2103.

- Soane, B.D., Ball, B.C., Arvidsson, J., Basch, G., Moreno, F., Roger-Estrade, J., 2012. Notill in northern, western and south-western Europe: A review of problems and opportunities for crop production and the environment. Soil and Tillage Research 118, 66-87.
- Stubbs, T.L., Kennedy, A.C., Schillinger, W.F., 2004. Soil ecosystem changes during the transition to no-till cropping. Journal of crop improvement 11, 105-135.
- Stumborg, M., Townleysmith, L., Coxworth, E., 1996. Sustainability and economic issues for cereal crop residue export. Canadian journal of plant science 76, 669-673.
- Sturz, A., Carter, M., Johnston, H., 1997. A review of plant disease, pathogen interactions and microbial antagonism under conservation tillage in temperate humid agriculture. Soil and Tillage Research 41, 169-189.
- Sun, Y., Zeng, Y., Shi, Q., Pan, X., Huang, S., 2015. No-tillage controls on runoff: A metaanalysis. Soil & Tillage Research 153, 1-6.
- Tabi, M., Tardif, L., Carrier, D., Laflamme, G., Rompré, M., 1990. Inventaire des problèmes de dégradation des sols agricoles du Québec. Rapport Synthèse. Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec.
- Thomas, B., Sharifi, M., Whalen, J., Chantigny, M., 2015. Mineralizable Nitrogen Responds Differently to Manure Type in Contrasting Soil Textures. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 79, 1396-1405.
- Tisdall, J.M., Oades, J.M., 1982. Organic matter and water-stable aggregates in soils. Journal of Soil Science 33, 141-163.
- Toliver, D., Larson, J., Roberts, R., English, B., Ugarte, D., West, T., 2012. Effects of No-Till on Yields as Influenced by Crop and Environmental Factors. AGRONOMY JOURNAL 104, 530-541.
- Triplett, G.B., Dick, W., 2008. No-tillage crop production: A revolution in agriculture! Agronomy Journal 100, S153-S165.
- Turmel, M.-S., Speratti, A., Baudron, F., Verhulst, N., Govaerts, B., 2015. Crop residue management and soil health: A systems analysis. Agricultural Systems 134, 6-16.
- UNCCD, 2017. Global Land Outlook. UN Convention to Combat Desertification Bonn.
- van Capelle, C., Schrader, S., Brunotte, J., 2012. Tillage-induced changes in the functional diversity of soil biota–A review with a focus on German data. European Journal of Soil Biology 50, 165-181.
- VandenBygaart, A.J., Gregorich, E.G., Angers, D.A., 2003. Influence of agricultural management
- on soil organic carbon: a compendium and assessment of Canadian studies. Can. J. Soil Sci. 83, 363–380.
- VandenBygaart, A.J., McConkey, B.G., Angers, D.A., Smith, W., De Gooijer, H., Bentham, M.,
- Martin, T., 2008. Soil carbon change factors for the Canadian agriculture national greenhouse gas inventory. Can. J. Soil Sci. 88, 671–680.
- Van Den Putte, A., Govers, G., Diels, J., Gillijns, K., Demuzere, M., 2010. Assessing the effect of soil tillage on crop growth: A meta-regression analysis on European crop yields under conservation agriculture. European Journal of Agronomy 33, 231-241.
- Viaud, V., Angers, D., Parnaudeau, V., Morvan, T., Menasseri-Aubry, S., 2011. Response of organic matter to reduced tillage and animal manure in a temperate loamy soil. Soil Use And Management 27, 84-93.

- Villamil, M.B., Little, J., Nafziger, E.D., 2015. Corn residue, tillage, and nitrogen rate effects on soil properties. Soil and Tillage Research 151, 61-66.
- Waksman, S.A., 1936. Humus origin, chemical composition, and importance in nature. LWW.
- Wander, M., 2004. Soil organic matter fractions and their relevance to soil function. Soil organic matter in sustainable agriculture. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 67-102.
- Wander, M.M., Bidart, M., Aref, S., 1998. Tillage impacts on depth distribution of total and particulate organic matter in three Illinois soils. Soil Science Society of America Journal 62, 1704-1711.
- Wang, Y., Amundson, R., Trumbore, S., 1999. The impact of land use change on C turnover in soils. Global Biogeochemical Cycles 13, 47-57.
- Wang, Y., Tu, C., Cheng, L., Li, C., Gentry, L.F., Hoyt, G.D., Zhang, X., Hu, S., 2011. Longterm impact of farming practices on soil organic carbon and nitrogen pools and microbial biomass and activity. Soil and Tillage Research 117, 8-16.
- Warren Raffa, D., Bogdanski, A., Tittonell, P., 2015. How does crop residue removal affect soil organic carbon and yield? A hierarchical analysis of management and environmental factors. Biomass and Bioenergy 81, 345-355.
- Watt, M., Hugenholtz, P., White, R., Vinall, K., 2006. Numbers and locations of native bacteria on field-grown wheat roots quantified by fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH). Environmental Microbiology 8, 871-884.
- Watts, D.B., Torbert, H.A., Prior, S.A., 2007. Mineralization of Nitrogen in Soils Amended with Dairy Manure as Affected by Wetting/Drying Cycles. Communications in Soil Science and Plant Analysis 38, 2103-2116.
- Webb, J., Sorensen, P., Velthof, G., Amon, B., Pinto, M., Rodhe, L., Salomon, E., Hutchings, N., Burczyk, P., Reid, J., 2013. An Assessment of the Variation of Manure Nitrogen Efficiency throughout Europe and an Appraisal of Means to Increase Manure-N Efficiency. Advances in agronomy, 119, 371-442.
- West, T.O., Post, W.M., 2002. Soil organic carbon sequestration rates by tillage and crop rotation: a global data analysis. Soil Science Society of America Journal 66, 1930-1946.
- Yagüe, M.R., Domingo-Olivé, F., Bosch-Serra, A.D., Poch, R.M., Boixadera, J., 2016. Dairy cattle manure effects on soil quality: porosity, earthworms, aggregates and soil organic carbon fractions. Land Degradation & Development 27, 1753-1762.
- Young, I.M., Crawford, J.W., Nunan, N., Otten, W., Spiers, A., 2008. Microbial distribution in soils: physics and scaling. Advances in agronomy 100, 81-121.
- Zhong, W., Gu, T., Wang, W., Zhang, B., Lin, X., Huang, Q., Shen, W., 2010. The effects of mineral fertilizer and organic manure on soil microbial community and diversity. Plant and soil 326, 511-522.
- Ziadi, N., Angers, D.A., Gagnon, B., Lalande, R., Morel, C., Rochette, P., Chantigny, M.H., 2014. Long-term tillage and synthetic fertilization affect soil functioning and crop yields in a corn–soybean rotation in eastern Canada. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 94, 365-376.
- Zuber, S.M., Villamil, M.B., 2016. Meta-analysis approach to assess effect of tillage on microbial biomass and enzyme activities. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 97, 176-187.

Chapitre 1 - Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type

ME. Samson^{abc}, S. Menasseri-Aubry^b, MH. Chantigny^c, DA. Angers^c, I. Royer^c, A. Vanasse^a

^aUniversité Laval, Département de Phytologie, 2425 rue de l'Agriculture, Québec, QC,

Canada, G1V 0A6

^bAgrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 65, rue de St-Brieuc 35042 Rennes Cedex - France

^cAgriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Québec Research and Development Centre, 2560

Hochelaga Boulevard, Quebec, QC, Canada, G1V 2J3

Copie de l'article publié « Samson, M.-E., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Chantigny, M., Angers, D., Royer, I., Vanasse, A., 2019. Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type. Field Crops Research 243, 107623. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fcr.2019.107623

Résumé

L'impact des pratiques de conservation des sols sur la productivité des cultures a souvent été évalué. Toutefois, la réaction des cultures à des pratiques spécifiques peut varier en fonction du type de sol et des différentes combinaisons de pratiques possibles. L'objectif de cette étude était de déterminer comment les interactions entre le travail du sol, la source d'engrais, la gestion des résidus de culture et les facteurs pédoclimatiques affectaient le rendement et l'efficacité d'utilisation de l'azote (NUE) dans une rotation maïs (Zea mays) - soya (Glycine max) - blé de printemps (Triticum aestivum) dans deux sols à texture contrastée. Une expérience factorielle a été menée de 2009 à 2017, comparant le labour [MB] au travail réduit du sol [MT], cinq sources fertilisantes (contrôle minéral sans azote [PK], engrais minéral complet [NPK], lisier de porc [LSM], lisier de bovins laitiers [LDM] et fumier volaille [SPM]), ainsi que deux gestions des résidus de culture (retournés au sol [RR] vs récoltés [RH]) sur une argile limoneuse et un loam sableux. Dans l'argile limoneuse, un effet positif du MT sur le rendement s'est développé au fil du temps pour toutes les cultures. Dans le loam sableux, le MT a eu peu d'effet sur le rendement du blé, a généralement diminué le rendement du maïs et a augmenté le rendement du soya. Lorsque les résidus de blé étaient retournés au sol à l'automne précédent, le rendement en grains de maïs a (i) diminué lorsqu'il a été combiné avec le MT dans les deux sols et (ii) lorsqu'il a été combiné avec des engrais de ferme liquides dans l'argile limoneuse. Dans le cas du soya, un effet résiduel positif des engrais de ferme a été observé sous MT dans le loam sableux uniquement. Pour toutes les cultures, l'effet de la source fertilisante sur le rendement était plus important dans le loam sableux que dans l'argile limoneuse. De façon générale, les engrais de ferme ont donné de meilleurs résultats sur les rendements de blé qu'avec le maïs. Parmi les engrais de ferme, le LSM permettait d'obtenir généralement les meilleurs rendements. Un arbre de régression a indiqué que le rendement des grains de maïs était principalement déterminé par l'apport d'azote (rendement plus élevé avec > 110 kg de N ha⁻¹ disponible), mais qu'une réponse plus faible à l'azote est attendue les années où les conditions sont plus sèches et plus froides en juillet-août. Nos résultats ont montré que les interactions entre les pratiques de gestion sont déterminantes pour la productivité des cultures, et que les réponses au rendement sont modulées par l'espèce cultivée, le type de sol et, parfois, les conditions météorologiques annuelles.

Abstract

The impact of management practices on crop productivity has often been assessed. However, crop response to specific practices may vary as a function of soil type and other associated management practices. The objective of this study was to determine how interactions between tillage, fertilizer source, crop residue management, and pedoclimatic factors affected yield and N use efficiency (NUE) in a corn (Zea mays) - soybean (Glycine max) spring wheat (Triticum aestivum) rotation in two contrasting soil types. A factorial experiment was conducted from 2009 to 2017, comparing moldboard plow [MB] vs minimum tillage [MT], five fertilizer sources (mineral control without nitrogen [PK], complete mineral fertilizer [NPK], liquid swine manure [LSM], liquid dairy manure [LDM] and solid poultry manure [SPM]), and two crop residue managements (retained [RR] vs harvested [RH]) on a silty clay and a sandy loam. In the silty clay, a positive effect of MT developed over time for all crop species, whereas MT had little effect on wheat yield, generally decreased corn yield and increased soybean yield in the sandy loam. When wheat residues were returned to the soil, corn grain yield in the next year was (i) decreased when combined with MT in both soils and (ii) when combined with liquid manures in the silty clay. In soybean, a positive residual effect of manures was observed under MT in the sandy loam only. For all crop species, yields were more responsive to fertilizer treatments in the sandy loam than in the silty clay, and manures generally performed better with wheat than with corn. Among the manures, LSM was the best fertilizer source. A regression tree indicated that corn grain yield was mainly driven by nitrogen supply (higher yield with > 110 kgavailable N ha⁻¹) but that a lower response to N is expected in years with drier and colder conditions in July-August. Our results demonstrated that interactions among management practices is determinant for crop productivity, and that yield responses are modulated by crop species, soil type and sometimes, yearly weather conditions.

Introduction

Over the last two decades, 20% of global cropland showed persistent declining productivity (UNCCD, 2017). To face the challenge of feeding the world's growing population and ensure our resilience to climate change, the adoption of agricultural practices that simultaneously promote soil health and good crop yield is crucially needed (Godfray *et al.*, 2010). Reduced tillage, retaining crop residues, and organic fertilization are considered as pillars of sustainable agriculture (Hobbs *et al.*, 2008). All these practices influence crop yields directly through their impact on soil water and nutrient availability, and indirectly through their effect on soil structure, organic matter formation and nutrient cycling. However, most of the available literature provides insights to the effect of agricultural practices, more field studies are required to better understand the net effect of combined practices on the productivity of cropping systems.

Even if no-till is known to improve soil health and resilience (Verhulst *et al.*, 2010; Sheehy *et al.*, 2015; Zuber and Villamil, 2016), only 7% of the world's arable land is under no-till management (Kassam *et al.*, 2009). This is partly attributable to the variable effects of no-till on crop yield as a function of crop type, climate and soil conditions (Toliver *et al.*, 2012; Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015). At the global scale, no-till was found to reduce crop yield by 5.1% on average, relative to conventional tillage (Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015). In general, yields tend to decrease in the first years following no-till implementation, but can increase considerably after 3 to 10 years (Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015). The adoption of reduced tillage practices and/or an enhanced nitrogen (N) fertilization could offset the negative effect of no-till on cereal yield (Malhi and Nyborg, 1990; Martens, 2001; Van Den Putte *et al.*, 2010). However, under no-till, nitrogen use efficiency (NUE) is also influenced by other agricultural practices such as crop residue management (Malhi and Nyborg, 1990; Dalal *et al.*, 2011).

Crop residues can either be returned to soil or harvested for other uses, such as livestock bedding or biofuel production (Stumborg *et al.*, 1996). Long term crop residue harvesting, however, can be deleterious to soil fertility by reducing organic matter inputs (Warren Raffa *et al.*, 2015) and soil organic matter (SOM) content, which negatively impacts soil physical,

chemical and biological status (Reeves, 1997). On the other hand, retaining crop residues in the field may have different consequences depending on placement. Under cool and humid conditions, a negative effect on crop yield is often reported where crop residues are left on the soil surface, because of waterlogging, lower soil temperatures, and/or enhanced pest infestation (Nyborg *et al.*, 1995; Cantero-Martínez *et al.*, 2003).

Animal manure is an interesting substitute for mineral fertilizers because it can simultaneously promote crop yield (Webb *et al.*, 2013), accumulation of organic matter in soils (Aoyama *et al.*, 1999; Maillard and Angers, 2014; Maillard *et al.*, 2015), and long-term soil fertility (Bolinder *et al.*, 1999; Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2009, 2010). In fact, the manure organic N that is not mineralized in the year of application can accumulate in soil and lead to a residual N fertilizer effect (Schroder *et al.*, 2005; Mallory *et al.*, 2010; Webb *et al.*, 2013). Thus, manure NUE and the magnitude of its residual effect both depend on the chemical composition of manure, and on its mineralization rate, which is influenced by abiotic factors such as soil type and weather conditions (Chantigny *et al.*, 2004; Watts *et al.*, 2007; Webb *et al.*, 2013; Thomas *et al.*, 2015).

In addition to the interactions among agricultural practices, soil type and weather conditions can also explain a considerable part of the variability in crop yield (Nyborg *et al.*, 1995; Malhi *et al.*, 2006). We further hypothesize that yield responses to a specific combination of agricultural practices vary with crop species. Long-term studies are necessary to further our understanding of responses of different crop species to combinations of agricultural practices as a function of soil type, and weather conditions (Dimassi *et al.*, 2014; Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015). To our knowledge, there has been no study considering the combined effects of soil tillage, residue management and fertilizer source on two contrasting soil types. The main objective of this study was to determine how interactions among these management practices affected the agronomic performance (yield and NUE) of a spring wheat – corn – soybean rotation depending on soil type.

Materials and methods

Experimental Site and Treatments

The experimental site is located at the Laval University agronomic research station in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, near Quebec City, Canada ($46^{\circ}44^{\prime}$ N, $71^{\circ}31^{\prime}$ W). It consists of two field sites located 0.9 km apart on two contrasting soil types: a poorly drained silty clay soil (432 g kg^{-1} clay, 163 g kg⁻¹ sand, 35 g C kg⁻¹, and 2.7 g N kg⁻¹) and a moderately to well-drained sandy loam soil (170 g kg^{-1} clay, 680 g kg⁻¹ sand, 19 g C kg⁻¹, and 1.5 g N kg⁻¹). These soils are classified as mixed frigid dystric eutrudept and mixed frigid typic dystrudept, respectively (Laflamme and Raymond, 1973). The two soils had been under annual crop rotations before plot establishment and were both cropped to silage corn in 2008.

In autumn 2008, experimental plots were delineated and arranged as a randomized complete block factorial design with split-split-plot restriction and three replications. Plots were cropped to spring wheat in 2009 and 2010, and to a corn-soybean-wheat rotation from 2011 to 2017. Detailed agronomic practices are presented in Table 1 -6 (S1).

Two soil tillage treatments (moldboard plow [MB] and minimum till [MT]) were assigned to main plots (10 by 35 m in size). The MB treatment consisted of inversion tillage (0.2 m) in the fall and harrowing in the spring (one pass before and one after fertilization, 0.05 and 0.025 to 0.05 m, respectively). The MT treatment consisted of one pass of harrow (0.025 to 0.05 m) in the spring after fertilization. Fertilizer treatments were ascribed to subplots (7 by 10 m) and comprised a no-N control (mineral P and K [PK]), a complete mineral fertilizer [NPK], liquid swine manure [LSM], liquid dairy manure [LDM] and solid poultry manure [SPM]. All fertilizer sources were surface broadcast before planting in the spring, and all plots were harrowed within three hours following application to minimize N loss through ammonia volatilization. Residue management treatments (residues exported with harvest [RH] and residues returned to soil [RR]) were randomly ascribed to sub-subplots (7 by 5 m). Fertilizer treatments were based on crop N requirements, and N rates were based on local recommendations corresponding to the minimum N rates recommended for wheat (90 kg N ha⁻¹), corn (120 kg N ha⁻¹), and soybean (0 kg N ha⁻¹) for the region of study (CRAAQ, 2010). In the NPK treatment, N was applied as calcium ammonium nitrate (27-0-0). The application

rates for the manures were calculated considering that 80% of manure total N is available to crop (CRAAQ, 2003). In 2013, the N availability was adjusted to 70% for LDM (CRAAQ, 2010). Application rates for P (triple superphosphate (0-46-0)) and K (potassium chloride (0-(0-62)) in the PK and NPK treatments were also based on local recommendations. Phosphorus rate was adjusted for initial soil P content (Mehlich 3 extraction, 233 kg P ha⁻¹ and 127 kg P ha⁻¹ for sandy loam soil and silty clay soil, respectively) (CRAAQ, 2003, 2010). Manure treatments contained enough P and K and were not supplemented with inorganic P or K fertilizers. Fertilizer treatments were not applied on soybean years because both soil types contained enough phosphorus and potassium to meet soybean needs. Crops were planted in the spring on the day of fertilizer application, after harrowing. Seeding rate and row spacing were adjusted as a function of crop type and cultivar or hybrid selected (Table 1 -6 (S1)). The crops were planted as soon as possible considering yearly soil and weather conditions and were harvested at grain maturity. Herbicides were applied based on weed spectrum and on suppliers' labels. Treatments typically included broadleaf and grass herbicide for wheat and one post-emergent broad-spectrum herbicide (glyphosate) for soybean and corn. Monthly precipitation and temperature were taken from Environment and Climate Change Canada weather station located at about 11 km of the experimental site (Table 1 -7 (S2)).

Sampling and Analyses

Manures

Each spring, raw LDM was collected from an earthen concrete storage tank on a dairy farm, after about six months of storage. The LSM came from a commercial farrow-to-finish operation and was usually collected in the holding tank in the pig barn. Fresh SPM was obtained from a commercial broiler operation and included bedding material composed of wood shavings. Each effluent was subsampled and analyzed for total N content (Kjeldahl digestion) to determine N application rates. On each application date, a composite subsample of each manure type was taken for detailed analyses. The pH of LDM and LSM was measured by direct reading with a glass electrode, whereas distilled water was added to SPM (10:1, water:SPM ratio) before reading with the electrode. Total N and P concentrations were determined by Kjeldahl acid digestion and measurement of NH₄ and PO₄ concentrations using an automated continuous-flow colorimeter (QuickChem 8000 FIA+; Lachat
Instruments, Loveland, CO) (Chantigny *et al.*, 2007). The mineral N content of manures was determined by shaking 5 g of fresh manure with 125 mL of 1 mol L^{-1} KCl for 60 min. The extract was filtered through prewashed (1 mol L^{-1} KCl) Whatman #42 filter paper, and the NH₄ and NO₃ + NO₂ concentrations were measured using the same colorimeter. A subsample (200-250 mL) of each manure type was lyophilized to measure dry matter (DM) and total C concentrations. Manure subsamples were frozen at -20°C and transferred to a freeze-drier (Model FreeZone Plus 4.5 L, Cascade Freeze Dry Systems, Labconco Corp., Kansas City) set at -84°C and 0.12 mBar vacuum until complete dryness. Dry matter was determined as the weight of materials remaining after freeze drying, and total C was measured on the lyophilized material by dry combustion (Model TruMac, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA). Chemical and physical characteristics of the manures are provided in (Table 1 -8 (S3)).

Crop yield and NUE

Plants were harvested at maturity using a small-plot harvester (Classic 2004, Wintersteiger, Ried, im Innkreis, Austria) for wheat and soybean, and by hand for corn. All aboveground material was removed from the plots. Grains were separated from vegetative parts and weighed separately to determine grain and residue yield. A 500-g subsample of residue materials was taken to determine DM content after drying at 55°C for 3 days, and data are presented on a 100% DM content basis. The rest of residue materials was returned to and evenly distributed on the RR plots; residues were not returned to RH plots.

Grain water content was measured on a 250-g winnowed subsample, and grain yield was corrected for water content (13.5% for wheat, 15% for corn and 13% for soybean) using a moisture meter (Model 919, Labtronics, Trois-Rivières, QC, CA). Crop N use efficiency (NUE) was calculated to better illustrate the fraction of the applied N that was absorbed by the plant and converted to grain. The NUE, also referred to as the agronomic efficiency (Woli et al. 2016), was calculated as follows: grain yield (kg m⁻²) obtained with N source – grain yield (kg m⁻²) obtained with PK, divided by the total N applied (kg m⁻²) with the N source.

Univariate Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed with the mixed procedure of Statistical Analysis System (SAS Institute, 2017). A combined (two sites with contrasting soil texture) factorial ANOVA model was used with year as a repeated measure to consider the interactions between soil types, treatments and years. The responses of each crop type were assessed separately. Blocks were considered as a random factor while soil tillage, N source, residue management, soil type and production year were considered as fixed effects. Production year was included as a fixed repeated measure to account for the cumulative effects of treatments over time. Variance-covariance matrix was chosen to minimize the Akaike criterion, and the Kenward-Roger method was used to calculate the degrees of freedom. Homogeneity of variance was verified through the analysis of residuals. The results of these statistical tests were declared significant at $P \le 0.05$. Wheat grain yields in 2009 and 2010 were previously published by Rieux *et al.* (2013). We included these data in our statistical analysis since they represent the starting point of the experiment.

Multivariate statistical analysis

Surface soil (0-10 cm) was sampled in autumn 2010, 2013 and 2016, between wheat harvest and soil tillage, to measure different soil characteristics in the autumn preceding corn. Soil carbon and N concentrations were measured by dry combustion with a CNS analyzer (LECO, TRUSPEC, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA) on air-dried soil, ground at 0.5 mm (Skjemstad and Baldock, 2007). Soil bulk density (cylinder method) and water content (weight loss at 105°C for 24 h) were measured as per Hao *et al.* (2008), and soil pH was measured in a 1:1 soil:water slurry with a pH meter (Accumet AR20, Fisher Scientific, Hampton, NH, USA). Soil residual mineral N concentration was determined on a fresh soil subsample by KCl (1M) extraction and colorimetric analysis (Maynard *et al.*, 2007). Soil texture was considered as a permanent soil characteristic and was measured in 2008 only with the sieve-pipette method (Sheldrick and Wang, 1993). These soil variables were measured on each autumn before corn and were thus used in conjunction with quantitative management variables (available N applied with each fertilizer source, average C/N ratio of manures, quantity of residues returned to soil) to perform a basic regression tree analysis. The basic regression tree model (Kuhn and Johnson, 2013) was fitted using corn yield as the response variable, and all the above-mentioned variables and year as predictors. In total, a set of 11 variables were analyzed by the model (n=1320) in order to determine the main factors driving corn yields in this experiment. To avoid overfitting, the quantity of final nodes was tuned using conditional inference trees (Hothorn et al., 2006). Selection of the better predictor for partitioning was made through a mean comparison statistical test. Since the choice of the P determines the tree complexity, P was tuned using the R software package caret (Kuhn et al., 2018). After tuning, the tree was fitted using the R software package partykit (Hothorn and Zeileis, 2015).

Results

Corn

Among all treatments, corn grain yield, stalk yield and NUE were highly influenced by fertilizer source (Table 1-1). Corn yielded significantly more with all N treatments than the PK treatment (Table 1-2). Among manures, the LSM in 2011 was the only one resulting in corn grain yield similar to the NPK treatment. On average, manures decreased corn grain yield by 12% relative to the NPK treatment in 2011 and 2014, and by 38% in 2017 (Table 1 -2). Stalk yield generally followed the same trends as grain yield. The NUE was always the highest in the NPK treatment, particularly in 2017 when NUE of the NPK treatment was 2.6 times higher than the average NUE of manures (Table 1 -2). The NUE was generally greater in the sandy loam than in the silty clay with all treatments and in all years (average values of 26.5 vs 18.2 kg grain kg-1 N applied, respectively).

A three-way interaction between soil type, fertilizer source and residue management also significantly influenced corn grain and stalk yields (Table 1 -1). Residue management did not affect corn performance in the sandy loam. However, in the silty clay, corn grain yield was on average 13% lower in RR than in RH plots when combined with LSM and LDM (Figure 1 -1). On average over years, the LSM-RH treatment in the silty clay soil was the only organic N treatment which resulted in corn grain yield similar to the NPK treatment.

Tillage effect on corn grain yield interacted with year and soil type (Table 1 -1). In the poorly drained silty clay soil, tillage did not influence yield in the first two corn years, but MT

yielded 30% more than MB in 2017 (Table 1 -3). In the sandy loam however, MB yielded more than MT in two out of three years. Tillage also interacted with residue management in both soil types (Table 1 -1). All other factors combined, the MB-RR, MB-RH and MT-RH gave similar corn grain yield (6022 kg ha-1, on average), whereas yield in MT-RR was significantly lower (5211 kg ha-1).

We performed a regression tree with corn years to highlight the main pedoclimatic and management factors driving corn grain yield under the experimental conditions (Figure 1 -2). The primary splitting nod of the regression tree (node 1) illustrates that providing less than 110 kg available N ha-1 to corn resulted in substantially lower yields. Among the treatments that received low N rates, soils containing < 4.31 mg kg-1 residual mineral N in the previous autumn (node 3) generally resulted in lower corn grain yield in the next year. Among the treatments that received at least 110 kg N ha-1, the next best predictor of corn grain yield was year (node 9). In 2011 and 2014, two years with temperature and precipitation above the 30-y averages in July and August (Table 1 -7 (S2)), corn yields were greater and less variable in soils with organic C concentration ≤ 35.4 g kg-1 (Figure 1 -2, node 10), thereby reflecting the greater and less variable yields measured in the sandy loam than in the silty clay soil. In the sandy loam (\leq 35.4 g C kg soil-1), corn yield was the highest in plots receiving fertilizer sources with a C/N ratio (node 11) <6.18 (e.g. NPK, LSM), intermediate in plots receiving fertilizer sources with C/N ratio >6.18 and soil C concentration ≤ 22.3 , and the lowest in plots receiving fertilizer sources with C/N ratio >6.18 and soil C concentration >22.3. In 2017 (node 9), a year characterized by a relatively cold and dry July-August period (Table 1-7, S2), the NPK treatment (node 17, C/N ratio 0) resulted in greater yield than all manures (C/N ratio > 0). On that particular year, manure treatments that left > 4.44 mg kg soil-1 residual mineral N content in the previous autumn slightly increased corn grain yield (node 19).

Wheat

Wheat grain and straw yields were influenced by a three-way interaction between years, soil type and fertilizer source, while NUE was not (Table 1 -1). Wheat grain yield was generally greater in the silty clay than in the sandy loam (Table 1 -4). In the silty clay, wheat yield was

similar among all N sources in three out of four years. In the sandy loam, however, grain yield depended on the fertilizer source. The LSM yielded as much as the NPK treatment in three out of four years, while the SPM yielded as much as the NPK treatment in two out of four years, and the LDM only performed as well as the others in 2009. Straw yield, however, varied among N sources in both soil types (Table 1 -5). On average over years, straw yield was the highest with NPK, intermediate with the manures, and the lowest with PK.

A three-way interaction between year, soil type and tillage influenced wheat grain and straw yield but did not affect NUE (Table 1 -1). In the silty clay, we observed a negative effect of MT on wheat grain yield in 2010, but a positive effect of MT was found afterwards with 10% and 16% greater yield with MT than MB in 2013 and 2016, respectively (Table 1 -3). In the sandy loam, little effect of soil tillage was found, except in 2013 when wheat grain yield was 9.5% less under MT than MB.

The effect of tillage on wheat straw yield was variable and inconsistent among years in the sandy loam, and no effect was found on straw yield in the silty clay (Table 1 -3). The effect of residue management on wheat straw and grain yields was also year dependent (Table 1 - 1). In 2010, the only year when wheat was cropped after wheat, wheat grain and straw yield were significantly lower in the RR than in the RH treatment (3166 kg ha⁻¹ and 3428 kg ha⁻¹ grain yield, and 3536 kg ha⁻¹ and 3544 kg ha⁻¹ straw yield, respectively), but no effect of residue management was observed in the other years when wheat was cropped after soybean.

Soybean

Soybean grain and straw yields were dominantly influenced by soil type and tillage, but responses varied between years (Table 1 -1). Soybean yield in the sandy loam was 6% greater than in the silty clay in 2012 (3548 and 3341 kg ha⁻¹, respectively), but 7% less in the sandy loam than in the silty clay in 2015 (3923 and 4216 kg ha⁻¹, respectively), and the same trend was observed for straw. Tillage had no effect on soybean grain yield in 2012, but MT improved mean yield by 13% in the sandy loam and by 8% in the silty clay in 2015 (Table 1 -3). Tillage treatments did not influence soybean straw yield. A three-way interaction between soil type, tillage and fertilizer source on soybean grain and straw yield was found

even though fertilizers were not applied on soybean years (Table 1 -1). Fertilization in the previous year had little residual effect on soybean yield in the silty clay, whereas a clear residual effect on grain and straw yield was observed in the sandy loam (Figure 1 -3). In the sandy loam, manures increased grain yield by 14% on average when compared to the NPK treatment under MT. Under MB, SPM and LDM increased grain yield by 10% when compared to the NPK and PK treatments. A similar trend was observed for straw yield. Retaining residues did not affect soybean grain yield and had a negative effect on soybean straw yield (1935 kg ha⁻¹ and 1887 kg ha⁻¹ for RH and RR treatments, respectively).

Discussion

Corn

Corn grain yield was very sensitive to the fertilizer source, most likely because we applied the lowest recommended dose of N to corn (120 kg N ha⁻¹). The regression tree revealed that in the area of study, corn required at least 110 kg N ha⁻¹ to produce acceptable grain yield, whatever the type of soil or the year conditions. This is in line with local recommendations that propose a minimum fertilization rate of 120 kg N ha⁻¹ for corn grain production (CRAAQ, 2010). The effect of fertilizer treatments was exacerbated when weather conditions did not favor soil and manure N mineralization. In 2017, for instance, corn grain yield was particularly low with organic fertilizer sources as compared to the NPK treatment, but stalk yield was high in all treatments. This suggests that sufficient water and nutrients were present during leaves and stalk formation, but that shortages likely occurred during later growth stages. In July and August 2017, during the critical stages of tasseling and pollination, the particularly dry and cold weather conditions (Table 1 -7 (S2)) likely reduced water supply and N mineralization and release from soil and manures (Bolinder et al. 2007; Leiros et al. 1999; Van Es et al. 2007). The very poor performance of corn in the PK treatment in 2017 is consistent with the idea that weather conditions limited organic matter mineralization and, thus, soil N supply. In addition, the particularly dry conditions in that period may have compromised kernel formation and filling through a reduced carbohydrate translocation from leaves to grains (Shaw, 1977; Wolfe et al. 1988). By contrast, in warmer and wetter years (2011, 2014), corn yield was mainly driven by soil type, with lower yields in the poorly

drained silty clay than in the well-drained sandy loam. In the well-drained soils, corn yield was again mainly driven by the fertilizer source, with generally greater yield with NPK and LSM than with LDM and SPM. The particularly low C/N ratio and high NH₄-N concentration of the LSM (C/N=6 and NH₄-N=4.6 g kg⁻¹) as compared LDM (C/N=11 and NH₄-N=1.1 g kg⁻¹) and SPM (C/N=13 and NH₄-N=3.9 g kg⁻¹) (Table 1-8 (S3)) could explain similar yields between LSM and NPK. In fact, as compared to the other organic fertilizer sources, the lower C/N ratio of LSM probably favored early-season N availability, and could also have promoted net soil N mineralization (Angers et al., 2010). These results are in line with those of Nyiraneza et al. (2010b) who previously suggested soil mineral N content as one of the main soil variables affecting the response of corn to N in eastern Canada. These authors also noted an important inter-annual variability in the relationship between soil N concentration and corn grain yield, likely due to different weather patterns between years that differently impacted soil N mineralization and availability to crop. Kablan et al. (2017) also proposed that fertilizer N requirement for corn in eastern Canada should consider the variability associated with site-specific effects of soil type and weather variability among years. All these interrelationships and the importance of each factor under different soil and weather conditions were clearly evidenced by the regression tree.

Overall, corn NUE with the manures was lower in the fine textured silty clay than in the sandy loam. This could be explained by a rapid and substantial fixation of manure-derived NH₄-N in clay lattices (Sørensen and Jensen, 1995; Chantigny *et al.*, 2004), and by a lower N mineralization rate in the fine textured soil (Ros *et al.*, 2011), which likely compromised fertilizer N availability in early season. In the silty clay, the reduction in corn grain yield where LSM and LDM were applied with crop residues at the soil surface was attributed to a better contact between the liquid manures and crop residues, as compared to the SPM and the granular NPK fertilizers, which further reduced the availability of LSM and LDM N to corn (Sørensen and Jensen, 1995; Sørensen and Jensen, 1998). Therefore, immobilization of available N through a combination of clay fixation (Chantigny et al., 2002) and the presence of abundant wheat straw (~ 3 440 kg ha⁻¹) with a wide C:N ratio (Nicolardot et al. 2001; Chantigny et al. 2002) at the soil surface likely reduced manure-derived N availability to corn in the fine textured silty clay, and especially N availability from LSM and LDM.

Tillage differentially affected corn grain yield depending on soil type and year. We hypothesize that MT gradually improved soil structure and hydraulic conductivity over time in the naturally poorly-drained silty clay (Pagliai *et al.*, 2004), which resulted in greater corn yield under MT as compared to MB in 2017. In the sandy loam, however, MT yielded less corn grain than MB in 2014 and 2017. This could be partly attributed to the moderate population of yellow foxtail that developed over time under MT. In fact, we observed a post-emergence foxtail recovering in corn years, probably because of its wide row spacing as compared to soybean and wheat. However, when all years and soil types were combined, MT yielded less than MB only when crop residues were returned to soil. It is therefore likely that under the cold and humid conditions of our experiment, the wheat straw mulch that developed under reduced tillage with RR caused poor seed placement and/or delayed soil warming in spring (Dwyer *et al.*, 1995; Defelice *et al.*, 2006; Rusinamhodzi *et al.*, 2011). Corn being a C4 crop species, its development is particularly vulnerable to lower soil temperature in the spring (van Wijk et al. 1959).

Wheat

Thomsen (2004) and Jensen *et al.* (1999) found that 45 to 67% of N taken up by wheat plants was soil derived. The particularly high wheat grain yield observed in the silty clay, as compared to the sandy loam, could therefore be partly explained by its greater N content and supply capacity (Bloom et al., 1988; Webb et al. 1998; Webb et al. 2013). Assuming that soil N mineralization was high and well synchronized with wheat N demand in the silty clay, it is likely that it blurred the effect of fertilizer treatments. In the coarse-textured sandy loam, however, soil N supply capacity was probably limited, which induced a greater response of wheat grain yield to the fertilizer source (Cerny et al. 2010, Hlisnikovský et al. 2014). Among the organic fertilizer sources, LSM was the only one to yield as much as the NPK treatment in three out of four years, consistent with the results obtained for corn.

Also in agreement with corn, the MT treatment tended to reduce wheat grain yield in the first years after implementation, but it significantly improved yield a few years later (starting in 2013). This finding corroborates our hypothesis that benefits of MT on soil properties

gradually developed in the silty clay soil, which eventually furthered yield. In the sandy loam, however, little effect of soil tillage was found, likely because improvements in soil structure and hydraulic conductivity with MT were more critical to wheat growing on the poorly drained silty clay than the well-drained sandy loam.

Residue management affected wheat grain yield in 2010 but not in the other years. This is probably related to the fact that wheat was grown after wheat in 2010, and after soybean in 2013 and 2016. On average, wheat produced more residues (~ 3400 kg ha^{-1}) than soybean (~ 1900 kg ha⁻¹). The presence of abundant wheat residues on the soil in 2010 could not only have created a more pronounced mulch effect, but it could also have created favourable conditions for the development of wheat diseases. This result highlights the importance to consider crop sequence and associated amounts of residues when assessing the effect of residue management on crop yield in the next year (Flower *et al.*, 2017).

Soybean

Soybean yield is generally greater in soils with higher clay (Cox *et al.*, 2003) and organic matter (Kravchenko and Bullock, 2000) concentrations. However, our results showed that soybean yield was not always greater in the silty clay soil. For instance, in 2012, soybean yields were higher in the sandy loam than the silty clay. On that year, a heavy rainfall period occurred in the week following planting (77 mm in 7 days). This probably induced prolonged waterlogging in the poorly drained silty clay, which could have affected early root development and, thereby, straw and grain yield (Wuebker et al., 2001).

In contrast with corn and wheat, the MT treatment improved soybean yields in both soil types. Defelice *et al.* (2006) and Defelice *et al.* (2006); Ogle *et al.* (2012) found that no-till resulted in greater soybean yield than moldboard plowing where spring soil conditions do not delay seedling emergence. Under these conditions, reduced tillage can significantly increase soybean N fixation (Anikwe et al., 2016; Wheatley et al., 1995) by maintaining greater bradyrhizobia populations (Ferreira et al. 2000).

Manures can also stimulate soil bacterial activity (Francioli *et al.*, 2016) and promote soybean nodulation (Ganeshamurthy and Sammi Reddy, 2000) and root growth (Hati *et al.*, 2006). In contrast, mineral fertilizers can promote mineralization of soil organic matter (Khan *et al.*, 2007), resulting in higher soil mineral N concentrations and lower pH, two conditions known to repress soybean nodulation (Reid *et al.*, 2011; Ferguson, 2013). We therefore hypothesize that the positive residual effect of organic fertilizers observed in the sandy loam was due to enhanced soybean nodulation, that increased N provision through symbiotic fixation. The residual effect of fertilizer source on soybean yields appeared to be especially important in the coarse-textured sandy loam, possibly because of its lower N supply capacity than the fine-textured silty clay (Schipanski *et al.*, 2010). Since manures improved soybean yield, while residue management did not, it suggests that soybean yield was more sensitive to the quality than to the quantity of organic matter returned to soil.

Conclusion

This multi-year field study revealed that crop responses to combinations of agricultural practices varied among species and soil types. Tillage treatments had inconsistent effects on crop yields in the sandy loam, whereas a positive effect of MT built up over time in the silty clay, where water drainage was more problematic. Overall, crop responses to the different fertilizer sources were greater in the sandy loam than in the silty clay soil, likely because of lower N supply capacity of the sandy loam. This lower N supply capacity also explains why a residual effect of manures was found in soybean in the sandy loam soil only. In general, LSM appeared the best organic fertilizer source, likely because of its lower C/N ratio and greater NH₄-N concentration than with the other manures. Management of corn and soybean residues did not influence soybean and wheat yields in the next year. In contrast, leaving wheat straw on the soil at harvest reduced corn yield in the next year (i) when it was fertilized with liquid manures in the silty clay only, or (ii) when combined with MT in both soil types. We put forward that the large amount of wheat straw left on the soil at harvest absorbed part of the nutrients applied with the liquid manures in the following spring and delayed soil warming in the spring under MT. Moreover, a "year" effect revealed that (i) the positive effect of MT built up with time; (ii) corn yield was primarily affected by soil texture on wetter-than-normal years, and by fertilizer source on dryer-than-normal years; (iii) wheat yield was affected by the previous crop species when residues were retained (significantly lower yield with residues in wheat after wheat, but not in wheat after soybean), and (iv) soybean yield was greater in sandy than clayey soils on year with wetter-than-normal spring. Continued monitoring of this field study, and other long-term studies are required to provide more insights to the net effects of combined agricultural practices on cropping systems productivity, as a function of soil type, especially in systems where different crop species are grown in rotation.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the great work of Benjamin Louis for the multivariate statistical analysis. Special thanks are also extended to the staff of Université Laval and Agriculture and Agrifood Canada for their meticulous technical work and their precious collaboration.

Funding

This work was financially supported by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. The Senior author was financially supported by scholarships from the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program, the Fonds de Recherche Québécois Nature et Technologies, Équiterre, the Erasmus+ exchange program, and the Choquette family foundation.

References

- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutr. Cycl. Agroecosyst 86, 225–229.
- Anikwe, M.A.N., Eze, J.C., Chima, M.C., Ikenganyia, E.E., 2016. Soil physicochemical quality in contrasting tillage systems and its effect on nodulation and nodulation effectivity of groundnut, Bambara groundnut and soybean in a degraded Ultisol in Agbani, Enugu Southeastern Nigeria. Rhizosphere. 1, 14–16.
- Aoyama, M., Angers, D., N'Dayegamiye, A., Bissonnette, N., 1999. Protected organic matter in water-stable aggregates as affected by mineral fertilizer end manure applications. Can. J. Soil Sci. 79, 419–425.
- Bloom, T., Sylvester-Bradley, R., Vaidyanathan, L., Murray, A., 1988. Apparent recovery of fertilizer nitrogen by winter wheat. In: Jenkinson, D.S., Smith, K.A. (Eds.), Nitrogen Efficiency in Agricultural Soils. Elsevier Applied Science, London, pp. 27–37.
- Bolinder, M.A., Andren, O., Katterer, T., de Jong, R., Vandenbygaart, A., Angers, D., Parent, L., Gregorich, E., 2007. Soil carbon dynamics in Canadian Agricultural Ecoregions: quantifying climatic influence on soil biological activity. Agric. Ecosyst. Environ. 122, 461–470.
- Cantero-Martiń ez, C., Angas, P., Lampurlanés, J., 2003. Growth, yield and water productivity of barley (Hordeum vulgare L.) affected by tillage and N fertilization in Mediterranean semiarid, rainfed conditions of Spain. Field Crops Res. 84, 341–357.
- Cerny, J., Balik, J., Kulhanek, M., Casova, K., Nedved, V., 2010. Mineral and organic fertilization efficiency in long-term stationary experiments. Plant Soil Environ. 56, 28–36.
- Chantigny, M.H., Angers, D.A., Rochette, P., 2002. Fate of carbon and nitrogen from animal manure and crop residues in cold and wet soils. Soil Biol. Biochem. 34, 509–517.
- Chantigny, M.H., Angers, D.A., Morvan, T., Pomar, C., 2004. Dynamics of pig slurry nitrogen in soil and plant as determined with N. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 68, 637–643.
- Chantigny, M.H., Angers, D.A., Rochette, P., Bélanger, G., Massé, D., Côté, D., 2007. Gaseous nitrogen emissions and forage nitrogen uptake on soils fertilized with raw and treated swine manure. J. Environ. Qual. 36, 1864.
- Cox, M.S., Gerard, P.D., Wardlaw, M.C., Abshire, M., 2003. Variability of selected soil properties and their relationships with soybean yield. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 67, 1296–1302.
- CRAAQ (Centre de reference en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Quebec), 2003. Guide De Référence En Fertilisation, 1st ed. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- CRAAQ (Centre de reference en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Quebec), 2010. Guide De Référence En Fertilisation, 2nd ed. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- Dalal, R.C., Wang, W., Allen, D., Reeves, S., Menzies, N., 2011. Soil nitrogen and nitrogenuse efficiency under long-term No-till practice. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 75, 2251–2261.
- Defelice, M.S., Carter, P.R., Mitchell, S.B., 2006. Influence of tillage on corn and soybean yield in the United States and Canada. Crop Manag. 5, 0.

- Dimassi, B., Mary, B., Wylleman, R., Labreuche, J., Couture, D., Piraux, F., Cohan, J.-P., 2014. Long-term effect of contrasted tillage and crop management on soil carbon dynamics during 41 years. Agric. Ecosyst. Environ. 188, 134–146.
- Dwyer, L.M., Ma, B.L., Hayhoe, H.N., Culley, J.L.B., 1995. Tillage effects on soil temperature, shoot dry matter accumulation and corn grain yield. J. Sustain. Agric. 5, 85–99.
- Ferguson, B.J., 2013. The development and regulation of soybean nodules. In: Board, J.E. (Ed.), A Comprehensive Survey of International Soybean Research-Genetics, Physiology, Agronomy and Nitrogen Relationships. InTech, Rijeka, Croatia, pp. 31–47.
- Ferreira, M.C., de, S., Andrade, D., de, O., Chueire, L.M., Takemura, S.M., Hungria, M., 2000. Tillage method and crop rotation effects on the population sizes and diversity of bradyrhizobia nodulating soybean. Soil Biol. Biochem. 32, 627–637.
- Flower, K.C., Ward, P.R., Cordingley, N., Micin, S.F., Craig, N., 2017. Rainfall, rotations and residue level affect no-tillage wheat yield and gross margin in a Mediterraneantype environment. Field Crops Res. 208, 1–10.
- Francioli, D., Schulz, E., Lentendu, G., Wubet, T., Buscot, F., Reitz, T., 2016. Mineral vs. Organic amendments: microbial community structure, activity and abundance of agriculturally relevant microbes are driven by long-term fertilization strategies. Front. Microbiol. 7, 1446.
- Ganeshamurthy, A.N., Sammi Reddy, K., 2000. Effect of integrated use of farmyard manure and sulphur in a soybean and wheat cropping system on nodulation, dry matter production and chlorophyll content of soybean on swell-shrink soils in Central India. J. Agron. Crop Sci. 185, 91–97.
- Godfray, H., Beddington, Jr, Crute, I.R., Haddad, L., Lawrence, D., Muir, J., Pretty, J., Robinson, S., Thomas, S.M., Toulmin, C., 2010. Food security: the challenge of feeding 9 billion people. Science 327, 812–818.
- Hao, X., Ball, B., Culley, J., Carter, M., Parkin, G., 2008. Soil density and porosity. In: Carter, M.R., Gregorich, E.G. (Eds.), Soil Sampling and Methods of Anlysis. CRC Press, Boca, Raton, FL, pp. 179–196.
- Hati, K.M., Mandal, K.G., Misra, A.K., Ghosh, P.K., Bandyopadhyay, K.K., 2006. Effect of inorganic fertilizer and farmyard manure on soil physical properties, root distribution, and water-use efficiency of soybean in Vertisols of central India. Bioresour. Technol. 97, 2182–2188.
- Hlisnikovský, L., Kunzová, E., Hejcman, M., Dvořáček, V., 2014. Effect of fertilizer application, soil type, and year on yield and technological parameters of winter wheat (Triticum aestivum) in the Czech Republic. Arch. Agron. Soil Sci. 61, 33–53.
- Hobbs, P.R., Sayre, K., Gupta, R., 2008. The role of conservation agriculture in sustainable agriculture. Philos. Trans. Biol. Sci. 363, 543–555.
- Hothorn, T., Hornik, K., Zeileis, A., 2006. Unbiased recursive partitioning: a conditional inference framework. J. Comput. Graph. Stat. 15, 651–674.
- Hothorn, T., Zeileis, A., 2015. Partykit: a modular toolkit for recursive partytioning in R. J. Mach. Learn. Res. 16, 3905–3909.
- Jensen, B., Sørensen, P., Thomsen, I.K., Christensen, B., Jensen, E., 1999. Availability of nitrogen in 15N-labeled ruminant manure components to successively grown crops. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 63, 416–423.

- Kablan, L., Chabot, V., Mailloux, A., Bouchard, M.E., Fontaine, D., Bruulsema, T., 2017. Variability in corn yield response to nitrogen fertilizer in Eastern Canada. Agron. J. 109, 2231–2242.
- Kassam, A., Friedrich, T., Shaxson, F., Pretty, J., 2009. The spread of Conservation Agriculture: justification, sustainability and uptake. Int. J. Agric. Sus. 7, 292–320.
- Khan, S.A., Mulvaney, R., Ellsworth, T., Boast, C.W., 2007. The myth of nitrogen fertilization for soil carbon sequestration. J. Environ. Qual. 36, 1821–1832.
- Kravchenko, A., Bullock, D.G., 2000. Correlation of corn and soybean grain yield with topography and soil properties. Agron. J. 92, 75–83.
- Kroetsch, D., Wang, C., 2008. Particle size distribution. In: Carter, M.R., Gregorich, E.G. (Eds.), Soil Sampling and Methods of Analysis. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, pp. 713– 725.
- Kuhn, M., Wing, Jed, from, C., Weston, S., Williams, A., Keefer, C., Engelhardt, A., Cooper, T., Mayer, Z., Kenkel, B., Core Team, R., Benesty, M., Lescarbeau, R., Ziem, A., Scrucca, L., Tang, Y., Candan, C., Hunt, T., 2018. Caret: classification and regression training. Astrophysics Source Code Library.
- Kuhn, M., Johnson, K., 2013. Applied Predictive Modeling. Springer.
- Leirós, M.C., Trasar-Cepeda, C., Seoane, S., Gil-Sotres, F., 1999. Dependence of mineralization of soil organic matter on temperature and moisture. Soil Biol. Biochem. 31, 327–335.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Glob. Change Biol. Bioenergy 20, 666–679.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Bittman, S., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Hunt, D., Parent, L.-É., 2015. Carbon accumulates in organo-mineral complexes after long term liquid dairy manure application. Agric. Ecosyst. Environ. 202, 108–119.
- Malhi, S.S., Lemke, R., Wang, Z.H., Chhabra, B.S., 2006. Tillage, nitrogen and crop residue effects on crop yield, nutrient uptake, soil quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Soil Tillage Res. 90, 171–183.
- Malhi, S.S., Nyborg, M., 1990. Effect of tillage and straw on yield and N uptake of barley grown under different N fertility regimes. Soil Tillage Res. 17, 115–124.
- Mallory, E., Griffin, T., Porter, G., 2010. Seasonal nitrogen availability from current and past applications of manure. Nutr. Cycl. Agroecosyst 88, 351–360.
- Martens, D.A., 2001. Nitrogen cycling under different soil management systems. Adv. Agron. 70, 143–192.
- Maynard, D., Kalra, Y., Crumbaugh, J., 2008. Nitrate and exchangeable ammonium nitrogen. In: Carter, M.R., Gregorich, E.G. (Eds.), Soil Sampling and Methods of Analysis. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, pp. 71–80.
- Nicolardot, B., Recous, S., Mary, B., 2001. Simulation of C and N mineralisation during crop residue decomposition: a simple dynamic model based on the C:N ratio of the residues. Plant Soil 222, 83–103.
- Nyborg, M., Solberg, E.D., Izaurralde, R.C., Malhi, S.S., Molina-Ayala, M., 1995. Influence of long-term tillage, straw and N fertilizer on barley yield, plant-N uptake and soil-N balance. Soil Tillage Res. 36, 165–174.
- Nyiraneza, J., Chantigny, M., N'Dayegamiye, A., Laverdiere, M., 2009. Dairy cattle manure improves soil productivity in low residue rotation systems. Agron. J. 101, 207–214.

- Nyiraneza, J., Chantigny, M., N'Dayegamiye, A., Laverdiere, M., 2010a. Long-term manure application and forages reduce nitrogen fertilizer requirements of silage corncereal cropping systems. Agron. J. 102, 1244–1251.
- Nyiraneza, J., N'Dayegamiye, A., Gasser, M., Giroux, M., Grenier, M., Landry, C., Guertin, S., 2010b. Soil and crop parameters related to corn nitrogen response in Eastern Canada. Agron. J. 102, 1478–1490.
- Ogle, S.M., Swan, A., Paustian, K., 2012. No-till management impacts on crop productivity, carbon input and soil carbon sequestration. Agric., Ecosyst. Environ., Appl. Soil Ecol. 149, 37–49.
- Pagliai, M., Vignozzi, N., Pellegrini, S., 2004. Soil structure and the effect of management practices. Soil Tillage Res. 79, 131–143.
- Pittelkow, C.M., Linquist, B.A., Lundy, M.E., Liang, X., van Groenigen, K., Lee, J., van Gestel, N., Six, J., Venterea, R., van Kessel, C., 2015. When does no-till yield more? A global meta-analysis. Field Crops Res. 183, 156–168.
- Reeves, D.W., 1997. The role of soil organic matter in maintaining soil quality in continuous cropping systems. Soil Tillage Res. 43, 131–167.
- Reid, D.E., Ferguson, B.J., Hayashi, S., Lin, Y.-H., Gresshoff, P.M., 2011. Molecular mechanisms controlling legume autoregulation of nodulation. Ann. Bot. 108, 789–795.
- Rieux, C.M., Vanasse, A., Chantigny, M., Gelinas, P., Angers, D., Rochette, P., Royer, I., 2013. Yield and bread-making potential of spring wheat under mineral and organic fertilization. Crop Sci. 53, 1139–1147.
- Ros, G.H., Hanegraaf, M.C., Hoffland, E., van Riemsdijk, W.H., 2011. Predicting soil N mineralization: relevance of organic matter fractions and soil properties. Soil Biol. Biochem. 43, 1714–1722.
- Rusinamhodzi, L., Corbeels, M., Wijk, M., Rufino, M., Nyamangara, J., Giller, K., 2011. A meta-analysis of long-term effects of conservation agriculture on maize grain yield under rain-fed conditions. Agron. Sustain. Dev. 31, 657–673.
- Schipanski, M., Drinkwater, L., Russelle, M., 2010. Understanding the variability in soybean nitrogen fixation across agroecosystems. Plant Soil 329, 379–397.
- Shaw, R.H., 1977. Climatic requirement. In: Sprague, G.F. (Ed.), Corn and Corn Improvement. American Society of Agronomy, Madison, WI, pp. 591–624.
- Sheehy, J., Regina, K., Alakukku, L., Six, J., 2015. Impact of no-till and reduced tillage on aggregation and aggregate-associated carbon in Northern European agroecosystems. Soil Tillage Res. 150, 107–113.
- Skjemstad, J., Baldock, J., 2008. Total and organic carbon. In: Carter, M.R., Gregorich, E.G. (Eds.), Soil Sampling and Methods of Analysis. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, pp. 225– 237.
- Soil Survey Staff, SSS, 1994. Keys to Soil Taxonomy. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Washigton, USA 306 p.
- Sørensen, P., Jensen, E., 1995. Mineralization-immobilization and plant uptake of nitrogen as influenced by the spatial distribution of cattle slurry in soils of different texture. Plant Soil 173, 283–291.
- Sørensen, P., Jensen, E.S., 1998. The use of 15N labelling to study the turnover and utilization of ruminant manure N. Biol. Fert. Soils. 28, 56–63.
- Stumborg, M., Townleysmith, L., Coxworth, E., 1996. Sustainability and economic issues for cereal crop residue export. Can. J. Plant Sci. 76, 669–673.

- Thomas, B., Sharifi, M., Whalen, J., Chantigny, M., 2015. Mineralizable nitrogen responds differently to manure type in contrasting soil textures. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 79, 1396– 1405.
- Thomsen, I., 2004. Nitrogen use efficiency of N-15-labeled poultry manure. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 68, 538–544.
- Toliver, D., Larson, J., Roberts, R., English, B., Ugarte, D., West, T., 2012. Effects of No-Till on yields as influenced by crop and environmental factors. Agron. J. 104, 530–541.
- Turmel, M.-S., Speratti, A., Baudron, F., Verhulst, N., Govaerts, B., 2015. Crop residue management and soil health: a systems analysis. Agric. Syst. 134, 6–16.
- UNCCD (United Nations Conventions to Combat Desertification), 2017. Global Land Outlook. Bonn, Germany.
- Van Den Putte, A., Govers, G., Diels, J., Gillijns, K., Demuzere, M., 2010. Assessing the effect of soil tillage on crop growth: a meta-regression analysis on European crop yields under conservation agriculture. Eur. J. Agron. 33, 231–241.
- Van Es, H., Kay, B., Melkonian, J., Sogbedji, J., Bruulsma, T., 2007. Nitrogen management for maize in humid regions: case for a dynamic modeling approach. In: Bruulsema, T.W. (Ed.), Managing Crop Nitrogen for Weather: Proceedings of the Symposium "Integrating Weather Variability into Nitrogen Recommendations," Indianapolis. Int. Plant Nutr. Inst., Norcross, GA, pp. 6–13 IN. 15 Nov. 2006.
- Van Wijk, W.R., Larson, W.E., Burrows, W.C., 1959. Soil temperature and the early growth of corn from mulched and unmulched soil. Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 23, 428–434.
- Verhulst, N., Govaerts, B., Verachtert, E., Castellanos-Navarrete, A., Mezzalama, M., Wall, P., Deckers, J., Sayre, K.D., 2010. Conservation agriculture, improving soil quality for sustainable production systems. In: Lal, R., Stewart, B.A. (Eds.), Food Security and Soil Quality. Adv. Soil Sci. CRC Press Inc., Boca Raton, FL, USA, pp. 137–208.
- Warren Raffa, D., Bogdanski, A., Tittonell, P., 2015. How does crop residue removal affect soil organic carbon and yield? A hierarchical analysis of management and environmental factors. Biomass Bioenergy 81, 345–355.
- Watts, D.B., Torbert, H.A., Prior, S.A., 2007. Mineralization of nitrogen in soils amended with dairy manure as affected by Wetting/Drying cycles. Commun. Soil Sci. Plant Anal. 38, 2103–2116.
- Webb, J., Seeney, F., Sylvester-Bradley, R., 1998. The response to fertilizer nitrogen of cereals grown on sandy soils. J. Agric. Sci. 130, 271–286.
- Webb, J., Sorensen, P., Velthof, G., Amon, B., Pinto, M., Rodhe, L., Salomon, E., Hutchings, N., Burczyk, P., Reid, J., 2013. An assessment of the variation of manure nitrogen efficiency throughout Europe and an appraisal of means to increase Manure-N efficiency. Adv. Agron 119, 371–442.
- Wheatley, D.M., Macleod, D.A., Jessop, R.S., 1995. Influence of tillage treatments on N 2 fixation of soybean. Soil Biol.Biochem. 27, 571–574.
- Wolfe, D., Henderson, D., Hsiao, T., Alvino, A., 1988. Interactive water and nitrogen effects on senescence of maize. I. Leaf area duration, nitrogen distribution, and yield. Agron. J. 80, 859–864.
- Woli, K.P., Boyer, M.J., Elmore, R.W., Sawyer, J.E., Abendroth, L.J., Barker, D.W., 2016. Corn era hybrid response to nitrogen fertilization. Agron. J. 108, 473–486.
- Wuebker, E., Mullen, R., Koehler, K., 2001. Flooding and temperature effects on soybean germination. Crop Sci. 41, 1857–1861.

Zuber, S.M., Villamil, M.B., 2016. Meta-analysis approach to assess effect of tillage on microbial biomass and enzyme activities. Soil Biol. Biochem. 97, 176–187.

Tables

Table 1-1. Summary of the analysis on variance (F values) for the effects of year, soil type, fertilizer source, tillage, residue management, and their interactions on crop grain yield, straw/stalk yield, and NUE.

	Corn				Wheat	Soybean		
	Grain yield	Stalk yield	NUE	Grain yield	Straw yield	NUE	Grain yield	Straw yield
Treatment	kg ha ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹	kg kg N ⁻¹	kg ha⁻¹	kg ha⁻¹	kg kg N ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹
Soil type	4.9*	ns	11.9**	51.6**	ns	ns	ns	ns
Tillage	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	11.0*	ns
Fertilizer source	171.7***	93.8***	24.6***	43.4***	85.1***	4.3*	ns	ns
Residue	14.7**	12.5**	ns	ns	1.8***	ns	ns	6.6*
Tillage x Fertilizer source	ns	4.3**	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Fertilizer source x Residue	2.9*	3.2*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Tillage x Residue	20.0***	4.7*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Tillage x Fertilizer source x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Soil type x Tillage	7.1*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Soil type x Fertilizer source	6.4**	ns	ns	ns	3.8**	ns	8.8***	5.1**
Soil type x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Soil type x Tillage x Fertilizer source	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	2.6*	3.9*
Soil type x Fertilizer source x Residue	3.5*	2.5*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Soil type x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Soil type x Tillage x Fertilizer source x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year	141.9***	40.2***	3.1*	327.4***	166.3***	31.9***	335.3***	68.9***
Year x Soil type	3.7*	34.6***	7.3**	120.7***	7.8***	17.7***	53.6***	365.6***
Year x Tillage	6.5**	ns	4.0*	18.6***	ns	ns	17.6***	ns
Year x Fertilizer source	7.1***	2.8**	9.8***	7.2***	11.0***	3.7***	ns	ns
Year x Residue	ns	18.3***	5.6**	4.9**	7.6***	ns	ns	ns
Year x Tillage x Fertilizer source	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	3.6**
Year x Fertilizer source x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Fertilizer source x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Tillage	6.6**	ns	ns	20.7***	8.1***	ns	ns	5.1*
Year x Soil type x Fertilizer source	ns	ns	ns	4.1***	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	3.0*	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Tillage x Fertilizer source	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Fertilizer source x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Fertilizer source x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Year x Soil type x Fertilizer source x Tillage x Residue	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

*, **, and *** denote significant differences at P < 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001, respectively; ns, not significant (P >

0.05).

		2011			2014		2017		
	Grain yield	Stalk yield	NUE	Grain yield	Stalk yield	NUE	Grain yield	Stalk yield	I NUE
Fertilizer	kg ha ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹	kg kg N^{-1}	kg ha ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹	kg kg N^{-1}	kg ha ⁻¹	kg ha ⁻¹	kg kg N^{-1}
Both soils									
NPK	8008 A	8850 A	33 A	7572 A	7695 A	31 A	7264 A	9948 A	44 A
LSM	7658 AB	8496 A	23 B	6671 B	7240 AB	20 B	4864 B	8906 B	19 B
SPM	7263 B	7729 B	19 BC	6635 B	6950 B	18 B	4305 B	8209 C	18 B
LDM	6243 B	7045 C	14 C	6588 B	6815 B	16 B	4359 B	7713 C	14 B
PK	4045 C	5562 D		3858 C	4766 C		1963 C	5431 D	

Table 1-2. Effects of year and fertilizer source on corn grain yield (kg ha⁻¹), stalk yield (kg MS ha⁻¹) and NUE (kg yield ha⁻¹ kg N applied⁻¹) combined for both soil types.

NPK : complete mineral fertilizer, LSM: liquid swine manure, SPM: solid poultry manure, LDM: liquid dairy manure, PK: mineral control without N.

Within each column, means followed by different letters are significantly different at the P < 0.05 confidence

level

	Corn				Wh	eat		Soybean		
	2011	2014	2017	2009	2010	2013	2016	2012	2015	
Sandy loam										
	kg ha ⁻¹				kg l	1a ⁻¹		kg ha ⁻¹		
Grain yield		_			_			_		
MT	6588 A	6060 B	4090 B	2541 A	2456 A	3309 B	3716 A	3599 A	4158 A	
MB	7207 A	7105 A	5021 A	2340 A	2496 A	3656 A	3461 A	3497 A	3688 B	
Straw/Stalk yield										
MT	6460 B	6559 A	8303 B	3244 A	2343 A	3279 B	3986 A	1969 A	1770 A	
MB	7497 A	7017 A	9183 A	2991 B	2535 A	3735 A	3672 B	1981 A	1767 A	
Silty clay										
Grain yield										
MT	6365 A	5605 A	5143 A	2692 A	3870 B	4493 A	3968 A	3405 A	4382 A	
MB	6348 A	6244 A	3951 B	2815 A	4366 A	4094 B	3434 B	3278 A	4050 B	
Straw/Stalk yield										
MT	8139 A	6475 A	7697 A	3689 A	2694 A	4333 A	3931 A	1753 A	2198 A	
MB	8048 A	6722 A	6984 A	3807 A	2792 A	4031 A	3981 A	1624 A	2226 A	

Table 1-3. Effect of tillage on crop grain (kg ha⁻¹) and straw/stalk (kg MS ha⁻¹) yields as influenced by soil type and year

MT = minimum till, MB = mouldboard plowing.

Means with different letters within the same soil type and the same year are significantly different at the P < 0.05

confidence level.

The interaction was not significant for corn stalk yield.

	2009	2010	2013	2016						
	Grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹)									
Fertilizer source										
Sandy loam										
NPK	2649 A	2764 A	4383 A	3783 BC						
LSM	2592 A	2544 AB	3606 BC	4066 A						
SPM	2684 A	2767 A	3773 B	3804 B						
LDM	2516 A	2533 B	3509 C	3556 C						
РК	1760 B	1773 C	2181 D	2682 D						
Silty clay										
NPK	2858 A	4923 A	4751 A	3968 A						
LSM	3056 A	4181 B	4551 A	4031 A						
SPM	2818 A	4348 B	4356 A	3959 A						
LDM	2791 A	3930 B	4427 A	3884 A						
РК	2243 B	3209 C	3412 B	2664 B						

Table 1-4. Wheat grain yield in a sandy loam and a silty clay soil as influenced by fertilizer source in 2009, 2010, 2013 and 2016.

NPK : complete mineral fertilizer, LSM: liquid swine manure, SPM: solid poultry manure, LDM: liquid dairy manure, PK: mineral control without N.

Means with different letters within the same soil type and year are significantly different at the P < 0.05 confidence level.

	Straw (kg l	Straw yield (kg ha-1)								
Fertilizer	Sandy loam	Silty clay								
NPK	3765 A	4230 A								
LSM	3355 BC	3846 B								
SPM	3503 B	3717 BC								
LDM	3220 C	3462 C								
РК	2273 D	3031 D								

Table 1-5. Wheat straw yield in the sandy loam and the silty clay as influenced by fertilizer source. Values are averaged for the four years with wheat (2009, 2010, 2013 and 2016).

NPK : complete mineral fertilizer, LSM: liquid swine manure, SPM: solid poultry manure, LDM: liquid dairy manure, PK: mineral control without N.

Means with different letters within the same soil type are significantly different at the P < 0.05 confidence

level.

Figures



Figure 1-1. Average (2011, 2014, 2017) corn grain yield (kg ha⁻¹) as influenced by the interactive effect of soil type (Silty clay and Sandy loam), fertilizer source (NPK=complete mineral fertilizer, LSM=liquid swine manure, SPM=solid poultry manure, LDM=liquid dairy manure and PK=mineral control without N), and residue management (RH=residue harvested, RR=residue returned). Means with different letters within the same soil type are significantly different at the P<0.05 confidence level.



Figure 1-2. Basic regression tree (2011, 2014 and 2017) performed with year, soils, and management variables (FertN=amount of available N provided by the fertilizer (kg N ha⁻¹), Soil_Nmin=soil mineral N concentration (mg N kg soil⁻¹), Soil_C=soil organic C, concentration (g C kg soil⁻¹), FertC:N= C/N ratio of the fertilizer source) as predictors of corn grain yield (kg ha⁻¹). Soil bulk density, soil pH, soil total N, soil water content, and the amount of residues retained in the previous year were measured in the autumn preceding corn planting and included in this analysis. Box plots graphically depict the average yield, major quartiles and variability of the statistical groups defined by the regression tree.



Figure 1-3. Average (2012 and 2015) soybean grain and straw yield as influenced by the interactive effects of soil type (Silty clay and Sandy loam), tillage (MB=moldboard plowing and MT=minimum till), and the residual effect of previous fertilizer treatments (NPK=complete mineral fertilizer, LSM=liquid swine manure, SPM=solid poultry manure, LDM=liquid dairy manure, and PK=mineral control without N). Means with different letters within the same soil type and the same tillage treatment are significantly different at the P<0.05 confidence level.

Supplementary material

		Cultiva	r/Hybrid	Seeding rate		Row spacing		Seeding date		Harvest date	
				kern	el m²	m		JJ/mm		JJ/mm	
Year	Crop	SL ^a	SC ^a								
2009	Spring wheat	AC	Brio	450	475	0.	18	12/05	13/05	12/08	25/08
2010	Spring wheat	AC Brio		450	475	0.	18	05/05	13/05	17/08	26/08
2011	Corn	30A27		8 0.76		76	31/05	04/06	11/10	18/10	
2012	Soybean	Astro R2		6	0	0.3	36	25/05	27/05	28/09	09/10
2013	Spring wheat	Fuz	tion	47	75	0.	18	06/05	07/05	19/08	20/08
2014	Corn	3007RIB	2755RIB	8	.7	0.1	76	21/05	09/06	14/10	30/10
2015	Soybean	Astro R2		52	52.5 0.36		36	15/05	25/05	05/10	08/10
2016	Spring wheat	Fuzion		44	50	0.18		05/05	12/05	19/08	24/08
2017	Corn	E474	A12R	8	.7	0.76		17/05	24/05	17/10	01/11

Table 1-6 (S1). Agronomic practices for each production year and soil type in a field experiment established in autumn 2008 at Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Québec, Canada.

SL: Sandy loam, SC: Silty clay

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	1981-2010
Month	Tempera	ature (°C)							
April	5.9	7.5	3.5	5.1	3.6	2.2	2.6	0.8	4.2	3.7
May	10.5	13.3	10.9	13.0	12.5	11.9	13.5	11.9	10.6	11.2
June	16.1	16.9	16.8	17.4	14.6	17.4	15.0	16.5	16.7	16.4
July	17.8	21.4	20.6	19.9	20.0	19.4	18.7	18.9	18.5	19.3
August	19.3	19.3	18.6	19.7	17.9	18.5	19.2	19.3	17.2	18.1
September	13.5	13.6	15.5	13.6	13.1	13.5	16.4	13.8	15.7	12.7
October	5.1	6.6	8.2	8.2	7.8	8.6	5.0	7.1	9.5	6.6
Mean	12.6	14.1	13.4	13.8	12.8	13.1	12.9	12.6	13.2	12.6
Month	Precipit	tations (n	nm)							
April	85	36	111	69	73	132	112	61	141	68
May	95	40	130	122	260	72	105	96	113	116
June	127	104	87	179	112	106	137	101	88	111
July	175	49	131	94	125	138	155	101	43	121
August	69	112	171	66	93	169	132	95	91	104
September	87	185	107	71	66	105	90	117	67	116
October	108	61	78	146	102	127	115	118	190	98
Total	745	587	815	747	830	849	846	688	732	734

Table 1-7 (S2). Monthly mean temperature and precipitation recorded in growing seasons 2009 to 2017, and 30-yr (1981-2010) average ^a.

^a Values were taken from Environment and Climate Change Canada weather station, located at the Jean Lesage international airport, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. The station is located about 11 km from the experimental site.

Table 1-8 (S3). Selected characteristics and application rates of liquid swine manure (LSM),liquid dairy manure (LDM) and solid poultry manure (SPM) for each application year from 2009to 2017. Fertilizers were not applied on soybean years.

				LSM			
Variables	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017
pН	7.2 (0.3)	7.3 (0.1)	7.1 (0.0)	7.0 (0.0)	6.4 (0.0)	7.6 (0.8)	7.4 (0.0)
Dry matter (g kg-1)	38.3 (3.9)	170.4 (3.0)	62.5 (3.0)	182.2 (3.5)	102.6 (0.5)	64.5 (16.7)	99.4 (14.5)
C:N ratio	3.3 (0.1)	9.2 (0.2)	2.8 (0.1)	8.6 (0.1)	7.3 (0.1)	6.4 (1.3)	6.2 (0.7)
Total N (g kg ⁻¹)	5.0 (0.3)	8.1 (0.1)	8.6 (0.1)	9.4 (0.2)	6.2 (0.1)	4.1 (0.3)	6.6 (0.2)
NH4-N (g kg ⁻¹)	2.7 (0.1)	5.1 (0.6)	5.9 (0.0)	7.0 (0.1)	4.1 (0.1)	2.3 (0.1)	4.8 (0.1)
Total P (g kg ⁻¹)	0.8 (0.1)	1.9 (0.0)	1.4 (0.0)	1.5 (0.0)	1.3 (0.0)	1.2 (0.2)	1.7 (0.3)
Application rates							
Manure (Mg ha ⁻¹)	20.3 (0.0)	13.4 (0.1)	18.0 (0.0)	11.4 (0.1)	23.2 (0.0)	26.6 (2.8)	23.5 (0.1)
Total N (kg ha ⁻¹)	101.0 (6.9)	109.1 (1.7)	155.1 (1.0)	107.2 (2.2)	143.3 (1.8)	108.3 (5.8)	155.2 (5.6)
NH4-N (kg ha ⁻¹)	55.0 (2.4)	69.1 (7.9)	105.6 (0.5)	80.2 (0.5)	95.0 (2.3)	62.0 (5.5)	111.5 (2.4)

	LDM									
Variables	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017			
pН	6.5 (0.1)	6.5 (0.1)	6.8 (0.3)	7.4 (0.1)	7.2 (0.2)	7.7 (0.8)	7.0 (0.2)			
Dry matter (g kg-1)	46.8 (3.5)	73.6 (4.4)	91.7 (5.2)	92.3 (0.0)	48.1 (3.8)	52.6 (16.7)	66.3 (1.9)			
C:N ratio	9.3 (0.4)	13.6 (0.7)	12.4 (1.2)	12.0 (0.0)	8.6 (0.6)	8.8 (1.3)	10.8 (0.2)			
Total N (g kg ⁻¹)	2.3 (0.1)	2.5 (0.0)	3.3 (0.1)	3.3 (0.0)	2.3 (0.1)	2.3 (0.3)	2.6 (0.1)			
NH4-N (g kg ⁻¹)	0.7 (0.0)	1.3 (0.0)	1.3 (0.3)	1.6 (0.0)	1.0 (0.2)	1.0 (0.1)	0.9 (0.1)			
Totak P (g kg ⁻¹)	0.5 (0.0)	0.4 (0.0)	0.6 (0.1)	0.5 (0.0)	0.4 (0.0)	0.4 (0.2)	0.5 (0.0)			
Application rates										
Manure (Mg ha ⁻¹)	45.7 (0.1)	52.8 (10.5)	49.5 (2.1)	38.5 (0.0)	73.3 (1.2)	53.4 (2.8)	66.5 (0.1)			
Total N (kg ha ⁻¹)	106.9 (3.0)	131.8 (24.5)	162.5 (7.0)	127.5 (0.2)	166.2 (1.9)	125.2 (5.8)	176.2 (6.1)			
NH4-N (kg ha ⁻¹)	32.0 (1.0)	67.9 (12.1)	66.8 (16.4)	60.1 (1.3)	75.0 (11.2)	50.8 (5.5)	61.7 (7.5)			

	SPM							
Variables	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	
pН	8.8 (0.1)	8.8 (0.1)	8.4 (0.0)	9.0 (0.0)	8.7 (0.1)	8.6 (0.1)	9.0 (0.2)	
Dry matter (g kg-1)	661.1 (29.4)	739.5 (16.6)	675.2 (67.0)	638.5 (15.8)	711.1 (7.8)	767.3 (30.3)	732.6 (65.2)	
C:N ratio	11.8 (0.0)	10.3 (1.0)	9.5 (0.6)	13.6 (1.0)	14.3 (0.8)	13.0 (0.8)	16.9 (0.6)	
Total N (g kg ⁻¹)	23.0 (1.1)	30.2 (2.6)	29.7 (1.3)	20.2 (0.7)	21.0 (1.6)	25.2 (2.3)	19.4 (1.1)	
NH4-N (g kg ⁻¹)	5.1 (0.0)	3.7 (0.4)	4.4 (0.3)	4.8 (0.1)	4.1 (0.4)	2.5 (0.3)	2.9 (0.2)	
Totak P (g kg ⁻¹)	9.7 (0.4)	9.8 (1.0)	10.7 (0.4)	5.9 (0.1)	7.0 (0.2)	9.1 (0.5)	7.1 (0.0)	
Application rates								
Manure (Mg ha ⁻¹)	5.1 (0.0)	4.3 (0.0)	5.6 (0.3)	5.3 (0.4)	7.6 (0.4)	4.5 (0.1)	6.8 (0.0)	
Total N (kg ha ⁻¹)	117.2 (5.6)	130.6 (11.3)	165.6 (16.0)	107.5 (5.2)	159.8 (4.4)	113.2 (8.5)	132.7 (7.2)	
NH4-N (kg ha ⁻¹)	26.2 (0.1)	15.9 (1.7)	24.7 (2.8)	35.1 (12.0)	31.0 (4.8)	11.0 (1.5)	20.0 (1.1)	

Chapitre 2 - Management practices differently affect particulate and mineral-associated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils

Marie-Elise Samson ^{abc}, Martin H. Chantigny ^b, Anne Vanasse ^a, Safya Menasseri-Aubry ^c, Isabelle Royer ^b, Denis A. Angers ^b

a Université Laval, Département de Phytologie, 2425 Rue de l'Agriculture, Québec, QC, G1V 0A6, Canada b Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Québec Research and Development Centre, 2560 Hochelaga Boulevard, Québec, QC, G1V 2J3, Canada

c Agrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 65, Rue de St-Brieuc, 5042, Rennes Cedex, France

Copie de l'article publié : Samson, M.-É., Chantigny, M.H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Royer, I., Angers, D.A., 2020. Management practices differently affect particulate and mineral-associated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 107867. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soilbio.2020.107867

Résumé

Notre compréhension des mécanismes de formation et de stabilisation de la matière organique du sol (SOM) a évolué récemment. La SOM est considérée comme un continuum allant des résidus végétaux grossiers en cours de décomposition (matière organique particulaire ; POM) à la matière organique fine et stable, associée à des surfaces minérales réactives (matière organique fine ; FOM). Les modèles théoriques actuels font état d'un rôle important des sous-produits microbiens dans la formation de la FOM. Cependant, il existe encore peu d'évidences pour confirmer ces modèles théoriques, en particulier dans les sols arables. Nous avons examiné les indicateurs de qualité du sol de surface (0-10 cm) dans deux Brunisols aux textures contrastées (argile limoneuse et loam sableux) après sept années sous 20 systèmes de gestion différents, combinant deux régimes de travail du sol (travail réduit du sol vs labour), deux modes de gestion des résidus de culture (résidus retournés au sol vs récoltés) et cinq sources d'engrais différentes (contrôle minéral sans azote (PK), fertilisation minérale complète (NPK), lisier de bovin laitier (LDM), lisier de porc (LSM), fumier de volaille (SPM)). Les indicateurs de qualité du sol comprenaient la concentration en carbone organique du sol (SOC), la POM-C, la FOM-C, la biomasse microbienne-C (MBC), les hydrates de carbone d'origine végétale et microbienne, et le diamètre moyen des agrégats stables à l'eau (MWD). Une analyse statistique univariée a été combinée avec une analyse en composantes principales (ACP) pour explorer les relations entre les indicateurs de qualité du sol. Dans les deux types de sol, la POM-C était étroitement liée au MWD et aux hydrates de carbone d'origine végétale, tandis que la FOM-C était étroitement liée aux sucres aminés microbiens. Ces résultats soutiennent les récents modèles conceptuels attribuant la formation de la FOM-C aux sous-produits de la dégradation microbienne. Nous avons constaté que les pratiques de gestion qui favorisent la formation de POM-C, telles que la réduction du travail du sol et le retournement des résidus au sol, étaient particulièrement efficaces pour augmenter la concentration en carbone en surface, quelle que soit la texture du sol. En revanche, les engrais de ferme avaient un effet important sur la biomasse microbienne et l'accumulation de sucres aminés microbiens, mais uniquement dans l'argile limoneuse. Les produits organiques riches en azote et à faible teneur en lignine, tels que les engrais de ferme, pourraient donc être un moyen efficace de favoriser la formation de SOC stable, mais seulement dans les sols où la teneur en argile est suffisante pour permettre la formation de ces complexes fins.

Abstract

Our understanding of soil organic matter (SOM) formation and stabilization mechanisms has evolved recently. The SOM is considered as a continuum from coarse fresh and decomposing plant residues (particulate organic matter; POM) to fine and presumably more stable mineralassociated organic matter (fine organic matter; FOM), which represents the major portion of total SOM. Current theoretical models call for a prominent role of microbial by-products in FOM formation. However, there is still relatively little field-based evidence to support these theoretical models, especially in arable soils. We examined surface (0-10 cm) soil quality indicators over seven years in two Brunisols with contrasting textures (silty clay and sandy loam) under 20 different management systems, combining two tillage regimes (minimum tillage vs inversion tillage), two crop residue management (residue retained vs harvested) and five different fertilizer sources (no-N control, complete mineral fertilization, liquid dairy manure, liquid swine manure, solid poultry manure). Surface soil quality indicators included soil organic carbon (SOC), POM-C, FOM-C, microbial biomass-C (MBC), plant- and microbe-derived carbohydrates, and mean-weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD). An univariate statistical analysis of these indicators was combined with a principal component analysis (PCA) to explore the relationships among soil quality indicators and SOC dynamics. In both soil types, POM-C was closely related to MWD and plant-derived carbohydrates, whereas FOM-C was closely related to microbial amino-sugars. These results support the recent conceptual models mainly attributing the formation of FOM-C to microbial by-products. We found that management practices that favored POM-C formation, such as reduced tillage and residue retention, were particularly efficient to increase surface SOC content, irrespective of soil texture. By contrast, manuring had a pronounced effect on microbial biomass, which resulted in the accumulation of microbial amino sugar and SOC, in the silty clay soil only. Use of N-rich organic amendments with low lignin content, such as manures, could therefore be an efficient way to foster the formation of stable SOC through the accumulation of microbe-derived FOM precursors in arable soils where clay content is sufficient to allow for the stabilization of microbial by-products.

Introduction

Improving agricultural soil quality is essential to achieve sustainable and resilient food production (Delgado et al., 2011; Lal et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2016). The soil organic carbon (SOC) content is considered as a key indicator of soil quality and is usually defined as a continuum from undecomposed plant residues to presumably more stable, mineral-associated organic matter (Paul, 2014). Recent theoretical models propose that soil microbes control the flux of organic matter through this continuum (Cotrufo et al., 2013) that can be arbitrarily divided into different conceptual fractions with relevance associated to specific soil functions and/or stabilization mechanisms (Von Lützow et al., 2007). Particle size fractionation is seen as one of the best ways to predict SOC dynamics (Lavallee et al. 2019). In its simplest form, particle size fractionation divides SOC into particulate (POM-C; >53 µm) and fine organic matter (FOM-C; <53 µm). The POM-C fraction is considered as a labile fraction accounting for 6 to 37% of total SOC in agricultural soils (Gregorich et al., 2006), and is mainly composed of fresh and decomposing plant residues, either unprotected or incorporated within large soil aggregates (Gregorich et al., 2006). The progressive fragmentation of POM-C and its conversion to soil microbial by-products eventually leads to the formation of finer and more stable SOC (Lehmann and Kleber, 2015) through intimate associations with mineral particles (Knicker, 2011; Dungait et al., 2012). The resulting complexes mainly comprise a fine, mineral-associated organic matter (FOM-C) composed of microbial by-products which, presumably, represents the core of stable SOC (Kallenbach et al. 2016).

Consistent with this theory, some authors identified microbial necromass as a relevant indicator of stable SOC formation (Kallenbach *et al.*, 2015). In fact, microbial amino sugars such as muramic acid and glucosamine are microbial cell wall components that can persist in soil after microbial death and, therefore, reflect both current and historical soil microbial activity (Glaser *et al.*, 2004). Moreover, nitrogen (N)-rich organic compounds have a strong affinity with clay particles and play a major role in bridging mineral surfaces with SOC, thereby promoting long-term SOC stabilization (Knicker, 2011). While some authors consider microbial necromass as a dynamic SOC fraction, due to permanent recycling of microbial components (Amelung, 2003; Blagodatskaya and Kuzyakov, 2013), others proposed that it could be a significant source of stable SOC (Derrien *et al.*, 2007; Miltner *et*

al., 2012; Ludwig *et al.*, 2015). If true, microbial necromass could reflect both short and long-term effects of environmental and/or management practices on SOC formation and stabilization.

These new theoretical models therefore place microbial processing of plant residues and the stabilization of microbial by-products within fine organo-mineral complexes as a central mechanisms of SOC stabilization (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). However, the ultimate fate of microbe-derived SOC depends on its potential to interact with the soil matrix which varies with soil texture (Six *et al.*, 2006; Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). While the accumulation of POM-C theoretically has no saturation limit, FOM-C formation and persistence is determined by mineral associations and therefore may be subject to saturation (Hassink, 1997; Six *et al.*, 2002a). The concept of saturation suggests that the quantity of stable SOC is limited and determined by the amount of fine silt and clay particles (Hassink and Whitmore, 1997). This makes clay-rich soils particularly prone to promote long-term SOC stabilization in the FOM-C fraction, whereas POM-C accumulation can occur independently of the soil texture and/or its saturation status (Lavallee *et al.* 2019).

In arable systems, animal manure and crop residues can be applied to soil to maintain or increase SOC content (Turmel *et al.*, 2015; Warren Raffa *et al.*, 2015). However, the composition of the organic amendments and soil texture can affect SOC formation processes (Abiven *et al.*, 2008; Peltre *et al.*, 2012; Cyle *et al.*, 2016). For instance, labile and N-rich organic compounds can increase microbial use efficiency and result in a more efficient conversion of the organic amendment into stable SOC (Cotrufo et al., 2013). Animal manures, that generally contain a considerable amount of simple, soluble and N-rich organic compounds (Peltre et al. 2012) could therefore foster the formation of fine and stable organomineral complexes, especially in fine textured soils, which provide greater opportunity for organomineral interactions (Cotrufo et al., 2013). On the other hand, crop residues containing a high proportion of C-rich, complex structural components, such as lignin, would have higher energy cost associated with their breakdown, resulting in a lower microbial use efficiency (Bahri et al., 2008; Lekkerkerk et al., 1990) and, thus, in a reduced flow of C from plant litter to fine and stable SOC.

There can also be interactive effects between organic inputs and other management practices. Soil tillage can indeed drastically affect SOC dynamics by modifying its vertical distribution through the profile (Angers and Eriksen-Hamel, 2008) and by enhancing the contact of organic residues with the soil mineral matrix (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000). Inversion tillage also typically increases surface soil temperature and aeration status (Johnson and Lowery, 1985b), which may accelerate the mineralization of SOC and result in macroaggregate disruption (Balesdent *et al.*, 1990; Balesdent *et al.*, 2000). By contrast, reduced tillage can exacerbate the positive effect of organic amendments on surface soil quality (Bissonnette *et al.*, 2001; Viaud *et al.*, 2011). Some authors also demonstrated different interactions between residue management and fertilizer sources. For instance, Shahbaz *et al.* (2017) found that residue restitution to soil could offset the mineralization of native SOC that occurs with mineral fertilization, whereas Chantigny *et al.* (2001) found a synergistic interaction on soil microbial activity when pig slurry was added to wheat straw. All management practices therefore influence surface soil quality through complex interrelationships, which may vary depending on soil properties and environmental conditions (Bronick and Lal, 2005).

The first objective of this study was to investigate the effect of different combinations of management practices on surface SOC dynamics through quantification of POM-C, FOM-C and various soil quality indicators of two arable soils with contrasting texture. The second objective was to determine whether the recent theoretical models of SOC formation and stabilization (e.g., Cotrufo et al. 2013), that were initially developed for natural systems, could apply to arable soils and help explain the dynamics of SOC under various management practices.

Material and method

Experimental Site and Treatments

The experimental site is located at the Université Laval Agronomic Research Station in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, near Quebec City, Canada (46°44′ N, 71°31′ W). Plots were cropped to spring wheat in 2009 and 2010, and to a corn-soybean-wheat rotation (one crop

per year) from 2011 to 2015. Experimental sites and treatments were previously described in Samson et al. (2019). Briefly, the experimental site was comprised of two field sites, a poorly drained silty clay soil (432 g kg⁻¹ clay, 405 g kg⁻¹ silt, 163 g kg⁻¹ sand, 35 g kg⁻¹ C, and 2.7 g kg⁻¹ N) and a moderately to well-drained sandy loam soil (170 g kg⁻¹ clay, 150 g kg⁻¹ silt, 680 g kg⁻¹ sand, 19 g kg⁻¹ C, and 1.5 g kg⁻¹ N) located 0.9 km apart. These soils are classified as a mixed, frigid Dystric Eutrudept and a mixed, frigid Typic Dystrudept, respectively (SSS, 1994). In autumn 2008, a factorial experiment was arranged as a randomized complete block design with split-split-plot restriction and three replications on each soil type. Tillage treatments were assigned to main plots and consisted of either inversion tillage (0.2 m) in the fall with shallow harrowing (0.025 to 0.05 m) in the spring after fertilization, or minimum tillage (shallow harrowing in the spring after fertilization). Fertilizer treatments were ascribed to subplots and comprised a no-N control (mineral P and K [PK]), a complete mineral fertilizer (NPK), liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure and solid poultry manure. All fertilizer sources were surface broadcast before planting in the spring, and all plots were harrowed within three hours following applications to minimize N loss through ammonia volatilization. Residue management treatments (residues harvested, and residues retained) were randomly ascribed to sub-subplots. Fertilizer treatments were based on local crop N requirements, and N rates were based on local recommendations (CRAAQ, 2003): 90 kg N ha⁻¹ for wheat, 120 kg N ha⁻¹ for corn, 0 kg N ha⁻¹ for soybean. For the PK and NPK treatments, P and K were provided based on crop requirements and no supplementary P or K was applied with the manure treatments. Fertilizer treatments were not applied to soybean as it relies on symbiotic N fixation and because both sites contained enough phosphorus and potassium to meet soybean needs.

Sampling and Analyses

Manures

The origin, sampling and characteristics of manures were described in detail in Samson *et al.* (2019). Briefly, raw liquid dairy manure was collected after about six months of storage in an earthen concrete tank on a commercial dairy operation. Liquid swine manure came from a commercial farrow-to-finish swine operation and was usually collected in the holding tank below the slatted floor. Both liquid manures were thoroughly agitated in the tank before being

collected. Fresh solid poultry manure was obtained from a commercial broiler operation and included bedding material composed of wood shavings. Prior to use, large clods were crumbled and mixed by hand. On the day of application, each manure type was mixed prior to application and small subsamples were repeatedly collected during application to create a 2-L composite sample for each manure type. Composite samples were mixed in the laboratory before analysis; all analyses were made in triplicates. Total N was determined by Kjeldahl acid digestion on fresh subsamples, whereas total C concentration was measured by dry combustion (Model TruMac, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA) on lyophilized subsamples.

Soils

Each year from 2010 to 2015, surface (0-10 cm) soil was sampled with a spade (5 cm²) between harvest and soil tillage. A composite sample was obtained in each plot (35 m^2) by pooling three soil samples. The samples were gently passed through a 6-mm sieve. A field-moist subsample was kept at 4°C until analyzed, whereas the rest of the sample was air-dried at room temperature. The mean weight diameter of water stable aggregates (MWD) was determined on the field-moist sieved soil as per Angers *et al.* (2008). The MBC was determined on field-moist soil by the chloroform fumigation-extraction technique (Voroney *et al.*, 2008). After extraction (K₂SO₄, 0.25M) of the fumigated and unfumigated subsamples, C concentrations were determined and converted to MBC using 0.45 as correction factor. Total SOC concentration was measured by dry combustion (Model TruMac, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA) on air-dried, finely ground (~ 5 µm; Mixer Mill MM 400, Retsch, Éragny, France) soil subsamples.

In 2015, the POM-C and FOM-C were measured on air-dried subsamples sieved at 6 mm as per Carter *et al.* (2003). Briefly, the soil was mixed with distilled water and glass beads. Samples were agitated on a reciprocal shaker for 12 h and wet-sieved (53 μ m) with distilled water. The fractions recovered on the sieve (POM; >53 μ m) and with the rinsing water (FOM; < 53 μ m) were dried at 50°C and weighed. The FOM-C content was determined as described earlier for the whole soil, and the POM-C content was obtained by difference between whole soil and FOM-C. Determination of POM-C with this approach has been shown to be
consistently more precise than the direct analysis for C in the POM fraction retained on the sieve (Cambardella and Eliott, 1992) and has often been used (e.g. Bolinder et al. 1999; Martins et al. 2012).

Soil carbohydrates were also determined on air-dried, finely ground ($\sim 5 \mu m$) soil subsamples. The methods for carbohydrate extraction are described in detail by Chantigny and Angers (2008). Neutral sugars were extracted by acid hydrolysis using a H_2SO_4 solution. Briefly, 2 g of air-dried and finely ground soil were moistened with 8 mL of 12 M H₂SO₄ in polyethylene centrifuge tubes, gently mixed with a glass rod, and left on the bench for 2 h. Deionized water was then added to dilute the slurry mixture to 0.5 M H₂SO₄ and the tubes were capped and incubated for 24 h in an oven set at 85°C. After cooling, the extracts were centrifuged, decanted in a glass beaker, and neutralized (pH 6.5-7) with 0.5 M NaOH, filtered (Whatman #42), and sequentially passed through anion- and cation-exchange resins. The purified extracts were analyzed for plant-derived (arabinose and xylose; AX) and microbederived (galactose and mannose; GM) carbohydrate concentrations using high-performance anion exchange chromatography with pulsed amperometry detection. Total (living cells and necromass) fungal and bacterial cell-wall masses were estimated by quantifying glucosamine (GluN) and muramic acid (MurA) concentrations, respectively. Briefly, another 1 g subsample of the air-dried and finely ground soil ($\sim 5 \mu m$) was mixed with 20 mL of 6 M HCl in glass tubes. The mixture was bubbled with N₂ gas for one minute before the tubes were capped and incubated at 105°C for 6 h. The extracts were cooled on ice, decanted to a plastic vial, and stored at -18°C until analyzed by high-performance liquid chromatography.

Statistical Analysis

Univariate statistical analyses were performed with the mixed procedure of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS Institute, 1999). For soil parameters measured yearly from 2010 to 2015 (MWD, SOC, MBC), a factorial ANOVA model was used. Blocks and years were considered as random factors while soil tillage, fertilizer source, and residue management were considered as fixed effects. Homogeneity of variance was verified through the analysis of residuals. For soil parameters measured in 2015 only (POM-C, FOM-C, AX, GM, GluN and MurA), the same procedure was used, but without the year factor. The effects were

considered significant at $p \le 0.05$. Treatment means were separated by the protected least significant difference (LSD), calculated at p=0.05. Detailed statistical results are given in supplementary materials (Table 2 -3 (S1)). All indications of significant differences and interactions among treatments in the text below refer to this table.

A PCA ((Escofier and Pagès, 2008; Husson *et al.*, 2016) was performed with soil variables measured in 2015 to investigate the relationships between surface SOC and other soil quality indicators after 7 years of cropping history. Among the variables measured in 2015, MurA, GluN, MWD, POM-C, FOM-C and AX were used as active variables (MBC and GM were excluded to avoid redundancy of information with MurA and GluN). The SOC and experimental treatments were used as quantitative and qualitative supplementary variables, respectively. The supplementary variables were projected on the PCA but did not contribute to its construction. This analysis was performed with the R software package FactoMineR (Lê *et al.*, 2008).

Results

SOC, stable aggregation and microbial biomass (2010-2015)

Surface SOC content was greater under minimum than inversion tillage in the sandy loam, whereas a similar but not significant trend was found in the silty clay (Table 2 -1). The MWD and MBC were also greater under minimum than inversion tillage in both soils. Overall, SOC, MWD, and MBC were also greater when residues were retained in both soil types (Table 2 -1). A significant interaction between soil tillage and crop residue management was observed for MWD and MBC in the silty clay and for MWD in the sandy loam. This interaction indicated that, overall, values of soil quality indicators were improved when residues were retained under minimum tillage, whereas the effect of residue management was not observed or was much smaller under inversion tillage (Figure 2 -1).

Surface SOC content was similar among all fertilizer sources in the sandy loam. Conversely, in the silty clay, SOC content was significantly higher with poultry manure and liquid dairy manure than with the PK treatment (Table 2 -1). Despite a much greater C input to soil with

crop residues than manures (Table 2 -4 (S2)), their relative effect on surface SOC content was similar in the silty clay (Table 2 -1). Both MWD and MBC were numerically greater with solid poultry manure and liquid dairy manure than with NPK and PK, in both soils (Table 2 -1).

POM-C, FOM-C, and carbohydrates (2015)

The FOM-C content was higher under minimum than inversion tillage in the sandy loam only and was higher with residues returned than residues harvested in both soils (Table 2 -1). In general, POM-C and plant-derived carbohydrates (AX) contents were greater under minimum than inversion tillage, and greater when residues were returned to soil (Table 2 -1). However, a three-way interaction among soil tillage, residue management and fertilizer source found for POM-C, AX and GM in the sandy loam reflected that, in this soil, the difference in POM-C, AX and GM induced by residue management tended to be greater with the manures, especially liquid swine manure, than with NPK, under minimum tillage (Figure 2 -2). In the silty clay, a similar three-way interaction was observed for POM-C, whereas a two-way interaction was found for AX where, irrespective of fertilizer source, greater AX values were measured when residues were returned under minimum tillage (2.8 g kg⁻¹) as compared to all other tillage-residue management combination (from 1.0 to 1.4 g kg⁻¹). The GM values were not influenced by experimental treatments in the silty clay.

In the sandy loam, GluN was only affected by residue management (greater when residues were retained), whereas MurA was not affected by any management practices (Table 2 -1). In the silty clay, an interaction between tillage and residue management was found for GluN, which was significantly higher under minimum tillage with residues retained (328 mg kg⁻¹ soil) than with the other three tillage x residue combinations (231 to 273 mg kg soil⁻¹). In the same soil, MurA was higher under minimum than inversion tillage, and higher with residues retained as compared to residues harvested (Table 2 -1). The MurA content was also greater with poultry manure and liquid dairy manure than with PK.

Relationships between soil quality indicators, SOC fractions, and management practices

The PCA performed on data collected in 2015 indicated that the first principal component (Dim 1) accounted for more than 60% of total variation in both soils (Figure 2 -3 a,c). The Dim 1 was highly correlated to SOC content in both soils (R^2 =0.90% and 0.87% in the sandy loam and the silty clay, respectively) (Table 2 -2). All soil quality indicators included in the PCA were positively and significantly correlated to Dim 1 (Figure 2 -3; Table 2 -2). Among management practices (supplementary qualitative variables), tillage treatments were the most strongly correlated to Dim 1, followed by residue management. Coordinates on Dim 1 were positive for minimum tillage and residues retained, and negative for inversion tillage and residues harvested in both soils (Figure 2 -3 b, d; Table 2 -2). In both soils, POM-C, MWD and AX aligned together, whereas FOM-C, GluN and MurA formed a second group of indicators (Figure 2 -3 a, c). The second principal component (Dim 2) accounted for 13% of total variation in both soils (Figure 2 -3 a, c), and most soil quality indicators significantly correlated with Dim 2 (Table 2 -2).

Discussion

Effects of soil management practices and their interactions on soil quality indicators

The surface SOC content and most soil quality indicators were improved by minimum tillage and crop residue retention in both soils. It is recognized that reducing tillage can considerably increase soil aggregation and stabilization by reducing SOC turnover rate and favoring the production of aggregate binding agents such as fine roots and fungal hyphae (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Six *et al.*, 1999). In the present study, the minimum tillage system consisted of surface harrowing which favored the accumulation of SOC in the topsoil layer, whereas inversion tillage led to a dilution of SOC in the plough layer (Angers and Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Gregorich *et al.*, 2009). This most likely explains why the positive effect of residue retention on surface soil quality indicators was generally greater under minimum tillage.

in both soil types where residues were retained suggests that residue retention favored the accumulation of plant-derived materials (more POM-C and AX) at or near the soil surface (Angers et al. 1993), which promoted the formation of stable macroaggregates (greater MWD). In fact, the POM-C fraction is known to be particularly responsive to tillage practices (Angers *et al.*, 1993; Chan *et al.*, 2002) since reduced tillage helps stabilize POM-C within macroaggregates (Six *et al.*, 2002b), and protects it from decomposition (Six *et al.*, 1999; Balesdent *et al.*, 2000). Our results also showed that the improvement in MWD under minimum tillage, as compared to inversion tillage, was more pronounced in the coarse-textured sandy loam than in the fine-textured silty clay, corroborating results of Franzluebbers and Arshad (1996). This can be attributed to the fact that roots and fungal hyphae are the primary binding agents of aggregates in coarse-textured soils (Oades, 1993), which may be particularly sensitive to tillage, whereas the greater abundance of clay particles in finer textured soils furthers aggregate stability and reduces their responsiveness to tillage practices (Franzluebbers and Arshad, 1996).

Compared to a balanced mineral fertilization, manure application can increase soil microbial biomass and activity (Peacock *et al.*, 2001; Chu *et al.*, 2007), water-stable aggregation, (Bissonnette *et al.*, 2001; Czachor *et al.*, 2015), and SOC content (Maillard and Angers, 2014). However, the expected increase in specific soil quality indicators may vary with substrate quality (Abiven *et al.*, 2007; Obriot *et al.*, 2016). In our study, responses of soil quality indicators to the different livestock manures also varied with soil texture. All manure types increased MWD and MBC as compared to the control (PK) treatment in both soil types, but increased surface SOC in the silty clay only. The differences were however generally less with liquid swine manure than with poultry manure and liquid dairy manure, especially for MWD in the sandy loam and for SOC in the silty clay soil. This is likely because the amount of C applied with liquid swine manure was about half the amounts applied with the other manures (Table 2 -4 (S2)). Liquid swine manure also typically contains a greater amount of water-soluble organic compounds (Morvan et al., 2009) which could have led to the leaching of organic compounds below the sampling layer.

The complete mineral fertilization treatment (NPK) did not improve any soil quality indicator as compared to the PK treatment. We hypothesize that despite a greater C input to soil with crop residues in the NPK treatment, as compared to the PK treatment (Samson *et al.*, 2019), the absence of a concomitant increase in MBC with the mineral fertilization restricted the conversion of particulate plant materials to microbial compounds. This, in turn, most likely limited interactions with the mineral matrix, thereby reducing macroaggregate formation (smaller MWD values) and POM-C stabilization. It illustrates that even if MBC generally accounts for no more than 5% of total SOC (Blagodatskaya and Kuzyakov, 2013), changes in this fraction can ultimately considerably affect SOC dynamics and stabilization.

Field-based evidence in support of recent SOM formation models

The PCA revealed that, in both soil types, the selected soil quality indicators were closely related to SOC. However, a relationship was found in both soil types among POM-C, MWD, and AX on the one hand, and among FOM-C, MurA and GluN on the other hand. These findings support the idea that in both coarse and fine-textured soils, POM-C is mostly composed of fresh and decomposing plant tissues (AX) occluded within macro-aggregates (Oades, 1984; Puget *et al.*, 1998), whereas FOM-C is mainly composed of microbial by-products (Kleber *et al.*, 2011; Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). These results provide field-based evidence in support to the conceptual model proposed by Cotrufo *et al.* (2013), and further developed by Robertson *et al.* (2019), where decomposing plant residues are found in uncomplexed SOM and coarse organo-mineral complexes (e.g. macro-aggregates) and are progressively metabolized and converted to microbial by-products accumulating in finer and, presumably, more stable organo-mineral complexes. Our results allow to extend their model to arable soils and indicate that microbial-derived amino sugars (MurA and GluN) could be a potent indicator of stable SOC formation, as previously proposed by Miltner *et al.* (2012).

General overview: management effects on SOC fractions and their precursors

Combined results from the ANOVA and the PCA indicated that minimum tillage and residue retention have a positive effect on surface SOC content, irrespective of soil texture (Figure 2 -4). The greater surface SOC content under those management practices was mainly attributable to the accumulation of C-rich plant debris (POM-C), which was paralleled by

increases in soil macro-aggregation (MWD) and plant-derived carbohydrate content (AX). POM-C is a relatively small fraction of total SOC (12 to 18%) but is considered to be very labile (Gregorich et al. 2006). It is therefore particularly sensitive to management practices and changes in this fraction can rapidly result in significant changes in total surface SOC content. Overall, minimum tillage and retention of crop residues had a much smaller, but significant effect on FOM-C (82 to 86% of total SOC), indicating that, after only 7 years of cropping history, a portion of accumulated SOC was already present in relatively stable forms.

Conversely to tillage and residue management, the fertilizer source influenced SOC content in the silty clay soil only. Despite a much lower C input to soil with manures as compared to residue retention, the effect of poultry and liquid dairy manures on SOC content as compared to the PK treatment was similar to that of residue retention as compared to residue harvest. However, the SOC increase found after 7 years with poultry manure and liquid dairy manure was not paralleled by an increase in POM-C or FOM-C, but was reflected in a significant increase in MBC (both soils) and in muramic acid (silty clay), a potential FOM precursor (Glaser et al. 2004). We suggest the enrichment in MBC and muramic acid, especially with poultry manure and liquid dairy manure, could ultimately lead to an increase in FOM-C in the longer term, especially in the silty clay soil (Figure 2 -4). Supporting this hypothesis, Gillespie et al. (2014) found that in a fine-textured soil, manures resulted in a greater enrichment of proteinaceous compounds in the FOM-C fraction as compared to mineral fertilization. In fact, N-rich organic molecules, such as amino compounds, are believed to play a significant role in bridging mineral surfaces with SOC (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke et al. 2018) and therefore likely to be an important contributor to SOC stabilization through FOM-C formation. The fact that some manures increased muramic acid within 7 years in the clayey soil suggests that the conversion of C inputs with manures to stable SOC is fostered in soils where clay particles are present in sufficient quantity to allow for the formation of FOM complexes.

Conclusion

Our results showed that after 7 years of cropping history, minimum tillage and residue retention were efficient ways to improve surface SOC content, mainly through POM-C accumulation irrespective of soil texture. Solid poultry manure and liquid dairy manure, on the other hand, had a pronounced effect on microbial biomass and muramic acid content, and resulted in considerably higher surface SOC content when compared to the control, but in the fine textured silty clay soil only. Moreover, a PCA demonstrated that irrespective of soil texture, POM-C was closely related to plant-derived carbohydrates and stable aggregation, whereas FOM-C was closely related to microbial amino sugars (muramic acid and glucosamine). These findings provide field-based evidence that recent SOM formation and stabilization models (Cotrufo et al., 2013; Robertson et al., 2019) developed for natural ecosystems can apply to the more perturbed arable soils and for different soil textures, and that microbial components such as cell walls may be involved in the formation of fine and stable SOC. Our results support the need to include these emergent concepts of SOC stabilization processes in biogeochemical models to predict long-term changes in SOC under different management practices in agricultural soils.

Acknowledgement

Special thanks are extended to the staff of Université Laval and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (Johanne Tremblay, Gabriel Levesque, Annie Robichaud and Francis Gagnon) for their meticulous technical work and their precious collaboration.

Funding

This work was financially supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The Senior author was financially supported by scholarships from the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program, the Fonds de Recherche Québécois Nature et Technologies, Équiterre, the Erasmus+ exchange program, and the Choquette family foundation.

References

- Abiven, S., Menasseri, S., Angers, D., Leterme, P., 2008. A model to predict soil aggregate stability dynamics following organic residue incorporation under field conditions. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 119-125.
- Amelung, W., 2003. Nitrogen biomarkers and their fate in soil. Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science 166, 677-686.
- Angers, D., Eriksen-Hamel, N., 2008. Full-inversion tillage and organic carbon distribution in soil profiles: A meta-analysis. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 1370-1374.
- Angers, D., N'dayegamiye, A., Cote, D., 1993. Tillage-induced differences in organic matter of particle-size fractions and microbial biomass. Soil Science Society of America Journal 57, 512-516.
- Angers, D.A., Bullock, M., Mehuys, G., 2008. Aggregate stability to water. Soil sampling and methods of analysis. 2nd ed. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 811-820.
- Bahri H., Rasse D.P., Rumpel C., Dignac M.F., Bardoux G., Mariotti, A., 2008. Lignin degradation during a laboratory incubation followed by (13)C isotope analysis. Soil Biology & Biochemistry, 40, 1916–1922.
- Balesdent, J., Mariotti, A., Boisgontier, D., 1990. Effect of tillage on soil organic carbon mineralization estimated from 13C abundance in maize fields. Journal of Soil Science 41, 587-596.
- Balesdent, J., Chenu, C., Balabane, M., 2000. Relationship of soil organic matter dynamics to physical protection and tillage. Soil and tillage research 53, 215-230.
- Bissonnette, N., Angers, D.A., Simard, R.R., Lafond, J., 2001. Interactive effects of management practices on water-stable aggregation and organic matter of a Humic Gleysol. Canadian journal of soil science 81, 545-551.
- Blagodatskaya, E., Kuzyakov, Y., 2013. Active microorganisms in soil: critical review of estimation criteria and approaches. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 67, 192-211.
- Bolinder, M.A., Angers, D., Gregorich, E., Carter, M. 1999. The response of soil quality indicators to conservation management. Canadian journal of soil science 79, 37-45.
- Bronick, C.J., Lal, R., 2005. Soil structure and management: a review. Geoderma 124, 3-22.
- Cambardella, C.A. and Elliott, E.T. 1992. Participate soil organic-matter changes across a grassland cultivation sequence. Soil Science Society of America Journal 56, 777-783.
- Carter, M., Angers, D., Gregorich, E., Bolinder, M., 2003. Characterizing organic matter retention for surface soils in eastern Canada using density and particle size fractions. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 83, 11-23.
- Chan, K., Heenan, D., Oates, A., 2002. Soil carbon fractions and relationship to soil quality under different tillage and stubble management. Soil and Tillage Research 63, 133-139.
- Chantigny, M.H., Rochette, P., Angers, D.A., 2001. Short-term C and N dynamics in a soil amended with pig slurry and barley straw: a field experiment. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 81, 131-137.
- Chantigny, M.H., Angers, D.A., 2008. Carbohydrates. Soil sampling and methods of analysis, 658-697.
- Chu, H., Lin, X., Fujii, T., Morimoto, S., Yagi, K., Hu, J., Zhang, J., 2007. Soil microbial biomass, dehydrogenase activity, bacterial community structure in response to long-term fertilizer management. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 39, 2971-2976.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Wallenstein, M.D., Boot, C.M., Denef, K., Paul, E., 2013. The M icrobial E fficiency-M atrix S tabilization (MEMS) framework integrates plant litter decomposition

with soil organic matter stabilization: do labile plant inputs form stable soil organic matter? Global Change Biology 19, 988-995.

- Cotrufo, M.F., Ranalli, M.G., Haddix, M.L., Six, J., Lugato, E., 2019. Soil carbon storage informed by particulate and mineral-associated organic matter. Nature Geoscience, 1-6F
- CRAAQ, 2003. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- Cyle, K.T., Hill, N., Young, K., Jenkins, T., Hancock, D., Schroeder, P.A., Thompson, A., 2016. Substrate quality influences organic matter accumulation in the soil silt and clay fraction. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 103, 138-148.
- Czachor, H., Charytanowicz, M., Gonet, S., Niewczas, J., Jozefaciuk, G., Lichner, L., 2015. Impact of long-term mineral and organic fertilizer application on the water stability, wettability and porosity of aggregates obtained from two loamy soils. European Journal of Soil Science 66, 577-588.
- Derrien, D., Marol, C., Balesdent, J., 2007. Microbial biosyntheses of individual neutral sugars among sets of substrates and soils. Geoderma 139, 190-198.
- Dungait, J.A., Hopkins, D.W., Gregory, A.S., Whitmore, A.P., 2012. Soil organic matter turnover is governed by accessibility not recalcitrance. Global Change Biology 18, 1781-1796.
- Escofier, B., Pagès, J., 2008. Analyses factorielles simples et multiples: objectifs, méthodes et interprétation. Dunod.
- Franzluebbers, A., Arshad, M., 1996. Water-stable aggregation and organic matter in four soils under conventional and zero tillage. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 76, 387-393.
- Gillespie, A., Diochon, A., Ma, B., Morrison, M., Kellman, L., Walley, F., Regier, T., Chevrier, D., Dynes, J., Gregorich, E., 2014. Nitrogen input quality changes the biochemical composition of soil organic matter stabilized in the fine fraction: a long-term study. Biogeochemistry 117, 337-350.
- Glaser, B., Turrión, M.a.-B., Alef, K., 2004. Amino sugars and muramic acid—biomarkers for soil microbial community structure analysis. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 36, 399-407.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J.M., Skjemstad, J.O., Clarke, P., 1994. Study of free and occluded particulate organic matter in soils by solid state 13C CP/MAS NMR spectroscopy and electron scanning electron microscopy. Australian Journal of Soil Research. 32, 285-309.
- Gregorich, E., Beare, M., McKim, U., Skjemstad, J., 2006. Chemical and biological characteristics of physically uncomplexed organic matter. Soil Science Society of America Journal 70, 975-985.
- Gregorich, E., Carter, M., Angers, D., Drury, C., 2009. Using a sequential density and particle-size fractionation to evaluate carbon and nitrogen storage in the profile of tilled and no-till soils in eastern Canada. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 89, 255-267.
- Hassink, J., 1997. The capacity of soils to preserve organic C and N by their association with clay and silt particles. Plant and Soil 191, 77-87.
- Hassink, J. & Whitmore, A.P. 1997. A model of the physical protection of organic matter in soils. Soil Science Society of America Journal, 61, 131–139.
- Husson, F., Lê, S., Pagès, J., 2016. Analyse de données avec R. Presses universitaires de Rennes.
- Johnson, M., Lowery, B., 1985. Effect of Three Conservation Tillage Practices on Soil Temperature and Thermal Properties 1. Soil Science Society of America Journal 49, 1547-1552.

- Kallenbach, C.M., Grandy, A.S., Frey, S., Diefendorf, A., 2015. Microbial physiology and necromass regulate agricultural soil carbon accumulation. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 91, 279-290.
- Kallenbach, C.M., Frey, S.D., Grandy, A.S. 2016. Direct evidence for microbial-derived soil organic matter formation and its ecophysiological controls. Nature Communications. 7, 13630.
- Kleber, M., Nico, P.S., Plante, A., Filley, T., Kramer, M., Swanston, C., Sollins, P., 2011. Old and stable soil organic matter is not necessarily chemically recalcitrant: implications for modeling concepts and temperature sensitivity. Global Change Biology 17, 1097-1107.
- Knicker, H., 2011. Soil organic N-An under-rated player for C sequestration in soils? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 1118-1129.
- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W. 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Lal, R., Delgado, J., Groffman, P., Millar, N., Dell, C., Rotz, A., 2011. Management to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Journal of Soil and water conservation 66, 276-285.
- Lavallee, J.M., Soong, J.M., Cotrufo, F.M. 2019. Conceptualizing soil organic matter into particulate and mineral-associated forms to address global change in the 21st century. Global Change Biology.
- Lê, S., Josse, J., Husson, F., 2008. FactoMineR: an R package for multivariate analysis. Journal of statistical software 25, 1-18.
- Lehmann, J., Kleber, M., 2015. The contentious nature of soil organic matter. Nature 528, 60-68.
- Lekkerkerk, L.J.A., Lundkvist, H., Agren, G., Ekbohm, G., Bosatta, E., 1990. Decomposition of heterogeneous substrates: an experimental investigation of a hypothesis on substrate and microbial properties. Soil Biology & Biochemistry 22, 161–167.
- Ludwig, M., Achtenhagen, J., Miltner, A., Eckhardt, K.-U., Leinweber, P., Emmerling, C., Thiele-Bruhn, S., 2015. Microbial contribution to SOM quantity and quality in density fractions of temperate arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 81, 311-322.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Martins, M.R., Angers, D.A., Corá, J.E. 2012. Co-accumulation of microbial residues and particulate organic matter in the surface layer of a no-till Oxisol under different crops. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 50, 208-213.
- Miltner, A., Bombach, P., Schmidt-Brücken, B., Kästner, M., 2012. SOM genesis: microbial biomass as a significant source. Biogeochemistry 111, 41-55.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., 2009. Role of organic fractions on C decomposition and N mineralization of animal wastes in soil. Biology and Fertility of Soils. 45, 477-486.
- Oades, J., 1984. Soil organic matter and structural stability: mechanisms and implications for management. Plant and Soil 76, 319-337.
- Oades, J., 1993. The role of biology in the formation, stabilization and degradation of soil structure. Soil Structure/Soil Biota Interrelationships. Elsevier, pp. 377-400.
- Obriot, F., Stauffer, M., Goubard, Y., Cheviron, N., Peres, G., Eden, M., Revallier, A., Vieublé-Gonod, L., Houot, S., 2016. Multi-criteria indices to evaluate the effects of

repeated organic amendment applications on soil and crop quality. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 232, 165-178.

- Peacock, A.g., Mullen, M., Ringelberg, D., Tyler, D., Hedrick, D., Gale, P., White, D., 2001. Soil microbial community responses to dairy manure or ammonium nitrate applications. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 33, 1011-1019.
- Peltre, C., Christensen, B.T., Dragon, S., Icard, C., Kätterer, T., Houot, S., 2012. RothC simulation of carbon accumulation in soil after repeated application of widely different organic amendments. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 52, 49-60.
- Puget, P., Angers, D., Chenu, C., 1998. Nature of carbohydrates associated with water-stable aggregates of two cultivated soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 31, 55-63.
- Robertson, A.D., Paustian, K., Ogle, S., Wallenstein, M.D., Lugato, E., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Unifying soil organic matter formation and persistence frameworks: the MEMS model. Biogeosciences 16, 1225-1248.
- Samson, M.-E., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Chantigny, M., Angers, D., Royer, I., Vanasse, A., 2019. Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type. Field Crops Research 243, 107623.
- Shahbaz, M., Kuzyakov, Y., Maqsood, S., Wendland, M., Heitkamp, F., 2017. Decadal nitrogen fertilization decreases mineral-associated and subsoil carbon: a 32-year study. Land degradation & development 28, 1463-1472.
- Six, J., Elliott, E., Paustian, K., 1999. Aggregate and soil organic matter dynamics under conventional and no-tillage systems. Soil Science Society of America Journal 63, 1350-1358.
- Six, J., Conant, R.T., Paul, E.A., Paustian, K., 2002a. Stabilization mechanisms of soil organic matter: implications for C-saturation of soils. Plant and soil 241, 155-176.
- Six, J., Feller, C., Denef, K., Ogle, S., de Moraes Sa, J.C., Albrecht, A., 2002b. Soil organic matter, biota and aggregation in temperate and tropical soils-Effects of no-tillage. Agronomie 22, 755-775.
- Six, J., Frey, S., Thiet, R., Batten, K., 2006. Bacterial and fungal contributions to carbon sequestration in agroecosystems. Soil Science Society of America Journal 70, 555-569.
- Soil Survey Staff, SSS, 1994. Keys to Soil Taxonomy. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Washington, USA 306 p.
- Stewart, C.E., Plante, A.F., Paustian, K., Conant, R.T., Six, J., 2008. Soil carbon saturation: linking concept and measurable carbon pools. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 379-392.
- Tisdall, J.M., Oades, J.M., 1982. Organic matter and water-stable aggregates in soils. Journal of Soil Science 33, 141-163.
- Turmel, M.-S., Speratti, A., Baudron, F., Verhulst, N., Govaerts, B., 2015. Crop residue management and soil health: A systems analysis. Agricultural Systems 134, 6-16.
- Viaud, V., Angers, D., Parnaudeau, V., Morvan, T., Menasseri-Aubry, S., 2011. Response of organic matter to reduced tillage and animal manure in a temperate loamy soil. Soil Use and Management 27, 84-93.
- Von Lützow, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Ekschmitt, K., Flessa, H., Guggenberger, G., Matzner, E., Marschner, B., 2007. SOM fractionation methods: Relevance to functional pools and to stabilization mechanisms. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 39, 2183-2207.
- Voroney, R., Brookes, P., Beyaert, R., 2008. Soil microbial biomass C, N, P and S. In 'Soil sampling and methods of analysis'. 2nd edn.(Eds MR Carter, EG Gregorich) pp. 637–651. CRC Press: Boca Raton, FL.

Warren Raffa, D., Bogdanski, A., Tittonell, P., 2015. How does crop residue removal affect soil organic carbon and yield? A hierarchical analysis of management and environmental factors. Biomass and Bioenergy 81, 345-355.

Tables

Table 2-1. Average effects of soil tillage, crop residue management and fertilizer source on soil quality indicators (total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), microbial biomass (MBC), particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), microbially-derived neutral sugars (GM), muramic acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN)) in the surface (0-10 cm) layer of a sandy loam and a silty clay.

	2010-2015 a					2015											
	s g	OC kg-1	M\ m	ND m	M mg	BC kg-1	POI g k	И-С g ⁻¹	FOM g kg	-C	A g k	Х g ⁻¹	GM g kg ⁻¹	M mg	urA kg ⁻¹	Glul mg k	N g ⁻¹
Sandy loam																	
Soil tillage																	
Minimum	21	Α	1.9	Α	302	Α	3.4	Α	17.0	Α	1.0	Α	0.9	13		142	
Inversion	18	В	1.5	В	196	В	2.2	В	14.6	В	0.6	В	0.7	10		113	
Residues																	
Retained	20	Α	1.7	Α	265	Α	3.2	Α	16.3	Α	1.0	Α	0.8	12		136	Α
Harvested	19	В	1.6	В	232	В	2.4	В	15.4	В	0.7	В	0.7	11		120	в
Fertilizer																	
Poultry	19		1.7	Α	263	Α	3.2		15.5		0.9	Α	0.8	12		128	
Liquid dairy	20		1.8	Α	276	Α	3.3		16.4		0.9	Α	0.8	11		125	
Liquid swine	20		1.7	AB	266	Α	3.1		16.0		0.9	Α	0.7	12		134	
NPK	19		1.6	С	214	В	2.2		15.6		0.8	Α	0.8	11		123	
РК	19		1.6	BC	225	В	2.1		15.5		0.7	В	0.7	12		128	
Silty clay																	
Soil tillage																	
Minimum	39		2.5	Α	630	Α	8.5	Α	24.3		2.1		1.4	33	Α	278	Α
Inversion	34		2.2	В	442	В	5.3	В	21.2		1.0		1.1	27	В	222	В
Residues																	
Retained	38	Α	2.5	Α	571	Α	7.9	Α	23.3	Α	1.9	Α	1.3	31	Α	267	Α
Harvested	35	В	2.3	В	500	В	5.9	В	22.2	В	1.2	В	1.3	29	В	233	В
Fertilizer																	
Poultry	39	Α	2.4	Α	567	Α	7.4		23.1		1.5		1.4	32	Α	262	
Liquid dairy	38	AB	2.4	Α	596	Α	7.3		23.8		1.5		1.2	31	AB	257	
Liquid swine	35	BC	2.4	Α	547	AB	7.0		22.6		1.8		1.3	30	ABC	249	
NPK	36	ABC	2.3	В	495	BC	6.1		22.1		1.6		1.3	29	BC	249	
PK	35	С	2.3	В	474	С	6.6		22.2		1.5		1.3	28	С	231	

MBC values were available from 2011 to 2015 only.

Table 2-2. Correlation coefficient (R^2) of surface (0-10 cm) soil quality indicators (total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), muramic acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN)) and treatments with the first and second dimensions (Fig. 3) of the PCA, for a sandy loam and a silty clay.

		San	dy loam			Silty clay				
			R2		R2					
Variables	PC	51	PC	2	P	C1	PC	2		
SOC	0.90	***	-0.10		0.87	***	-0.23			
POM-C	0.78	***	-0.44	***	0.85	***	0.24	*		
MWD	0.79	***	-0.17		0.81	***	0.26	*		
Plant neutral	0.84	***	-0.37	**	0.76	***	0.53	***		
FOM-C	0.82	***	0.09		0.75	***	-0.47	***		
Glucosamine	0.69	***	0.54	***	0.93	***	-0.20			
Muramic. acid.	0.85	***	0.40	**	0.87	***	-0.33	*		
Treatments										
Tillage	0.50	***	0.00		0.49	***	0.03			
Residues	0.10	**	0.01		0.13	**	0.03			
Fertilizer	0.03		0.09		0.04		0.07			

*** = p < 0.001 ** = p > 0.001 and < 0.01 * = p > 0.01 and < 0.05

Figures



Figure 2-1. Interactive effects of soil tillage and residue management on the mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD) and soil microbial biomass (MBC) content in the surface layer (0-10 cm) of a sandy loam and a silty clay.



Figure 2-2. Interactive effect (2015) of soil tillage, fertilizer source and residue management on particulate organic matter (POM-C), plant-derived carbohydrates (AX) and microbe-derived carbohydrates (GM) content of the surface layer (0-10 cm) of a sandy loam and a silty clay.



Figure 2-3. Principal components biplots of selected surface soil variables (total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), muramic acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN)) for the silty clay (a) and the sandy loam (c), and projections of soil tillage, fertilizer source and residue management used as supplementary qualitative variables in the silty clay (b) and the sandy loam (d).



Figure 2-4. Graphical sketch of the differential influence of varied management practices on surface (0-10 cm) SOC fractions (particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C) and their precursors (Plant-derived carbohydrates and microbial amino-sugars) relative to soil texture.

Supplementary material

Table 2-3 (S1). Summary of the analysis on variance (*p* values) for the effects of tillage, fertilizer source, residue management, and their interactions on total soil organic carbon (SOC), mean weight diameter of water-stable aggregates (MWD), microbial biomass (MBC), particulate organic matter (POM-C), fine organic matter (FOM-C), plant-derived neutral sugars (AX), microbially-derived neutral surgars (GM), muramic acid (MurA) and glucosamine (GluN) in the sandy loam and the silty clay soil.

	2	0102015	3			201	5		
	SOC	MWD	MBC	POM-C	FOM-C	AX	GM	MurA	GluN
San dy I o am									
Tillage	<.0001	0.01	0.02	<.0001	0.05	0.05	0.12	0.06	0.07
Fertilizer source	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.86	0.01	0.30	0.83	0.78
Tillage * Fertilizer source	0.92	0.70	0.38	0.15	0.86	0.08	0.50	0.68	0.54
Residue	<.0001	<.0001	0.01	<.0001	0.00	<.0001	0.16	0.23	0.00
Tillage * Residue	0.90	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.56	<.0001	0.35	0.16	0.83
Fertilizer source * Residue	0.94	0.93	0.80	0.12	0.79	0.21	0.85	0.94	0.60
Tillage* Fertilizer source * Residue	0.48	0.98	0.89	0.02	0.47	0.01	0.04	0.73	0.70
Silty clay									
Tillage	0.25	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.30	0.06	0.15	0.01	0.03
Fertilizer source	0.05	<.0001	<.0001	0.39	0.41	0.64	0.76	0.05	0.12
Tillage * Fertilizer source	0.17	0.28	0.08	0.43	0.15	0.70	0.64	0.85	0.63
Residue	0.01	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	0.02	0.00	0.86	0.02	<.0001
Tillage * Residue	0.32	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.15	0.30	0.02
Fertilizer source * Residue	0.79	0.66	0.78	0.67	0.98	0.36	0.42	0.15	0.09
Tillage* Fertilizer source * Residue	0.56	0.41	0.85	0.04	0.59	0.39	0.14	0.54	0.44

MBC values were available from 2011 to 2015 only.

Table 2-4 (S2). Cumulative (2009-2015) C input to soil (T ha⁻¹) as crop residues and manures for each treatment in each soil type.

		Sandy loan	n	Silty clay				
	Cresidue	Cfertilizer	Total C	Cresidue	Cfertilizer	Total C		
	T ha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1		
INVERSION TILLAGE								
Poultry manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	7.88	7.88	0.00	8.23	8.23		
Residues retained	13.26	7.88	21.14	13.62	8.23	21.85		
Liquid dairy manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	7.46	7.46	0.00	7.84	7.84		
Residues retained	12.14	7.46	19.61	11.70	7.84	19.54		
Liquid swine manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	3.72	3.72	0.00	3.75	3.75		
Residues retained	13.31	3.72	17.03	13.82	3.75	17.56		
NPK								
Residues harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Residues retained	15.09	0.00	15.09	15.46	0.00	15.46		
РК								
Residues harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Residues retained	9.40	0.00	9.40	11.86	0.00	11.86		
MINIMUM TILLAGE								
Poultry manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	7.88	7.88	0.00	8.23	8.23		
Residues retained	12.13	7.88	20.01	13.55	8.23	21.78		
Liquid dairy manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	7.46	7.46	0.00	7.77	7.77		
Residues retained	11.97	7.46	19.44	12.78	7.77	20.55		
Liquid swine manure								
Residues harvested	0.00	3.75	3.75	0.00	3.75	3.75		
Residues retained	13.14	3.75	16.89	13.63	3.75	17.38		
NPK								
Residues harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Residuesretained	13.59	0.00	13.59	15.33	0.00	15.33		
РК								
Residues harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Residues retained	7.61	0.00	7.61	9.66	0.00	9.66		

Chapitre 3 - Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fraction for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs

Marie-Élise Samson^{abc}, Martin H. Chantigny^b, Anne Vanasse^a, Safya Menasseri-Aubry^c,

and Denis A. Angers^b

^aUniversité Laval, Département de Phytologie, 2425 rue de l'Agriculture, Quebec, QC,

Canada, G1V 0A6

^b Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Québec Research and Development Centre, 2560

Hochelaga Boulevard, Québec, QC, Canada, G1V 2J3

^cAgrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 65, rue de St-Brieuc 35042 Rennes Cedex - France

Copie de l'article publié : Samson, M.-É., Chantigny, M.H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Angers, D.A., 2020. Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fraction for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 107935. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soilbio.2020.107935

Résumé

De récents modèles mécanistiques de la dynamique de la matière organique du sol (SOM) proposent que la fraction de matière organique lourde et grossière (coarse-MAOM) soit une fraction pivot qui fait le pont entre les apports de matière organique fraîche et la SOM stable, associée aux surfaces minérales. Cependant, on sait encore peu de choses sur l'effet de la qualité biochimique des apports organiques et de la texture du sol sur la dynamique du carbone (C) et de l'azote (N) dans cette fraction. Nous avons étudié la dynamique de la SOM dans le cadre d'une expérience factorielle comparant 10 combinaisons de gestion des résidus de culture (retournés au sol ou récoltés) avec différentes sources fertilisantes : du fumier solide de volaille, du lisier de bovins laitiers et du lisier de porc, un engrais minéral (NPK) et un contrôle minéral sans N (PK) dans deux sols à la texture contrastée. Après 9 ans de traitements, nous avons comparé la répartition du C et du N dans la fraction légère (LF), la coarse-MAOM et la fraction fine de la matière organique associée aux surfaces minérales (fine-MAOM) du sol de surface (0-5 cm). Nous avons constaté que le retour au sol de résidus de cultures de blé, de maïs et de soya augmentait la concentration en C du sol par une augmentation de la concentration en C de la LF et de la coarse-MAOM, mais n'influençait pas la concentration en N de ces fractions. À l'inverse, la source fertilisante a influencé l'accumulation de C et de N dans la coarse-MAOM et la fine-MAOM de l'argile limoneuse, où des valeurs plus élevées ont généralement été observées avec le fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovins laitiers. Des tendances similaires ont été observées dans le loam sableux, mais des différences statistiquement significatives n'ont été constatées que pour la concentration en C de la coarse-MAOM. La coarse-MAOM présentait un rapport C/N (15-16) beaucoup plus faible que la fraction légère (26-36) et semblait généralement réagir aux différents apports organiques. Malgré sa taille limitée (10 % du carbone organique total du sol), la coarse-MAOM semblait représenter un lieu central pour la formation de la nouvelle SOM et pour l'accumulation de C et N à la suite d'apports organiques frais. Nous proposons donc qu'elle soit considérée dans les modèles comme une fraction pivot de la formation de la SOM dans les sols arables.

Abstract

Recent models of soil organic matter (SOM) formation propose that the coarse mineralassociated fraction (coarse-MAOM) could be a pivotal fraction bridging the gap between fresh organic matter inputs and stabilized, mineral-associated SOM. However, little is known about the effect of organic input chemistry and soil texture on the carbon (C) and nitrogen (N) dynamics of this fraction. We studied SOM dynamics in a factorial field experiment comparing 10 combinations of crop residue management (retained or exported) with different fertilizer sources, including solid poultry, liquid dairy and liquid swine manure, a mineral fertilizer (NPK), and a control without N (PK) in two soils with contrasted texture. After 9 y of management, we compared the distribution of C and N within the light fraction (LF), the coarse-MAOM, and the fine mineral-associated organic matter fraction (fine-MAOM) of surface (0-5 cm) soil. We found that retention of mature crop residues increased soil C content through an increase in LF and coarse-MAOM but did not influence N content in any fractions. Conversely, the fertilizer source influenced C and N accumulation in the coarseand fine-MAOM in the silty clay soil where greater values were generally found with poultry and liquid dairy manures. Similar trends were found in the sandy loam soil, but statistically significant differences were only found for C in the coarse-MAOM fraction. The coarse-MAOM fraction had a much lower C:N ratio (15-16) than LF (26-36) and appeared generally responsive to the different organic inputs. Despite its limited size (10% of total soil organic carbon), coarse-MAOM appeared to represent a central location for the formation of new SOM and for the accumulation of C and N following fresh organic inputs. We therefore propose that it is considered in models as a pivotal fraction of SOM formation in arable soils.

Introduction

Understanding soil organic matter (SOM) cycling processes is essential to implement global strategies that maintain or enhance the multiple ecosystem services provided by soils, including climate change mitigation through carbon (C) sequestration (Palutikof, 2007). To adequately understand and model the effects of management practices on the processes that govern SOM formation and persistence, SOM may be divided into distinct functional pools with specific relevance with regards to stabilization mechanisms and turnover time (Von Lützow *et al.*, 2007). Isolating homogenous and functionally relevant SOM fractions remains a challenge, however, since SOM is comprised of a highly heterogeneous continuum of organic compounds of diverse origin (Von Lützow *et al.*, 2007; Paul, 2014).

Physical fractionation has been used for many years to divide soil organic matter into particulate and mineral associated organic matter (e.g. Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Six *et al.* 2002; Wander, 2004; Gregorich, 2006). The particulate organic matter fraction (POM; $>53\mu$ m) is considered as a labile and responsive fraction that may offer early insights to the long-term impacts of environmental conditions and management practices on SOM (Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006; Gosling *et al.*, 2013). However, the POM fraction has a relatively heterogeneous composition (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006), and its reliability as a functionally relevant fraction has been debated for a long time (e.g., Wander, 2004; Curtin *et al.* 2019). Over the years, many alternative physical fractionation methods have been proposed to increase the homogeneity and relevance of measurable SOM fractions, but often with equivocal results (Magid *et al.* 1996; Wander, 2004; Von Lützow *et al.*, 2007; Diochon *et al.* 2016). Some recent theoretical models, however, emphasized that further separating POM using density fractionation could increase the homogeneity and functional relevance of the resulting fractions (Lavallee *et al.*, 2019; Robertson *et al.*, 2019).

In fact, the POM is composed of both light and heavy materials, two fractions with distinct biochemical properties and behavior (Li *et al.*, 2013; Soong *et al.*, 2016). The light fraction (LF; >53 μ m and < 1.6-1.85 g cm⁻³), sometimes referred to as light-POM, is particularly rich in plant carbohydrates and aliphatic compounds and is therefore considered to be closely

related to fresh plant materials (Gregorich *et al.*, 1996; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006). As these plant materials are decomposed, the resulting SOM becomes enriched in microbial by-products (Christensen, 1992; Li *et al.*, 2013) and more closely associated to mineral particles. This results in a heavy-POM fraction comprised of partly decomposed plant materials coated by fine mineral particles (Maillard *et al.*, 2015), which could be referred to as coarse mineral-associated organic matter (coarse-MAOM; >53 µm and > 1.6-1.85 g cm⁻³). By contrast, the fine-MAOM (< 53 µm and > 1.6-1.85 g cm⁻³) fraction is mostly comprised of microscopic organic molecules of plant and/or microbial origin closely associated to silt and clay minerals (Ludwig *et al.*, 2015). These mineral associations, together with the physical protection of MAOM within aggregates, are thought to increase the resistance of MAOM to degradation and its persistence (Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008; Schweizer *et al.*, 2019). The fine-MAOM fraction is therefore considered as a relatively stable SOM fraction (Christensen, 2001; Wander, 2004; Poeplau *et al.*, 2018).

Some models suggest that the distribution of fresh plant materials within different SOM fractions happens via two distinct pathways (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2015, Robertson *et al.*, 2019). The biochemical pathway would occur early after plant litter addition to soil when water-soluble, non-structural plant compounds are leached and/or efficiently incorporated into the microbial biomass, resulting in the formation of stable fine-MAOM (Haddix *et al.*, 2016). As described by Cotrufo *et al.* (2015), the physical pathway happens when coarse plant fragments are gradually incorporated into the soil matrix, thereby entering the soil as LF. However, the physical pathway also involves a biochemical phase, since the incorporation of LF within the soil matrix leads to its gradual conversion to microbially enriched SOM and, eventually, leads to its coating with surrounding mineral particles. This process results in the formation of coarse-MAOM (sometimes referred to as heavy-POM). According to the model of SOM formation and persistence recently proposed by Robertson *et al.* (2019), the coarse-MAOM could also be a precursor of more stable fine-MAOM complexes.

In arable soils, a wide range of organic amendments can be returned to soil and differently affect SOM formation processes (Mitchell *et al.*, 2016; Obriot *et al.*, 2016). Given the linear relationship between the lignin:N ratio and litter decay rate found by Melillo *et al.* (1982),

this ratio has been used as an indicator of organic matter quality in SOM models (Parton et al., 1994). Although little studied in the literature, the coarse-MAOM has recently proven to be particularly responsive to organic amendments inputs (Maillard et al. 2015; Lambie et al. 2019). Little is known, however, about the response of coarse-MAOM as a function of the quality of organic matter returned to the soil. By contrast, accumulation of C and N in the fine-MAOM fraction is known to be closely related to the biochemistry of the input. As compared to more chemically recalcitrant compounds, labile organic matter with a low lignin:N ratio is used more efficiently by soil microbes, which is thought to favor the formation of fine-MAOM (Cotrufo et al., 2013; St. Luce et al., 2014; Cyle et al., 2016). Since nitrogen-rich microbial by-products are increasingly assumed to play a central role in the formation of fine-MAOM complexes (Knicker, 2011; Bingham and Cotrufo, 2016), fertilization of arable soils could stimulate microbial activity and therefore favor the formation of fine and stable MAOM. In fact, Gillespie et al. (2014) found that any increase in soil N availability fostered the transformation of plant material into microbial by-products, which favored SOM accumulation within the fine-MAOM. However, it is unclear whether the accumulation of SOM in the coarse- and fine-MAOM fractions operates similarly depending on the source of N (e.g., mineral vs. organic). Moreover, the stabilization of these organic compounds within the fine and more stable MAOM complexes may be ultimately regulated by the texture and the mineralogy of the soil matrix (Sorensen, 1981; Parton et al. 1994; Cotrufo et al., 2013; Haddix et al., 2020; Poirier et al., 2020). While the accumulation of organic matter within coarse SOM fractions theoretically has no saturation limit, the formation of fine-MAOM is dependent on soil silt and clay content and may, therefore, be subject to saturation, especially in low-clay soils (Hassink, 1997; Six et al., 2002; Stewart et al., 2008).

The fact that the biochemistry of organic inputs, the environmental factors and the soil mineral composition have determinant effects on SOM processes makes it hard to draw general conclusions based on field experiments. Our first objective was to clarify the influence of input biochemistry and soil texture on SOM formation by comparing the distribution of C and N among LF, coarse-MAOM and fine-MAOM fractions, as influenced by the fertilizer source (organic vs mineral) and crop residue management (exported vs

returned to soil), in two soils with contrasted texture and submitted to the same management and meteorological conditions for 9 y. Our second objective was to validate if the coarse-MAOM fraction could be considered as a functionally relevant fraction in SOM formation and stabilization processes, as suggested by the model proposed by Robertson *et al.* (2019). We hypothesized that the coarse-MAOM fraction would be particularly responsive to organic amendments, and organic inputs with a low lignin:N ratio would foster C and N accumulation within the mineral-associated fractions.

Material and method

Experimental Site and Treatments

The experimental site is located in the province of Québec, in eastern Canada ($46^{\circ}44'$ N, 71°31' W). The experimental setup consists of two field sites located 0.9 km apart; a silty clay soil (432 g kg⁻¹ clay, 163 g kg⁻¹ sand, 35 g kg⁻¹ C, and 2.7 g kg⁻¹ N) and a sandy loam soil (170 g kg⁻¹ clay, 680 g kg⁻¹ sand, 19 g kg⁻¹ C, and 1.5 g kg⁻¹ N). The silty clay soil is classified as a Mixed Frigid Dystric Eutrudept, and the sandy loam soil is classified as a Mixed Frigid Typic Dystrudept (Soil Survey Staff, 1994). In 2009 and 2010, the soils were cropped to spring wheat, and to a corn-soybean-wheat rotation from 2011 to 2017. A factorial experiment was arranged as a randomized complete block design with split-plot restriction and three replications on each soil type. Fertilizer treatments were ascribed to main plots and comprised a no-N control (mineral P and K), a complete mineral fertilizer (NPK), liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure and solid poultry manure. Crop residue management was randomly ascribed to sub-plots and consisted of residues exported with harvest or returned to the soil surface.

All fertilizer treatments were surface broadcast in the spring before planting, and the soil was harrowed (one pass, 0.025 to 0.05 m depth) within three hours to minimize ammonia-N volatilization. There was no other tillage operation during the year. Fertilizer treatment rates were based on local crop N requirements and local recommendations (CRAAQ, 2003): 90 kg N ha⁻¹ for wheat, 120 kg N ha⁻¹ for corn, 0 kg N ha⁻¹ for soybean. Mineral N was applied as calcium ammonium nitrate. The application rates for the manures were calculated considering that 80% of manure total N is available to crop (CRAAQ, 2003). In 2013, the N

availability was adjusted to 70% for liquid dairy manure (CRAAQ, 2010). For the PK and NPK treatments, P and K were provided based on crop requirements (CRAAQ, 2003), and no supplementary P or K was applied with the manure treatments. Fertilizer treatments were not applied on soybean years because both soils contained enough P and K to meet soybean needs.

Samplings and Analyses

Organic amendments

Raw liquid dairy manure was collected after about six months of storage in an earthen concrete tank on a commercial dairy operation. The liquid swine manure came from a commercial farrow-to-finish swine operation and was collected in the holding tank below the slatted floor. Fresh poultry manure was obtained from a commercial broiler operation and included wood shavings as bedding. On each application date, a composite subsample of each manure type was collected and analyzed. Total N was determined by Kjeldahl acid digestion, and the manure NH₄-N content was determined by shaking 5 g of fresh manure with 125 mL of 1 M KCl for 60 min. The extract was filtered through prewashed (1 M KCl) Whatman #42 filter paper, and the NH₄ concentration was measured using an automated continuous-flow colorimeter (QuickChem 8000 FIA+; Lachat Instruments, Loveland, CO). A subsample (200-250 mL) of each manure was lyophilized as described by Samson et al. (2019). Total C was measured by dry combustion (Model TruMac, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA) on the lyophilized material. A subsample of the lyophilized material was submitted to the Van Soest detergent fiber analysis (Goering and Van Soest, 1970). The soluble fraction was first determined using hot water extraction (100 °C) for 1 h followed by extraction with a neutral detergent (100 °C) for 60 min (Linères and Djakovitch, 1993). The hemicellulose, cellulose and lignin concentrations were subsequently determined on another subsample using proximate analysis, and expressed on a dry matter basis. Those biochemical analyses were not made on the crop residues, and values from Recous et al. (2015) were used since they provided values for the three crops of interest under comparable pedoclimatic conditions.

Soils

In autumn 2017, surface (0-5 cm) soil was sampled with a spade after corn harvest. As sampled plots were all under minimum tillage (top 5 cm, see above), the sampled layer included the zone where crop residues and fertilizers/manures were incorporated. A composite sample (three sampling points per plot) was taken, sieved in the field at 6 mm, and air-dried at room temperature in the laboratory. Soil samples were then fractionated with a method adapted from Maillard et al. (2015) that combines density and particle size fractionation (Figure 3 -1). Briefly, air-dried soil (25 g) was placed in a 250-mL polyethylene centrifuge bottle with 100 mL of NaI (1.7 g cm⁻³) solution. The bottle was then placed in a bath with crushed ice, and soil aggregates were dispersed using an ultrasonic generator (Model Q500, QSONICA, Newton, Connecticut, USA) fitted with a 6-mm diameter probe with a dispersion energy of 750 J g⁻¹ dry soil over 4 min, corresponding to a total of 18750 J. The soil suspension was then centrifuged for 45 min at $4100 \times g$. The LF floating on the NaI supernatant was collected by siphoning and filtration on a 0.45 µm nylon membrane (Nylaflo, Pall Corporation, Ann Arbor, NI, USA) using a vacuum (-0.81 bar) filtration unit with fritted glass. The material remaining on the filter was then washed with about 400 mL of distilled water to eliminate residual NaI. The LF was then gently removed from the filter membrane with a razor blade, transferred to a pre-weighed petri dish using distilled water, dried at 55 °C for 24 h, and weighed.

The soil remaining at the bottom of the centrifuge bottle was re-suspended by adding 150 mL of distilled water, vigorous hand shaking, centrifuging for 10 min at 15 000 \times g, and siphoning the supernatant above the soil residue. This procedure was repeated twice to remove as much residual NaI as possible. After the three successive washings, 100 mL of distilled water and 10-12 glass beads were added to the soil residue and shaken on a horizontal shaker at 120 strokes per minute for 30 min. Soil suspension was passed through a 53-µm sieve and rinsed with distilled water to separate the coarse-MAOM from finer fractions. All fractions were transferred into pre-weighed 600-mL beakers, dried at 55°C and weighed. Subsamples of the dried MAOM fractions were ground with a ball mill in preparation for C and N analyses, whereas LF samples were analyzed for C and N without additional preparation since all the collected material was used for the analysis. Total C and

N concentrations were determined with a CNS analyzer (Model TRUSPEC, LECO Corp., Saint-Joseph, MI, USA). The C concentration of each SOM fraction was expressed on a whole soil basis (g C kg⁻¹ soil) by multiplying the C concentration of a fraction (g C kg⁻¹ fraction) by the mass of material recovered with that fraction, and dividing by the mass of the original soil sample. On average, 96.4% of the initial soil mass, 93.1% of initial soil OC, and 95.0% of initial soil N were recovered using this fractionation procedure.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed with the mixed procedure of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS Institute, 2016). A factorial ANOVA model was used to consider the main effects and interaction of the fertilizer source and crop residue management. Blocks were considered a random factor, while fertilizer source and residue management were considered fixed effects. Homogeneity of variance was verified through the analysis of residuals. The differences were considered significant at $p \le 0.05$ and treatment means were separated by the protected least significant difference (LSD) with a Tukey adjustment, calculated at p=0.05.

Results

Characterization of manures and crop residues

On average, crop residues contained less soluble compounds, more cellulose and similar proportions of hemicellulose and lignin, when compared to the different manures (Table 3 - 1). However, the lignin:N ratio of crop residues was much wider than those of manures. Among manures, solid poultry manure contained a much higher proportion of cellulose and a smaller proportion of soluble compounds than the other manures. This difference was likely caused by the presence of wood shavings in the poultry manure. Solid poultry and liquid dairy manures contained similar proportions of lignin and similar lignin:N ratios, while those of liquid swine manure were much narrower. Liquid swine manure was also characterized by a much smaller proportion of lignin and a higher NH₄-N concentration as compared to the other manures.

Whole soil organic C and total N

In the silty clay soil, soil organic C (SOC) was on average 12% higher when residues were returned to the soil than exported, whereas residue management had no effect on soil total N (Table 3 -2). The SOC concentration was on average higher with solid poultry manure (21%), liquid dairy manure (15%) and the NPK (10%), as compared to the PK treatment. The SOC concentration was similar between liquid swine manure and the PK treatment. The fertilizer source had a statistically significant effect on soil total N, and differences among treatments were generally consistent with those observed for SOC. For both SOC and total N, a statistically significant interaction between the fertilizer source and residue management was found in the silty clay soil (Table 3 -3 (S1)). The interaction was mainly caused by the higher SOC and total N concentrations in soils with than without crop residues when fertilized with liquid dairy manure; such a difference was not found with the other fertilizer sources and the PK treatment.

In the sandy loam soil, SOC concentration was 7% higher where crop residues were returned to soil than where residues were exported (Table 3 -2). As in the silty clay soil, residue management showed no effect on total N concentration. By contrast, the fertilizer source had a statistically significant effect on total N, but not SOC concentration in the sandy loam soil. Total N concentration was higher with poultry (9%), dairy (7%) and swine manure (7%), than with NPK.

Characteristics of SOM Fractions

On average, the LF represented the smallest fraction of SOC in both soils and had the widest C:N ratio (26 to 36) (Figure 3 -2). The coarse-MAOM had a much narrower C:N ratio (\sim 15) and contained a greater proportion of SOC, on average, than the LF. The majority of SOC was comprised in the fine-MAOM of both soils, but the silty clay soil contained about 1.7 times more C in this fraction than the sandy loam soil. The fine-MAOM had the narrowest C:N ratio (\sim 11).

Carbon and N concentrations in SOM fractions

In the silty clay soil, returning crop residues increased C concentration in the LF and the coarse-MAOM, but not in the fine-MAOM (Figure 3 -3, a). Similar trends (not statistically significant) were found for N concentration (Figure 3 -3, b). The fertilizer source had no effect on the LF, but had a statistically significant effect on both C and N concentrations in coarse and fine MAOM fractions of the silty clay soil (Figure 3 -3, c,d). In coarse-MAOM, C and N concentrations were greater with poultry and liquid dairy manures than with the other fertilizer sources. In fine-MAOM, C concentrations were higher with poultry and liquid dairy manures than with liquid swine manure and PK, whereas N concentrations were the highest with poultry and liquid dairy manures, intermediate with liquid swine manure and NPK and the lowest with the PK treatment. A statistically significant interaction found between residue management and fertilizer source in the fine-MAOM fraction showed that N concentration was higher with residues returned than exported in soils fertilized with liquid dairy manure, but this difference was not found with the other fertilizer treatments (Table 3 -4 (S2)).

In the sandy loam soil, C concentrations in the LF and coarse-MAOM were higher where crop residues were returned than where residues were exported, but that effect was not found in fine-MAOM (Figure 3 -3, e). In the coarse-MAOM only, the N concentration was also significantly higher with residues returned (Figure 3 -3, f). The fertilizer source influenced the C concentration in the coarse-MAOM fraction only (Figure 3 -3, g). The C concentration of this fraction was higher with the poultry manure than with the NPK and the PK treatment. Similar trends (not statistically significant) were found for N concentration (Figure 3 -3, h).

Discussion

Residue retention increased C content in whole soil and coarse SOM fractions In both soils, retaining crop residues increased total SOC concentration in the surface layer (0-5 cm). The greater response of the silty clay soil to residue retention (12% increase relative to residue exported) than in the sandy loam soil (7% increase) could be attributed to lower C and N turnover rates due to greater physical protection and mineral-organic complexation in the clay-rich soil (Chivenge *et al.*, 2011; St. Luce *et al.*, 2014). In both soils, after 9 yrs, the increase in total SOC with crop residues retained was reflected by an increase in C in the LF and coarse-MAOM, but not in the fine-MAOM. As observed by Kirkby *et al.* (2014) and Gillespie *et al.* (2014), C-rich and nutrient-poor organic matter, such as mature crop residues, would produce less fine-MAOM, due to N limitation. Haddix *et al.* (2020) also found that above ground plant litter makes relatively small contribution to C storage in mineral arable soils. It is increasingly accepted that the formation of fine and stable organo-mineral complexes is mainly driven by microbial use efficiency of fresh organic matter (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). In the present study, the generally high lignin:N ratio of mature crop residues (Table 3 -1) might not have stimulated the formation of fine-MAOM. However, it can not be excluded that C from plant residues may have replaced some older C in fine-MAOM (Diochon *et al.* 2016).

Those findings can be extended to soil N as crop residue management did not influence soil N concentration in the silty clay soil and had a limited effect in the sandy loam soil. We suggest that the return of C-rich, N-poor mature crop residues forced microorganisms to mine the soil N reserve to metabolize the newly added C sources (Fontaine *et al.*, 2011; Kirkby *et al.*, 2014), which resulted in little N accumulation in the soils. Our results further indicate that adding a mineral fertilizer did not improve the limited impact of crop residues on C in fine-MAOM, but increased its N content in the silty clay soil only.

Animal manures increased C and N in whole soil and MAOM fractions

The use of solid poultry and liquid dairy manures generally favored the accumulation of whole-soil SOC and/or N as compared to the PK and/or the NPK treatments, especially in the silty clay soil. This was reflected by increases in C and N in the MAOM fractions, but not in the LF, in agreement with Yan *et al.* (2007) and Maillard *et al.* (2015). Even if the LF is usually closely related to the recent history of organic matter addition (Gosling *et al.*, 2013), it also has a high turnover rate (Schmidt *et al.*, 2011) that is influenced by soil microbial activity (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006). We therefore propose that the high proportion of labile C and relatively narrow C:N ratio of manures fostered the direct inclusion of manure-

derived C and N within the MAOM fractions. This enrichment occurred in both soils, although the effects were stronger in the silty clay soil.

The positive effect of poultry and liquid dairy manures on the coarse-MAOM fraction could be attributed to the concomitant presence of coarse organic particles (undigested fibers and beddings) and organic-N in the manures. As protein-N is believed to have high affinity for mineral surfaces (Kleber *et al.*, 2011; Knicker, 2011; Kopittke *et al.*, 2018), it is proposed that these N-rich molecules present in manure fostered the rapid coating of coarse organic fragments with mineral particles (Maillard et al., 2015), thereby amplifying the formation of coarse-MAOM. By contrasts, mineral fertilization failed to increase C and N content of this fraction, despite the greater amount of crop residues returned to soil (Samson et al., 2020). These results suggest that the accumulation of C and N in the coarse-MAOM fraction does not depend on the mere fertilization or the amounts of fresh organic matter inputs, but rely on the biochemical characteristics of the inputs, such as the presence of organic N.

The greater accumulation of C and N also found in the fine-MAOM fractions of the silty clay soil with solid poultry and liquid dairy manure is consistent with the positive effect of manure addition on fine and heavy SOM fractions previously reported by other authors (Christensen, 1988; Angers and N'dayegamiye, 1991; Aoyama et al., 1999; Maillard et al., 2015). This positive effect could be attributed to the low lignin:N ratio and high content in soluble and N-rich organic compounds of manure-derived organic matter (Table 3 -1), which could have favored the formation of fine-MAOM complexes in that clay-rich soil (Cotrufo et al., 2013; Cyle et al., 2016). By contrast, manures did not influence the C and N content of the fine-MAOM in the sandy loam soil, as also observed by Aoyama et al. (1999) in a loamy soil. Samson et al. (2020) also observed that manure addition could favor the accumulation of fine organic matter in a clayey, but not in a sandy loam soil. They attributed this discrepancy to the soil clay content since the formation and persistence of fine-MAOM complexes are determined by association with silt and clay particles. Those results support the model proposed by Castellano et al. (2015), suggesting that the effect of litter quality on SOM stabilization within the fine-MAOM fraction could be greater in soils with a greater saturation deficit in the fine-MAOM fraction.

Despite that liquid swine manure additions could also be considered a high-quality organic matter input, it generally did not increase C and N in the different SOM fractions, as compared to the PK and NPK treatments. Moreover, values were generally lower than with the other two manures. A lack of C accumulation in soil after 20 yrs of liquid swine manure applications was also observed by Angers *et al.* (2010). In agreement with these authors, we hypothesize that swine manure could have led to the priming of both fresh organic matter inputs (Chantigny et al., 2001) and native SOM (Bingeman et al., 1953). In fact, the very low lignin: N ratio of liquid swine manure coupled with its high content in NH4-N (Table 3 -1) likely fostered the rapid mineralization of C and N within MAOM complexes that are normally protected from decomposition by limited nutrient availability (Bimüller et al., 2014). Moreover, the fact that liquid swine manure generally contains a smaller amount of coarse organic fragments, probably also limited the possibility for swine manure-derived organic matter to become incorporated within the coarse-MAOM fraction. Finally, given the high concentration of soluble compounds found in the liquid swine manure, it can not be excluded that a considerable portion of the C and N comprised in this manure leached below the sampled layer (0-5 cm).

Particular characteristics and behavior of the coarse-MAOM fraction

In most studies, the coarse-MAOM fraction is not isolated, but rather included within the POM, together with the LF. Our results demonstrated that these light (LF) and heavy (coarse-MAOM) portions of POM have distinct properties and responsiveness to soil management practices. The much wider C:N ratio of LF (average of 31) as compared to the coarse-MAOM (15), reflects an important microbial enrichment in the latter, as demonstrated by Li *et al.* (2013). This coarse-MAOM contains coarse and partly processed plant materials coated by fine mineral particles (Li *et al.*, 2013; Maillard *et al.*, 2015). It is therefore suggested that coarse-MAOM complexes represent the early stage of organic residues–soil mineral matrix interactions, as a result of colonization of fresh organic matter fragments by soil microbes.

In this study, the coarse-MAOM fraction was also particularly responsive to the experimental treatments. In fact, it was the only fraction that responded to both crop residue management
and manures in both soils. Moreover, in the silty clay soil, relative differences in C and N contents with solid poultry and liquid dairy manures, as compared to the PK treatment, were 2 to 5 times greater in the coarse-MAOM than in the fine-MAOM. These results are in accordance with Maillard *et al.* (2015), who also found the coarse-MAOM fraction to be the most responsive to long-term (12 yr) manure applications in a sandy loam soil.

Given its specific characteristics in terms of composition, and its responsiveness to management practices, we propose that the coarse-MAOM fraction is a relevant fraction to monitor the formation of new SOM in arable soils. Moreover, we hypothesize that regular organic inputs and their physical incorporation into the soil matrix may give a greater importance to the physical than to the biochemical pathway in SOM formation and stabilization, in contrast with models proposed for soils in natural [less perturbed] ecosystems (Cotrufo et al., 2015; Robertson et al., 2019). Despite its limited size, the coarse-MAOM fraction would therefore be a central location for SOM formation. Moreover, the readiness of incorporation of fresh organic inputs within coarse organo-mineral complexes depends on the biochemical characteristics of the inputs (Figure 3 -4). Our results suggest that organic inputs with a high lignin: N ratio, such as mature crop residues, would initially enter the physical pathway of SOM formation though the LF fraction and gradually become incorporated within the coarse-MAOM fraction through microbial decomposition; this fraction could in turn be gradually transformed to fine-MAOM through further microbial decomposition and fragmentation of coarse-MAOM complexes, but this step was not detected in our study. Animal manures, on the other hand, would more directly favor the formation of coarse-MAOM because they contain N-rich organic compounds that are thought to have a strong affinity with mineral surfaces, which could foster the rapid coating of larger organic fragments with fine mineral particles. The low lignin: N ratio of manures could also favor the transfer and accumulation of C and N within the fine-MAOM fraction either directly through the biochemical pathway (leaching of soluble C and N compounds in the soil), or indirectly through the physical pathway (aging and fragmentation of coarse-MAOM complexes). This accumulation of C and N in the fine-MAOM fraction was, however, only found in the fine textured soils.

Conclusion

Low quality (high lignin:N ratio) organic inputs, such as mature crop residues, increased the C content of LF and coarse-MAOM in both soils. By contrast, high quality inputs, such as solid poultry and liquid dairy manures favored the direct inclusion of C and N within the coarse-MAOM of both soils, and also within the fine-MAOM of the fine textured silty clay soil. These results support conceptual models of SOM attributing the stabilization potential of fresh organic inputs to their biochemical characteristics and to soil texture. Our results also indicate that the coarse-MAOM fraction (heavy POM) is highly responsive to organic amendment and has a distinct composition and behaviour as compared to LF and fine-MAOM. We conclude that coarse-MAOM represents complexes in the early stage of organic fragments–soil mineral matrix interactions. We propose that, in arable soils, coarse-MAOM is (i) a functionally relevant fraction where most new SOM is formed, and (ii) a key fraction leading to the stabilisation of SOM in fine MAOM through the physical pathway.

Acknowledgement

Special thanks are extended to the staff of Université Laval and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (Johanne Tremblay, Gabriel Levesque, Annie Robichaud and Francis Gagnon) for their meticulous technical work and their precious collaboration.

Funding

This work was financially supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The Senior author was financially supported by scholarships from the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program, the Fonds de Recherche Québécois Nature et Technologies, Équiterre, the Erasmus+ exchange program, and the Choquette Family Foundation.

References

- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 86, 225-229.
- Angers, D., N'dayegamiye, A., 1991. Effects of manure application on carbon, nitrogen, and carbohydrate contents of a silt loam and its particle-size fractions. Biology and Fertility of Soils 11, 79-82.
- Aoyama, M., Angers, D., N'Dayegamiye, A., 1999. Particulate and mineral-associated organic matter in water-stable aggregates as affected by mineral fertilizer and manure applications. Canadian Journal Of Soil Science 79, 295-302.
- Bimüller, C., Mueller, C.W., von Lützow, M., Kreyling, O., Kölbl, A., Haug, S., Schloter, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2014. Decoupled carbon and nitrogen mineralization in soil particle size fractions of a forest topsoil. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 78, 263-273.
- Bingeman, C.W., Varner, J., Martin, W., 1953. The Effect of the Addition of Organic Materials on the Decomposition of an Organic Soil. Soil Science Society of America Journal 17, 34-38.
- Bingham, A.H., Cotrufo, M.F., 2016. Organic nitrogen storage in mineral soil: implications for policy and management. Science of the Total Environment 551, 116-126.
- Cambardella, C., Elliott, E., 1992. Particulate soil organic-matter changes across a grassland cultivation sequence. Soil science society of America journal 56, 777-783.
- Castellano, M.J., Mueller, K.E., Olk, D.C., Sawyer, J.E., Six, J., 2015. Integrating plant litter quality, soil organic matter stabilization, and the carbon saturation concept. Global change biology 21, 3200-3209.
- Chantigny, M.H., Rochette, P., Angers, D.A., 2001. Short-term C and N dynamics in a soil amended with pig slurry and barley straw: a field experiment. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 81, 131-137.
- Chivenge, P., Vanlauwe, B., Gentile, R., Six, J., 2011. Comparison of organic versus mineral resource effects on short-term aggregate carbon and nitrogen dynamics in a sandy soil versus a fine textured soil. Agriculture, ecosystems & environment 140, 361-371.
- Christensen, B.T., 1988. Effects of animal manure and mineral fertilizer on the total carbon and nitrogen contents of soil size fractions. Biology and Fertility of Soils 5, 304-307.
- Christensen, B.T., 1992. Physical fractionation of soil and organic matter in primary particle size and density separates. Advances in soil science. Springer, pp. 1-90.
- Christensen, B.T., 2001. Physical fractionation of soil and structural and functional complexity in organic matter turnover. European Journal of Soil Science 52, 345-353.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Soong, J.L., Horton, A.J., Campbell, E.E., Haddix, M.L., Wall, D.H., Parton, W.J., 2015. Formation of soil organic matter via biochemical and physical pathways of litter mass loss. Nature Geoscience 8, 776.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Wallenstein, M.D., Boot, C.M., Denef, K., Paul, E., 2013. The M icrobial E fficiency-M atrix S tabilization (MEMS) framework integrates plant litter decomposition with soil organic matter stabilization: do labile plant inputs form stable soil organic matter? Global Change Biology 19, 988-995.
- CRAAQ, 2003. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- CRAAQ, 2010. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.

- Curtin, D., Beare, M.H., Weiwen, Q., Sharp, J., 2019. Does particulate organic matter fraction meet the criteria for a model soil organic matter pool? Pedosphere 29, 195-203.
- Cyle, K.T., Hill, N., Young, K., Jenkins, T., Hancock, D., Schroeder, P.A., Thompson, A., 2016. Substrate quality influences organic matter accumulation in the soil silt and clay fraction. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 103, 138-148.
- Diochon, A., Gillespie, A., Ellert, B., Janzen, H., Gregorich, E., 2016. Recovery and dynamics of decomposing plant residue in soil: an evaluation of three fractionation methods. European Journal of Soil Science 67, 196-205.
- Fontaine, S., Henault, C., Aamor, A., Bdioui, N., Bloor, J., Maire, V., Mary, B., Revaillot, S., Maron, P., 2011. Fungi mediate long term sequestration of carbon and nitrogen in soil through their priming effect. Soil biology and Biochemistry 43, 86-96.
- Gillespie, A., Diochon, A., Ma, B., Morrison, M., Kellman, L., Walley, F., Regier, T., Chevrier, D., Dynes, J., Gregorich, E., 2014. Nitrogen input quality changes the biochemical composition of soil organic matter stabilized in the fine fraction: a long-term study. Biogeochemistry 117, 337-350.
- Goering, H.u., Van Soest, P.J., 1970. Forage fiber analyses (apparatus, reagents, procedures, and some applications). US Agricultural Research Service.
- Gosling, P., Parsons, N., Bending, G., 2013. What are the primary factors controlling the light fraction and particulate soil organic matter content of agricultural soils? Biology and Fertility of Soils 49, 1001-1014.
- Gregorich, E., Beare, M., McKim, U., Skjemstad, J., 2006. Chemical and biological characteristics of physically uncomplexed organic matter. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 70, 975-985.
- Gregorich, E., Monreal, C., Schnitzer, M., Schulten, H.-R., 1996. Transformation of plant residues into soil organic matter: chemical characterization of plant tissue, isolated soil fractions, and whole soils. Soil Science 161, 680-693.
- Haddix, M.L., Gregorich, E.G., Helgason, B.L., Janzen, H., Ellert, B.H., Cotrufo, M.F., 2020. Climate, carbon content, and soil texture control the independent formation and persistence of particulate and mineral-associated organic matter in soil. Geoderma 363, 114160.
- Haddix, M.L., Paul, E.A., Cotrufo, M.F., 2016. Dual, differential isotope labeling shows the preferential movement of labile plant constituents into mineral-bonded soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 22, 2301-2312.
- Hassink, J., 1997. The capacity of soils to preserve organic C and N by their association with clay and silt particles. Plant and Soil 191, 77-87.
- Kirkby, C.A., Richardson, A.E., Wade, L.J., Passioura, J.B., Batten, G.D., Blanchard, C., Kirkegaard, J.A., 2014. Nutrient availability limits carbon sequestration in arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 68, 402-409.
- Kleber, M., Nico, P.S., Plante, A., Filley, T., Kramer, M., Swanston, C., Sollins, P., 2011. Old and stable soil organic matter is not necessarily chemically recalcitrant: implications for modeling concepts and temperature sensitivity. Global Change Biology 17, 1097-1107.
- Knicker, H., 2011. Soil organic N-An under-rated player for C sequestration in soils? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 1118-1129.
- Kögel-Knabner, I., Guggenberger, G., Kleber, M., Kandeler, E., Kalbitz, K., Scheu, S., Eusterhues, K., Leinweber, P., 2008. Organo-mineral associations in temperate soils:

Integrating biology, mineralogy, and organic matter chemistry. Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science 171, 61-82.

- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Lavallee, J.M., Soong, J.L., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Conceptualizing soil organic matter into particulate and mineral-associated forms to address global change in the 21st century. Global change biology.
- Li, X.G., Chen, Z.M., Li, X.H., Ma, Q., Lin, Y., 2013. Chemical characteristics of physically separated soil organic matter fractions in contrasting arable soils. Soil Science 178, 128-137.
- Linères, M., Djakovitch, J., 1993. Caractérisation de la stabilité biologique des apports organiques par l'analyse biochimique. Matières organiques et agricultures. GEMAS-COMIFER, Paris, 59-68.
- Liu, C., Lu, M., Cui, J., Li, B., Fang, C., 2014. Effects of straw carbon input on carbon dynamics in agricultural soils: a meta-analysis. Global change biology 20, 1366-1381.
- Lu, M., Zhou, X., Luo, Y., Yang, Y., Fang, C., Chen, J., Li, B., 2011. Minor stimulation of soil carbon storage by nitrogen addition: a meta-analysis. Agriculture, ecosystems & environment 140, 234-244.
- Ludwig, M., Achtenhagen, J., Miltner, A., Eckhardt, K.-U., Leinweber, P., Emmerling, C., Thiele-Bruhn, S., 2015. Microbial contribution to SOM quantity and quality in density fractions of temperate arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 81, 311-322.
- Magid, J., Gorissen, A., Giller, K., 1996. In search of the elusive "active" fraction of soil organic matter: Three size-density fractionation methods for tracing the fate of homogeneously 14C-labelled plant materials. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 28, 89-99.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Bittman, S., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Hunt, D., Parent, L.-É., 2015. Carbon accumulates in organo-mineral complexes after long-term liquid dairy manure application. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 202, 108-119.
- Melillo, J.M., Aber, J.D., Muratore, J.F., 1982. Nitrogen and lignin control of hardwood leaf litter decomposition dynamics. Ecology 63, 621-626.
- Mitchell, E., Scheer, C., Rowlings, D.W., Conant, R.T., Cotrufo, M.F., van Delden, L., Grace, P.R., 2016. The influence of above-ground residue input and incorporation on GHG fluxes and stable SOM formation in a sandy soil. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 101, 104-113.
- Obriot, F., Stauffer, M., Goubard, Y., Cheviron, N., Peres, G., Eden, M., Revallier, A., Vieublé-Gonod, L., Houot, S., 2016. Multi-criteria indices to evaluate the effects of repeated organic amendment applications on soil and crop quality. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 232, 165-178.
- Palutikof, J., 2007. Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Contribution of working group II to the fourth assessment report of the intergovernmental panel on climate change.
- Parton, W.J., Ojima, D.S., Cole, C.V., Schimel, D.S., 1994. A general model for soil organic matter dynamics: sensitivity to litter chemistry, texture and management. Quantitative modeling of soil forming processes 39, 147-167.
- Paul, E.A., 2014. Soil microbiology, ecology and biochemistry. Academic press. 598 p.

- Poeplau, C., Don, A., Six, J., Kaiser, M., Benbi, D., Chenu, C., Cotrufo, M.F., Derrien, D., Gioacchini, P., Grand, S., 2018. Isolating organic carbon fractions with varying turnover rates in temperate agricultural soils–A comprehensive method comparison. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 125, 10-26.
- Poirier, V., Basile-Doelsch, I., Balesdent, J., Borschneck, D., Whalen, J.K., Angers, D.A., 2020. Organo-Mineral Interactions Are More Important for Organic Matter Retention in Subsoil Than Topsoil. Soil Systems 4, 4.
- Recous, S., Chabbi, A., Vertes, F., Thiebeau, P., Chenu, C., 2015. Fertilité des sols et minéralisation de l'azote: sous l'influence des pratiques culturales, quels processus et interactions sont impliqués? Fourrages, 189-196.
- Robertson, A.D., Paustian, K., Ogle, S., Wallenstein, M.D., Lugato, E., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Unifying soil organic matter formation and persistence frameworks: the MEMS model. Biogeosciences 16, 1225-1248.
- Samson, M.-E., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Chantigny, M., Angers, D., Royer, I., Vanasse, A., 2019. Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type. Field Crops Research 243, 107623.
- Samson, M.-E., Chantigny, M., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Royer, I., Angers, D. 2020. Management practices differently affect particulate and mineral-associated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry. Accepted
- Schmidt, M.W., Torn, M.S., Abiven, S., Dittmar, T., Guggenberger, G., Janssens, I.A., Kleber, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Lehmann, J., Manning, D.A., 2011. Persistence of soil organic matter as an ecosystem property. Nature 478, 49.
- Schweizer, S.A., Bucka, F.B., Graf-Rosenfellner, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2019. Soil microaggregate size composition and organic matter distribution as affected by clay content. Geoderma 355, 113901.
- Six, J., Conant, R.T., Paul, E.A., Paustian, K., 2002. Stabilization mechanisms of soil organic matter: implications for C-saturation of soils. Plant and soil 241, 155-176.
- Soil Survey Staff, SSS, 1994. Keys to Soil Taxonomy. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Washington, USA 306 p.
- Soong, J.L., Vandegehuchte, M.L., Horton, A.J., Nielsen, U.N., Denef, K., Shaw, E.A., de Tomasel, C.M., Parton, W., Wall, D.H., Cotrufo, M.F., 2016. Soil microarthropods support ecosystem productivity and soil C accrual: evidence from a litter decomposition study in the tallgrass prairie. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 92, 230-238.
- Sorensen LH (1981) Carbon-nitrogen relationships during the humification of cellulose in soils containing different amounts of clay. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 13, 313–321.
- St. Luce, M., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., Chantigny, M.H., 2014. Labile organic nitrogen transformations in clay and sandy-loam soils amended with 15N-labelled faba bean and wheat residues. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 68, 208-218.
- Stewart, C.E., Plante, A.F., Paustian, K., Conant, R.T., Six, J., 2008. Soil carbon saturation: linking concept and measurable carbon pools. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 379-392.
- Von Lützow, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Ekschmitt, K., Flessa, H., Guggenberger, G., Matzner, E., Marschner, B., 2007. SOM fractionation methods: Relevance to functional pools and to stabilization mechanisms. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 39, 2183-2207.
- Wander, M., 2004. Soil organic matter fractions and their relevance to soil function. Soil organic matter in sustainable agriculture. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 67-102.

Yan, D., Wang, D., Yang, L., 2007. Long-term effect of chemical fertilizer, straw, and manure on labile organic matter fractions in a paddy soil. Biology and Fertility of Soils 44, 93-

Tables

Table 3-1. Average (2009-2017) soluble organic compounds, hemicellulose, cellulose and lignin proportions (dry matter basis), lignin:N and C:N ratios as well as N-NH4 concentrations of the liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure, solid poultry manure applied to soil each spring, and of plant residues returned to soil at harvest. Concentrations in manures (mean \pm standard deviation) were determined annually, in triplicates, as per the Van Soest method; concentrations in crop residues were taken from Recous *et al.* 2015).

	Soluble organic compounds		Hemi- cellulose		Cellulose		Lignin		N-N	H4	Lignin:N
		(Van Soest, % MS)						g kg ⁻¹ MS			
Liquid swine manure	51.2	±9.8	33.3	±7.8	11.9	±2.5	3.7	±1.3	48.1	±21.0	0.5
Liquid dairy manure	46.5	±7.2	19.0	±4.2	20.8	±5.0	13.7	±3.6	16.8	±4.8	3.2
Solid poultry manure	33.8	±4.0	20.2	±3.3	30.9	±3.0	15.1	±2.0	5.6	±1.6	4.3
Crop residues (average)	21.5		21.0		41.3		15.6				23.1
Wheat	7.5		27.0		51.0		14.0				25.7
Corn	38.8		19.0		31.4		9.9				11.8
Soybean	18.3		17.1		41.4		23.0				31.8

	Silty clay			Sandy loam				
	SOC		Total N		SOC		Total N	
Residue management	g kg so			g kg soi	il ⁻¹			
Residues retained	37.4	А	3.03		20.3	А	1.83	
Residues harvested	33.5	в	2.84		18.9	в	1.6	
SEM	1.4		0.06		1.8		0.19	
Fertilizer source								
Solid poultry manure	39.0	А	3.13	А	20.3		1.83	А
Liquid dairy manure	37.3	AB	3.12	Α	20.3		1.80	А
Liquid swine manure	33.3	CD	2.85	BC	19.7		1.77	А
NPK	35.4	BC	2.88	в	18.4		1.60	в
РК	32.3	D	2.69	с	19.2		1.68	AB
SEM	1.6		0.06		1.9		0.19	
Residue management x fer	tilizer s	ourc	e					
Solid poultry manure								
Residues retained	39.8	AB	3.20	AB	21.1		1.93	
Residues harvested	38.2	AB	3.06	BC	19.4		1.73	
Liquid dairy manure								
Residues retained	42.0	Α	3.39	А	20.8		1.88	
Residues harvested	32.5	D	2.86	CDE	19.9		1.72	
Liquid swine manure								
Residues retained	34.1	CD	2.85	CDE	20.5		1.88	
Residues harvested	32.6	D	2.84	CDE	18.9		1.66	
NPK								
Residues retained	37.1	вс	2.97	BCD	19.3		1.67	
Residues harvested	33.7	CD	2.79	DE	17.6		1.53	
РК								
Residues retained	33.9	CD	2.74	E	19.7		1.76	
Residues harvested	30.7	D	2.64	E	18.7		1.60	
SEM	1.9		0.09		2.0		0.20	

Table 3-2. Surface (0-5 cm) soil organic carbon (SOC) and total N as influenced by residue management, fertilizer source and their interactions, and standard error of the means (SEM) for each variable.

Figures



Figure 3-1. Scheme of the soil organic matter fractionation adapted from Maillard *et al.* 2015. LF=light fraction, MAOM=mineral associated organic matter.



Figure 3-2. Carbon concentration (g C kg⁻¹ soil) and C:N ratio of the LF (light fraction), the coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and the fine-MAOM (fine mineral associated organic matter) of silty clay and sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction.



Figure 3-3. Effect of residue management (a,b,e,f) and fertilizer source (c,d,g,h) on C and N content of LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral associated organic matter) and fine MAOM (fine mineral associated organic matter) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soils. Error bars represent the standard deviation of the mean in each fraction.



Figure 3-4. Schematic of SOM formation and stabilization emphasizing the relevance of subdividing particulate organic matter (POM) into light (LF) and heavy (coarse-MAOM) material to better highlight the impact of different organic inputs on SOM formation in different fractions. In our study, mature crop residues mainly entered the soil as LF and then coarse-MAOM, with no impact on the size of the fine-MAOM fraction. In contrast, C and N from animal manures were directly incorporated within the coarse-MAOM fraction and, in the fine-textured soils, contributed to increase the amounts of C and N in the fine-MAOM fraction, presumably directly because of the presence of organic N in the manure, or indirectly through aging and fragmentation of coarse-MAOM complexes.

Supplementary material

Table 3-3 (S1). Summary of the analysis on variance (*p*-values) for the effects of fertilizer source, residue management, and their interactions on LF (light fraction), coarse-MAOM (coarse mineral-associated organic matter), fine-MAOM (fine mineral-associate organic matter), SOC (total soil organic carbon) and Total N (total soil N) in the silty clay and the sandy loam soil.

Silty clay

Carbon concentration-(ig Ckg	I F	CoarseMAOM	Fine-MAOM	SOC		
-	n-value	n-value	n-value	n-value		
Residue management	0.052	<.0001	0.081	0.000		
Fertilizer source	0.341	0.006	0.018	0.001		
Residue management * fertilizer source	0.216	0.518	0.083	0.045		
Nitrogen concentratio-n(gՒ						
_	LF	CoarseMAOM	Fine-MAOM	Total N		
	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value		
Residue management	0.112	0.111	0.209	0.117		
Fertilizer source	0.783	0.007	0.000	0.000		
Residue management * fertilizer source	0.404	0.498	0.023	0.038		
_						

Sandy loam

Carbon concentration (g C kg13)ol

	LF	CoarseMAOM	Fine-MAOM	SOC
	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value
Residue management	0.006	<.0001	0.481	0.028
Fertilizer source	0.732	0.006	0.434	0.251
Residue management * fertilizer source	0.290	0.423	0.895	0.980
Nitrogen concentration (g N kg-1901				
	LF	CoarseMAOM	Fine-MAOM	Total N
	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value
Residue management	0.738	0.044	0.158	0.096
Fertilizer source	0.145	0.103	0.083	0.050
Residue management * fertilizer source	0.868	0.460	0.969	0.980

Table 3-4 (S2).Interaction between residuemanagement and fertilizer source on N (nitrogen)concentration of the fine-MAOM in the silty clay soil.

Treatments	[N] g kg ⁻¹			
Solid poultry manure				
Residues retained	2.8	AB		
Residues harvested	2.7	вс		
Liquid dairy manure				
Residues retained	3.0	Α		
Residues harvested	2.6	CDE		
Liquid swine manure				
Residues retained	2.5	DE		
Residues harvested	2.6	CDE		
NPK				
Residues retained	2.7	BCD		
Residues harvested	2.5	DE		
РК				
Residues retained	2.4	Е		
Residues harvested	2.4	Е		

Chapitre 4 - Coarse-MAOM: a physical fraction of significance to support simultaneous C storage and N supply soil functions

Marie-Élise Samson^{abc}, Martin H. Chantigny^b, Anne Vanasse^a, Safya Menasseri-Aubry^c, M. Francesca Cotrufo^d and Denis A. Angers^b

^aUniversité Laval, Département de Phytologie, 2425 rue de l'Agriculture, Québec, QC, Canada, G1V 0A6

^b Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Québec Research and Development Centre, 2560 Hochelaga Boulevard, Québec, QC, Canada, G1V 2J3

^cAgrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 65, rue de St-Brieuc 35042 Rennes Cedex – France

^d Department of Soil and Crop Sciences and Natural Resources Ecology Laboratory,

Colorado State University, 200 West Lake Street, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA

Copie de l'article « Samson, M.-É., Chantigny, M.H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Cotrufo, M.F., Angers, D.A., 2020. Coarse-MAOM : a physical fraction of significance to support simultaneous C storage and N supply soil functions» qui sera soumis à la revue *Geoderma* à l'automne 2020.

Résumé

L'adoption de pratiques agricoles qui stockent du carbone (C) dans les sols arables a été largement encouragée en tant que stratégie d'atténuation et d'adaptation aux changements climatiques. Toutefois, la faisabilité de cette stratégie a été débattue, notamment en raison de contraintes stoechiométriques. En effet, puisque les molécules organiques riches en N jouent un rôle central dans la stabilisation du C à long terme, le stockage de C dans les sols à l'échelle mondiale nécessiterait l'immobilisation de quantités substantielles de N. Or, une certaine proportion de l'azote du sol doit continuer à circuler pour maintenir la capacité d'approvisionnement en azote du sol et atteindre la sécurité alimentaire sous une pression démographique croissante. Jusqu'à aujourd'hui, toutefois, les mécanismes impliqués dans la fertilité du sol sont encore peu connus. Nous passons ici en revue la littérature la plus récente sur le cycle de la matière organique du sol (SOM) afin de proposer un modèle conceptuel qui intègre dans un même cadre les fonctions de stockage du C et d'approvisionnement en N du sol, telles qu'influencées par le type de sol et les pratiques agricoles. Nous présentons la fraction lourde et grossière de la matière organique du sol (coarse-MAOM) comme une fraction essentielle, mais largement négligée, dans les fonctions de stockage du C et d'approvisionnement en N du sol. Il est proposé que cette fraction représente la SOM aux premiers stades des interactions entre les résidus organiques et la matrice minérale du sol, suite à la colonisation de fragments de matière organique fraîche par les microorganismes. En raison de leur stabilité transitoire, ces complexes organominéraux enrichis en N pourraient jouer un rôle central dans la fertilité du sol et potentiellement aussi contribuer à la stabilisation à long terme du C par la voie physique de formation de la SOM. Les pratiques de gestion agricole qui pourraient augmenter la teneur en coarse-MAOM de la couche arable comprennent la réduction du travail du sol et l'épandage d'engrais de ferme. Ce modèle conceptuel est proposé pour améliorer notre compréhension des mécanismes impliqués dans le cycle de la SOM des sols agricoles et pour stimuler davantage la recherche dans ce domaine. À terme, cela pourrait permettre de développer des modèles qui prédisent efficacement l'effet des pratiques de gestion sur les cycles du C et du N sous diverses conditions pédoclimatiques et donc, de contribuer à optimiser les services écosystémiques fournis par les sols arables à l'échelle globale.

Abstract

Adopting agricultural management practices that store carbon (C) in arable soils has been widely encouraged as a strategy to mitigate climate change. However, the feasibility of this strategy has been debated due to stoichiometric constraints. In fact, C stabilization in soil at a global scale would require the immobilization of substantial amounts of N since N-rich organic molecules are assumed to play a central role in long-term C stabilization. Furthermore, although the mechanisms involved in soil N fertility are still poorly understood, a certain proportion of soil N must keep cycling to maintain soil N supply capacity and achieve food security under growing demographic pressure. Here, we review the most recent literature and knowledge breakthroughs on soil organic matter (SOM) cycling to propose a conceptual framework that integrates simultaneity of C storage and N supply soil functions, as influenced by soil type and agricultural management practices. In this framework, we present the coarse mineral-associated organic matter (coarse-MAOM) fraction as a pivotal, yet largely overlooked, fraction in both C storage and N supply functions in soil. It is proposed that this fraction represents SOM on the early stages of organic residues-soil mineral matrix interactions, as a result of colonization of fresh organic matter fragments by soil microbes. Due to their transient stability, these N-enriched organo-mineral complexes could play a central role in soil fertility and potentially contribute to long-term C stabilization through the physical pathway of SOM formation. Agricultural management practices, that could increase coarse-MAOM content of the topsoil include reduced tillage and manuring. This framework is proposed to improve our mechanistic understating of SOM cycling in agricultural soils and to further stimulate research in the matter. Ultimately, this could help to develop models that efficiently predict the effect of management practices on C and N cycling under various pedoclimatic conditions and help optimize the ecosystem services provided by arable soils at a global scale.

Introduction

Soils represent the largest terrestrial pool of organic C and can therefore act as both a major source and sink of CO₂. Sequestering C in soil by increasing soil organic matter (SOM) content has therefore been proposed as one of the most cost-effective strategies to mitigate global climate change (Minasny et al., 2017). Theoretically, encouraging the broad adoption of management strategies that increase SOM would not only remove significant amounts of CO₂ from the atmosphere, but would also improve soil health and, therefore, help sustain the multiple ecosystem services provided by soils. The feasibility of this alluring mitigation strategy has, however, been debated, notably due to stoichiometric constraints (Van Groenigen et al., 2017; Bertrand et al., 2019). Increasing soil organic C stocks would indeed require the immobilization of substantial amounts of N (Bingham and Cotrufo, 2016; Van Groenigen et al., 2017; Bertrand et al., 2019), an essential element for plant growth. This gives rise to an important dilemma already raised by Janzen (2006): can we both store organic matter in soil and profit from its decay, or do we necessarily have to choose between the two functions? This dilemma is particularly relevant at a time when adopting management practices that store C in arable soils is widely encouraged, while maintaining the N supply capacity of these soils is also critical to achieve food security under growing demographic pressure.

The dynamics of C and N in soils are intimately intertwined and soil C:N ratios appear to be well-constrained at a global scale (Cleveland and Liptzin, 2007; Bertrand *et al.*, 2019). The C:N ratio of cropland soils is typically lower than to that of forests or pastures and usually varies between 7.6 and 12.5 (Xu *et al.* 2013; Tipping et al., 2016; Bertrand *et al.*, 2019). If notable changes in C:N ratio have been noted after land us changes (Murty et al. 2002; Fazhu et al., 2015; Li et al. 2016), the C:N ratio of cropped soils seems to be little sensitive to agricultural management practices at the whole soil scale (Bertrand *et al.*, 2019).

However, C and N dynamics can be considerably different within distinct SOM fractions (Bimüller et al., 2014). In fact, SOM is considered as a continuum from fresh and decomposing plant residues to fine and presumably more stable mineral-associated organic matter. Since a few decades now, SOM has therefore been physically fractionated based on

its size (Elliott and Cambardella, 1991; Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Lavallee *et al.* 2019). Particulate organic matter (POM; > 50-63 μ m) has been associated to fast cycling SOM whereas fine mineral-associated organic matter (fine-MAOM; < 50-63 μ m, sometimes referred to as FOM) has been associated to the stable SOM pool. It has been recently proposed that N-rich organic molecules of microbial origin play a central role in the formation of these presumably stable fine-MAOM complexes (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke *et al.*, 2018). Given the fact that the vast majority of SOM in arable soils is comprised within this fine-MAOM fraction, the C:N ratio of the whole soil is relatively close to that of soil microbes (~ 8.5) and is relatively stable (Cleveland and Liptzin, 2007; Kallenbach and Grandy, 2011). Sequestering significant amounts of C in these fine and stable organo-mineral complexes would therefore imply the long-term immobilization of large amounts of N (Van Groenigen *et al.*, 2017).

On the counterpart, POM fractions represent a much smaller fraction of total SOM in arable soils. Changes in its quantity, or quality are therefore not necessarily easily reflected at the whole soil scale. However, coarse SOM components tend to react much faster to changes in management practices and has often been regarded as the main site of C and N mineralization in soil (e.g., Schimel and Bennett, 2004; Nyiraneza et al., 2010; St-Luce et al., 2014). Up until now, however, a measurable SOM fraction that could be linked to soil N supply capacity under a wide range of pedoclimatic conditions and management practices has not yet been identified (Luce *et al.*, 2011; Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2012; Niu *et al.*, 2016).

Most importantly, a mechanistic understanding of soil N supply capacity will be needed before we can efficiently couple C and N cycling within distinct SOM fractions in predictive models. In fact, coupling C and N cycles in mechanistic models based on biogeochemical processes and operationally-defined SOM fractions remains an important challenge, since research on soil C and N cycles have historically evolved in parallel, using different methods and often considering very different time scales.

For instance, Robertson *et al.* (2019) recently proposed a mathematical model based on the biogeochemical processes that govern SOM formation and persistence. This model is based

on the Microbial Efficiency-Matrix Stabilization framework (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013) and emphasizes the importance of linking the biochemical quality of organic matter inputs with the efficiency of microbial processing and potential interaction with the soil matrix to predict C stabilization processes. Their mechanistic model, developed for natural ecosystems, has proven to be a promising tool to predict C storage across extensive gradients of pedoclimatic conditions. However, the authors ultimately stressed the need to develop a mechanistic understanding of N cycling to integrate plant-soil nutrient feedback to this model. Further elucidation of the mechanisms underlying the MEMS model and the effect of management practices in the partitioning of SOM within operationally defined fractions will also be necessary to adapt this model to agricultural soils.

We therefore reviewed the literature to define the most recent knowledge breakthroughs regarding SOM formation and stabilization processes in the topsoil layer. We thereafter identify gaps in knowledge and develop additional concepts to further integrate the N cycle to the concepts underlying the MEMS model (Robertson *et al.* 2019). We present arguments suggesting that the coarse-MAOM (sometimes referred to as heavy-particulate organic matter), is a pivotal SOM fraction with relevance for both C stabilization and N cycling in soil. Finally, we integrate these ideas into a simple framework of SOM dynamics that considers the effect of agricultural management practices and soil type on the partitioning of C and N within different operationally defined SOM fractions. This framework improves our understanding of the physical locations of mechanisms involved in C stabilization and N supply in arable soils and provides a basis for future research on SOM cycling.

Soil as a carbon sink

Current paradigm of soil organic matter stabilization processes

Our understanding of SOM stabilization mechanisms has greatly improved in the past decades. For the last two centuries, SOM persistence has been mainly attributed to the chemical recalcitrance of organic inputs (Achard, 1786; Waksman, 1936; Olk *et al.* 2019). Carbon comprised in complex organic molecules such as lignin, has been thought to be stabilized in soils due to its intrinsic biochemical resistance to microbial breakdown (Stevenson, 1994). These molecules could also acquire further recalcitrance through a

process known as *humification*, where their condensation with microbial by-products results in the formation of humus, a highly recalcitrant concatenation of aromatic polymers (Kononova, 1966). However, direct and field-based evidence that these processes take place in quantitatively significant proportions in soil has never been found (Lehmann and Kleber, 2015; Kleber and Lehmann, 2019). On the contrary, Kleber et al. (2011) demonstrated that the oldest fraction of soil organic matter mainly contains easily metabolizable aliphatic molecules, that are thought to be of microbial origin (Miltner et al., 2012; Kopittke et al., 2018). These discoveries were the premises to the new theoretical models of SOM dynamics that mainly attribute SOM stabilization to its physical protection, rather than intrinsic or inherited chemical recalcitrance (Schmidt et al. 2011; Dungait et al., 2012). The adsorption of organic matter to mineral surfaces and protection within aggregates would therefore be the main mechanisms leading to the protection of SOM against extensive microbial degradation, thereby promoting their long-term stabilization in soil (Lützow et al., 2006; Marschner et al., 2008; Kleber et al., 2011; Dungait et al., 2012). Based on these new concepts, there has been a renewed interest in the physical fractionation of soil to isolate functionally relevant SOM fractions (Christensen, 2001; Wander, 2004; Skjemstad et al., 2006; Poeplau et al., 2018). Since a few decades there has been a certain consensus for dividing SOM into POM and fine-MAOM as a simple and efficient way to isolate operationally-defined and functionally relevant SOM fractions (Elliott and Cambardella, 1991; Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Lavallee et al. 2019).

Particulate organic matter

Particulate organic matter (POM) is isolated by size fractionation after dispersion of soil aggregates (Figure 4 -1). It is comprised of coarse organic fragments (>50-63 μ m). Its composition and abundance in soil are therefore closely related to the amount and composition of recent organic matter inputs (Magid and Kjærgaard, 2001). As compared to the bulk soil, it is usually enriched in plant carbohydrates and lignin (Golchin *et al.*, 1995; Li *et al.*, 2013) which explains its relatively wide C:N ratio (22.1 ± 14.9) (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2019).

Even if POM accounts on average for only 15% of total organic C in arable soils (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006), it has often been proposed as a functionally relevant fraction that gives insight

to the long-term effects of management practices on soil C content (Cambardella and Elliott, 1992; Gosling *et al.*, 2013). The close relationships found between changes in the proportion of soil C present as POM and soil respiration led to the assumption that this fraction represents the most dynamic part of soil organic C (Magid and Kjærgaard, 2001). In fact, evidences from isotopic studies indicate that this fraction turns over considerably faster than the bulk soil C (Baisden *et al.*, 2002; Henderson *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, even if this fraction can eventually become physically stabilized within macroaggregates, the stabilizing agents involved in its physical protection, such as roots and polysaccharides, are relatively weak and mainly temporary and/or transient (Tisdall and Oades, 1982). The POM therefore includes a variety of organic components ranging from fresh and undecomposed plant residues of different origin to partly decomposed and microbially-enriched plant materials encrusted with fine mineral particles (Tisdall and Oades, 1979; Golchin *et al.*, 1994a; Gregorich *et al.*, 2006).

The factors affecting the amount of POM and its biochemical properties include: 1) organic input to the soil, 2) microbial activity that regulates organic matter degradation and the occurrence of stabilizing agents such as fungal hyphaes and microbial polysaccharides (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006) as well as, 3) the potential for the transient stabilization of POM within the soil matrix, as influenced by soil texture and mineralogy (Cambardella and Elliott, 1994). For these reasons, the amount, composition, and behavior of POM can vary greatly depending on land use, management practices and pedoclimatic conditions (Chan, 2001; Marriott and Wander, 2006; Li *et al.*, 2013; Curtin *et al.*, 2019). In her review on SOM fractions and their relevance to soil functions, Wander (2004) stated that given its heterogeneous biochemical composition and the sensitivity of its kinetics to resource quality and physical factors impacting its decay, it would not be safe to assume that C content of the POM fraction is an effective measure of the active soil organic C pool in all environments.

Fine mineral-associated organic matter

The fine-MAOM is usually operationally defined as the fraction of SOM that is smaller than 50–63 μ m, and heavier than 1.6–1.85 g cm⁻³, due to its association with mineral particles (Lavallee *et al.*, 2019; Figure 4 -1). It represents the largest proportion of soil organic C in

arable soils and has a much narrower C:N ratio (12.6 ± 4.7) than the POM (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2019). The C included within the fine-MAOM mainly consists of microscopic organic fragments or molecules closely associated to mineral surfaces of silt and clay sizes (Lavallee et al., 2019) by strong chemical bondings, such as ligand exchange, cation bridging, and Van der Waals forces (Mikutta et al., 2007; Kögel-Knabner et al., 2008). Nitrogen-rich organic molecules, such as microbial proteins and cell wall components (amino-sugars) are thought to play a major role in fine-MAOM formation (Rumpel et al., 2010; Miltner et al., 2012; Kallenbach et al., 2015; Ludwig et al., 2015; Kallenbach et al., 2016; Kopittke et al., 2018) due to their strong affinity with mineral surfaces (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke et al., 2018). These organo-mineral associations can be further stabilized in soil through their occlusion within aggregates, which limits their accessibility to decomposers and/or catalytic enzymes (Dungait et al., 2012). Because of these stabilization mechanisms, fine-MAOM is considered as the core of stable C in soil (Wiesmeier et al., 2019). In fact, despite the simple chemical composition of the occluded organic matter (Kleber et al., 2011), fine-MAOM typically has a much lower turnover rate in soil than the POM (Von Lützow et al., 2007; Poeplau et al., 2018).

According to recent models of SOM formation, the biochemical composition of organic inputs is of particular importance for fine-MAOM formation (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). In fact, since fine-MAOM is mostly comprised of microbial by-products, labile organic inputs with a low amount of structural components and a high N content result in a greater microbial use efficiency, which is thought to favor fine-MAOM formation (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). Apart from the chemical composition of the organic amendment, all environmental and biological factors that affect microbial use efficiency are also thought to influence fine-MAOM formation (Schmidt *et al.*, 2011). For instance, increasing N availability in soil could also favor microbial anabolism by shifting the C:N ratio of organic matter closer to meeting microbial nitrogen demand, therefore fostering the formation of fine-MAOM (Gillespie *et al.*, 2014; Foeplau *et al.*, 2019).

Pathways of soil organic matter formation

Recent findings suggest that SOM is formed via two distinct pathways following the addition of plant residues to the soil (Cotrufo et al., 2015). Early in the decomposition process, watersoluble, non-structural plant compounds are released in soil and/or efficiently incorporation into the microbial biomass, resulting in the leaching of dissolved organic matter (DOM) of plant and microbial origin (Cotrufo et al., 2015; Haddix et al., 2016). The incorporation of these simple organic compounds within the fine-MAOM fraction is described as the *biochemical pathway* (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2015). By contrast, the *physical pathway* happens when coarse plant fragments are gradually decomposed and incorporated into the soil matrix (Cotrufo et al., 2015). The microbial processing of these fragments and their gradual conversion to microbial by-products could eventually lead to their occlusion within aggregates and ultimately foster the formation of fine-MAOM (Golchin et al., 1994a; Grandy and Neff, 2008; Lehmann and Kleber, 2015). Recent findings, however, suggest that the formation of POM and fine-MAOM are two distinct and independent processes in soils, and that the physical pathway of soil organic matter formation does not result in the formation of significant amounts of fine-MAOM (Haddix et al., 2016; Fulton-Smith and Cotrufo, 2019; Haddix et al., 2020). However, these emergent concepts of SOM formation processes must still be tested under different land use, ecosystems and also under longer time frames.

Soil as a nitrogen source

Dividing SOM into POM and fine-MAOM seems to be simple and efficient, as these fractions are fundamentally different in terms of their formation, persistence, and functioning (Lavallee *et al.*, 2019), at least with regards to the C cycle. However, it might not allow to properly integrate soil functions related to the N cycle. In fact, the POM is a C-rich fraction that usually acts as a sink for N (Robinson, 1967; Whalen *et al.*, 2000; Fornara *et al.*, 2011; Diochon *et al.*, 2016) to meet the stoichiometric constraints of the microbial biomass. The fine-MAOM, in turn, contains large amounts of N, but these N-rich organic molecules are assumed to play a major role in long-term C stabilization in soil (Von Lützow *et al.*, 2007). This would imply that the fine-MAOM is also a major N sink. If both the POM and the fine-MAOM are N sinks, how then, can soil be such an important N source for plants?

Most research on soil fertility has focused on the formation of inorganic N forms in soil via the depolymerization of plant detritus by soil microbes (Schimel and Bennett, 2004). It has been argued that even if the POM contains small amounts of N, as compared to its C content, the extensive microbial processing of POM could eventually lead to N mineralization (e.g. Bu *et al.*, 2015; St. Luce *et al.* 2016). The efficiency with which plant material addition to soil results in N mineralization or immobilization would therefore depend on the biochemical characteristics of the input and C:N imbalances between the organic input and soil microbial community (Hassink *et al.*, 1993; Mooshammer *et al.*, 2014). This likely explains why POM was associated to soil N supply capacity with limited success, since the parameters affecting this relationship are site dependent (Ros, 2012; Bu *et al.*, 2015).

Some authors also suggested that although fine-MAOM is usually considered as a stable fraction, it could nevertheless be the main source of potentially mineralizable N in soil (Sollins et al., 1984; Whalen et al., 2000; Bimüller et al., 2014). However, the scientific evidence supporting this hypothesis is mainly derived from incubation experiments of soil samples that had been profoundly disturbed and fractionated prior to incubations. These manipulations therefore likely exposed organic matter in the fine-MAOM that was initially physically protected and stabilized within larger aggregates. Indeed, Sollins et al. (1984) and Bimüller et al. (2014) found that the sum of the N mineralized by the fractions during these incubations was considerably greater than the amount of N mineralized in the bulk soil during the same period. Therefore, even if most of the organic matter comprised in the fine-MAOM is N-rich and biochemically labile (Kleber et al., 2011), a substantial part of this labile N in the bulk soil is physically inaccessible to soil microbes, making it unavailable as a potential source of N (Darrouzet-Nardi and Weintraub, 2014). More recently, however, Jilling et al. (2018) proposed that the fine-MOAM of the rhizosphere could be a significant source of bioavailable N since root exudates can foster microbial activities and the mobilization of fine-MAOM N in the root vicinity.

To date, isolating a specific and measurable organic matter fraction that can be related to the soil N supply capacity remains a challenge (Luce *et al.*, 2011). Many studies demonstrated close relationships between total SOM and/or total soil N content and soil mineralizable N

using regression statistics (Booth et al., 2005; Dessureault-Rompré et al., 2010; Ros et al., 2011). However, the potential drivers of these relationships vary considerably among studies, limiting their general applicability to predict the soil N supply capacity (Luce *et al.*, 2011). In the last decades, many attempts have been made to find a measurable and functionally relevant soil fraction for predicting soil N supply capacity. A meta-analysis showed that most of these fractions (POM-N, hot water extractable N, etc.) were either worse or similar to total N in predicting soil N supply (Ros, 2012). In a review on the subject, Ros (2012) stressed the fact that regression statistics were not well suited for the purpose of predicting soil N supply capacity and that there was a strong need for research that explores the biochemical basis of the relationships between SOM fractions and soil N supply capacity based on a mechanistic approach.

The coarse-MAOM, an underrated fraction in SOM models What is coarse-MAOM?

The POM is often conceptualized as a "physically uncomplexed" soil organic matter fraction (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006). Nevertheless, it is comprised of a continuum of organic components ranging from light and undecomposed plant materials to heavier and microbially-enriched coarse organic fragments (Tisdall and Oades, 1982). Only a few authors used density fractionation to separate the light and heavy fractions of the POM. They generally found that the light fraction of POM (LF) mainly comprised poorly processed organic fragments of plant origin (Jastrow *et al.*, 2000; Maillard *et al.*, 2015; Figure 4 -2), which usually features a wide C:N ratio ranging from 17 to 36 (Jastrow *et al.*, 2000; Hai *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2013) and is rich in plant carbohydrates (Li *et al.*, 2013).

When plant litter enters the soil, it serves as a readily decomposable substrate for soil organisms (Alvarez *et al.*, 1998). As decomposition progresses, those coarse plant fragments comprised in the LF become enriched in nitrogen due to the proliferation of microorganisms colonizing the decaying tissues (Foster, 1988). Since N-rich organic molecules of microbial origin show a strong affinity to mineral surfaces (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke et al., 2018), these coarse decaying organic particles eventually become coated by fine mineral particles (Tisdall and Oades, 1979; Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Waters and Oades, 1991; Maillard et al., 2015).

This results in the formation of coarse complexes comprised of mineral-associated macroorganic matter (coarse-MAOM) (Figure 4 -2). This SOM fraction is enriched in microbial amino-sugars (Li *et al.*, 2013) and typically displays a much narrower C:N ratio (9 to 20) than LF (17 to 36) (DeGryze *et al.*, 2004; Hai *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2013). This clearly indicates that the LF and the coarse-MAOM fractions are two very distinct fractions which should be studied separately. Here, we propose that the coarse-MAOM fraction has been underrated in past literature and may have a key role in both C and N cycling in soil.

Coarse-MAOM and soil carbon cycling

The LF is closely related to the amount of plant residues returned to soil (Boone, 1994). The coarse-MAOM, however, could be more relevant to understand the soil C cycle in the early stages of organic residues—soil mineral matrix interactions, as a result of colonization of fresh organic matter fragments by soil microbes (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Golchin *et al.*, 1994b) (Figure 4 -3). The coating of this coarse organic matter with fine mineral particles and the further incorporation of these coarse complexes within macroaggregates through the action of roots and fungal hyphae would physically protect C comprised in coarse-MAOM (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Golchin *et al.*, 1997). Supporting this hypothesis, Jastrow *et al.* (2000) found that, under soil conditions stimulating microbial activity, the LF turned over rapidly whereas the coarse-MAOM tended to accumulate in soil.

Even if these coarse-MAOM complexes are thought to have a shorter residence time in soil than the fine-MAOM (Wander et al. 2004; Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008), increases in their content in soil could still influence C stocks due to its high reactivity to management practices. In fact, Lambie *et al.* (2019) found that decadal changes in soil C and N content across 46 different sites were mostly explained by changes in free and occluded organomineral complexes of 50 to 250 µm in size. Furthermore, according to many SOM models, the coarse-MAOM could eventually evolve to fine and stable MAOM complexes (Oades, 1984; Six *et al.*, 2004; Robertson *et al.*, 2019) through continued microbial decomposition (Figure 4 -3). As discussed earlier, recent findings, however, suggest that this may not be the main pathway of fine-MAOM formation in soil (Haddix *et al.*, 2020), which would

preferentially be formed from soluble plant inputs (Haddix et al., 2016), directly or through continued microbial processing (Liang et al., 2018).

Coarse-MAOM and the nitrogen cycle

Based on the mechanisms discussed above, the agents involved in stabilization of macroorganic matter within coarse-MAOM thus include 1) the coating of coarse decaying material by mineral particles and 2) their inclusion within macroaggregates through the actions of microbial polysaccharides, roots and fungal hyphae, which are all considered as transient and temporary stabilization agents (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Golchin *et al.*, 1997). This transient stabilization in soil is what allows this coarse-MAOM to gradually become enriched in N following the accumulation of microbial by-products within the complex. In a decadal timeframe, however, the N-rich organic compounds comprised in the coarse-MAOM most probably end up being released in soil, and eventually mineralized. In fact, the eventual degradation of the organic biding agents involved in their stabilization (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Six *et al.*, 2004) and/or the effect of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles on the peripheral structures of macroaggregates (Denef *et al.*, 2001; Zaher *et al.*, 2005) would eventually result in the disruption of these coarse, transient and N-enriched organo-mineral complexes (Figure 4 -3). We therefore propose that the coarse-MAOM fraction could play a central role in soil N supply function.

As mentioned earlier, there has only been a few studies that explicitly considered the coarse-MAOM fractions and therefore factors driving its dynamics are still poorly known. However, results from studies using other fractionation procedures can provide insight and support to its relevance and importance in N cycling. In an incubation study with 15N-labelled crop residues added to two soils with contrasting texture, St-Luce *et al.* (2014) studied labile organic N transformation in soil. They found that the 15N content of the LF increased rapidly after plant residue addition to soil, but subsequently decreased throughout the study. Conversely, the 15N content of the POM (that comprises the coarse-MAOM fraction) increased in the first months of the incubation and subsequently decreased. This decrease in N concentration of the POM corresponded with mineral 15N increase in the soils, suggesting that coarse SOM fractions could be an important source of mineral N in agricultural soils. Supporting theses results, St-Luce *et al.* (2016) demonstrated, in a multiple stepwise regression analysis that soil net N mineralization was more closely related to the biochemical composition of POM than to soil properties. Similarly, Bosshard *et al.* (2008) studied the fate of 15N-labelled sheep feces and urine into physically separated SOM fractions and found that small macroaggregates, that are mainly composed of coarse-MAOM (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Oades and Waters, 1991b), were the principal sink of 15N in soil. They also observed that during the dispersion of soil aggregates, 27% of soil total N was lost, and that is was mainly accounted for by the loss of 15N accumulated in these small complexes.

Even though the coarse-MAOM represents a relatively small proportion of total SOM, these results support the hypothesis that short-term dynamics of coarse SOM fractions play a central role in soil N cycling (Wander, 2004; St-Luce et al. 2014). Nyiraneza et al. (2010a) reported that, after 28 years, soil total N increased by 20% with manure applications, as compared to soils without manure, and by 50% if manure application was combined with inclusion of perennial forage grasses in the crop rotation (Figure 4 -4). In the same systems, they reported that the soil N supply capacity was disproportionately increased with 200% increase with manure and 400% increase if manure was combined with inclusion of perennial grasses in the rotation. It can therefore be hypothesized that the disproportionate increase in soil N supply capacity reflected an uneven accumulation of N in these soils and that N accumulated over 28 years contributed significantly more to N supply capacity that the rest of soil N reserve. Interestingly, a few studies highlighted a preferential accumulation of C and N in the coarse-MAOM fraction when animal manures were applied to soil (Bosshard, et al. 2008, Hai et al. 2010, Maillard et al. 2015, Samson et al. 2020). Many others found a significant decrease in the C:N ratio of these SOM fractions when manures were applied to soil (Aoyama et al., 1999; Marriott and Wander, 2006). We therefore hypothesize that the soil N supply capacity may be dependent on the preferential allocation of N into the coarse-MAOM fraction, that provides fertility though its relatively fast turnover, and that it would be the main driver of the N legacy effect typically observed in manured soils (Schröder et al., 2007; Nyiraneza et al., 2010b; Webb et al. 2013; Cavalli et al., 2014; Riley, 2016).

The coarse-MAOM fraction only accounts for about 3 to 11 % of total soil N in agricultural soils (Li *et al.* 2013; Maillard *et al.* 2015; Samson et al. 2020). However, considering an average turnover rate of < 10 years for coarse and labile SOM fractions (Gregorich *et al.*, 2006; Von Lützow *et al.*, 2007), it can be estimated that at least 10% of this fraction could turn over in a year. Using data from Samson et al. (2020), we calculated that if 10% of the coarse-MAOM fraction turns over in a year, it would be sufficient to supply 56 to 97 kg N per hectare in the top 30 cm of soil. These values are well in the range of N supply capacity reported by Nyiraneza *et al.*, (2010a) under relatively similar pedoclimatic conditions.

An integrative framework

Our framework aims at describing how the coarse-MAOM may act as a pivotal fraction for N supply soil functions and how it integrates in C stabilization models. It also gives a framework to expand our capacity to explain how agricultural management practices can influence the partitioning of SOM within measurable SOM fractions with distinct functional relevance in agricultural soils and therefore increase our mechanistic understanding of the C and N cycles in agroecosystems. Our framework focuses on the topsoil layer only. Although the subsoil makes a great contribution to soil C stocks (Harrison *et al.*, 2011), SOM formation and stabilization processes in deeper soil layers are different (Poirier *et al.* 2020) and still relatively poorly understood as compared to those in the topsoil (Rumpel and Kögel-Knabner, 2011).

Framework description

When fresh organic matter is added to soil, water-soluble, non-structural compounds are released and/or rapidly incorporated into the microbial biomass, resulting of subsequent migration of dissolved organic matter (DOM) of plant and/or microbial origin to deeper soil layers (Cotrufo et al., 2015; Haddix et al., 2016) (Figure 4 -5). The DOM is then thought to be rapidly and directly incorporated within fine-MAOM complexes and stabilized in the long-term, via the *biochemical pathway* (Haddix *et al.*, 2016; Haddix *et al.*, 2020). Its fate is therefore regulated by potential interactions with reactive soil minerals.

In parallel, organic matter that enters the soil as coarse organic fragments is thought to evolve through the physical pathway, as described by Cotrufo et al. (2015) (Figure 4 -5). Organic fragments that physically enter the soil are rapidly colonized by soil microbes since they represent a readily-available source of energy for microorganisms. Microbes feeding on this fresh LF multiply, and produce mucilage and other metabolites. This favors the coating of these organic cores with fine and reactive mineral particles (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Golchin et al., 1994a), resulting in coarse-MAOM complexes. This implies that the formation of coarse-MAOM from fresh organic matter entering the soil matrix is regulated by the biochemical lability of the input as well as environmental factors affecting microbial use efficiency. Nitrogen-rich organic matter with a low content of structural compounds is thought to optimize microbial use efficiency (Cotrufo et al., 2013) and, thus, would help create and stabilize these coarse-MAOM complexes in the short-to-medium term (1 to 50 years) (Cotrufo et al., 2019). Occlusion of these coarse-MAOM complexes within larger aggregates through the action of organic agents such as polysaccharides, roots and fungal hyphae could increase their residence time in soil (Elliott, 1986; Oades and Waters, 1991a). However, as decomposition proceeds within these coarse-MAOM complexes, the organic cores are gradually converted to microbial products and therefore become enriched in N. Decomposition of the organic cores eventually renders the coarse-MAOM unstable because microbial activity declines as the organic cores become less palatable or exhausted (Golchin et al., 1994a). Wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles can also lead to the disruption of the macro-aggregates containing coarse-MAOM complexes and of these complexes themselves. These factors therefore favor the release of N-rich molecules and their subsequent mineralisation in the soil, which could contribute to soil fertility. Following the disruption of these coarse-MOAM complexes, the fine mineral particles that coated the cores are separated, but some of their close associations with microbial products can persist in soil, evolve as fine-MAOM complexes, and even facilitate the subsequent accumulation of organic particles on these mineral surfaces (Kopittke et al., 2018).

Influence of soil texture and mineralogy

Since organo-mineral associations play a dominant role in SOM stabilization, soil texture and mineralogy exert a strong influence on SOM cycling. Soils that contain high amounts of amorphous iron and aluminum oxides and/or clay minerals are thought to favor the formation of fine-MAOM complexes (Kiem and Kögel-Knabner, 2002; Kögel-Knabner *et al.*, 2008; Haddix *et al.*, 2020). These reactive minerals not only favor DOM sorption when high quality organic matter is added to the soil (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013), but they can also further promote the stability of fine-MAOM complexes by favoring their occlusion within aggregates (Tisdall and Oades, 1982; Jastrow, 1996; Christensen, 2001; Six *et al.*, 2004; Schweizer *et al.*, 2019). By contrast, coarse-textured soils with a lower amount of reactive minerals may thus be less likely to stabilize the soluble fraction of organic inputs within fine-MAOM complexes (Samson *et al.* 2020), which can result in a lower potential for long-term C stabilization in the topsoil.

Coarse-textured soils therefore usually contain a greater proportion of total C and N within the coarse SOM fractions (Sorensen, 1981; Liang *et al.*, 2003; Grandy *et al.*, 2009). These coarse fractions of SOM are also thought to have a higher turn over rate in coarse-textured soils, since they are less efficiently stabilized within aggregates (Oades and Waters, 1991a; Six *et al.*, 2000; Christensen, 2001) (Figure 4 -5). This usually results in a faster mineralization rate of fresh organic inputs (Sorensen, 1981; Colman and Schimel, 2013) and a higher percentage of organic N mineralized in these soils (Sorensen, 1981; Hassink *et al.*, 1993; Sørensen and Jensen, 1995; Webb *et al.*, 2013). However, the amounts of C and N present in the coarse-MAOM fraction (absolute pool size) may be more important than the proportion of total C and N present as coarse-MAOM (relative pool size) in determining soil fertility.

Influence of agricultural management practices

The SOM dynamics are particularly challenging to predict in arable soils given the wide array of management practices that influence SOM cycling. For instance, tillage is thought to preferentially degrade coarse SOM fractions (Grandy and Neff, 2008). In fact, tillage can destroy temporary aggregate-stabilizing agents, such as roots and fungal hyphae, and increase the aeration status of the soil, thereby fostering the oxidation of other transient aggregate stabilizing agents such as polysaccharides. This promotes macroaggregate disruption, and exposes coarse-MAOM complexes that were initially physically protected

within aggregates (Grandy and Robertson, 2007) (Figure 4 -5). This results in a faster oxidation rate of coarse-MAOM complexes and favors N release in soil. Tillage could therefore increase soil fertility in the short term. In the longer term, however, repeated tillage may reduce the coarse-MAOM pool size and eventually reduce the labile soil N reserve and soil fertility. Consistent with this theory, Balesdent *et al.* (2000) found, in a literature review, that mineralizable N was always and sometimes up to two-fold greater in untilled than tilled soils.

In arable cropping systems, nutrient inputs also influence SOM cycling. The addition of organic matter, such as animal manure, compost and crop residues has proven to be an efficient way to increase SOM (Gosling et al., 2013). Even if the cumulative amount of organic matter returned to soil has been proposed as the single most determinant factor (Maillard and Angers, 2014), the biochemical quality of the input could be of particular importance to the partitioning of this fresh organic matter within the different SOM fractions. As compared to animal manures (low lignin:N ratio; high proportion of soluble C and N), low quality amendments such as mature crop residues (high lignin:N ratio; low proportion of soluble C and N), are thought to provide less potential for fine-MAOM formation and longterm SOM stabilization through the *biochemical pathway* (Samson et al. 2020). Similarly, when the inputs contribute to SOM formation through the physical pathway, mature crop residues are used with a relatively low microbial use efficiency, which could result in a slow conversion of LF to coarse-MAOM (Figure 4 -5). Conversely, high quality organic amendments that contain high amounts of labile and soluble organic compounds, such as animal manures, could foster the formation of fine-MAOM through the biochemical pathway, especially in non-saturated fine-textured soils (Castellano et al., 2015). Furthermore, evidence showed that animal manures have little effect on the LF, but C and N from these inputs are rather directly incorporated within the coarse-MAOM fraction (Maillard et al., 2015). Samson et al. (2020) attributed this finding to the concomitant presence of coarse organic particles (undigested fibers and beddings) and organic N in the manure. As protein-N is believed to have high affinity for mineral surfaces (Kleber et al., 2011; Knicker, 2011; Kopittke et al., 2018), the presence of these N-rich molecules present in manure likely explains (i) the extensive coating of coarse organic fragments with fine

mineral particles (Maillard et al., 2015), and (ii) the propensity of animal manure to amplify the accumulation of C and N in coarse-MAOM, irrespective of soil texture (Maillard et al., 2015; Samson et al. 2020).

The fact that C and N from animal manures are directly incorporated within this relatively labile SOM fraction could explain the manure legacy effect typically observed in manured soils (Schröder *et al.*, 2005; Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2010a; Webb et al. 2013; Riley, 2016). However, animal manures can have distinct effects on C and N kinetics in soil as a function of their biochemical characteristics (Morvan *et al.*, 2006). For instance, liquid swine manure typically features a relatively low dry matter content and lignin:N ratio coupled with a high concentration of soluble organic compounds (Morvan and Nicolardot, 2009). This could result in a limited effect on C and N content of the coarse-MAOM fraction in the topsoil (Samson et al. 2020). By contrast, poultry and dairy manure contain high amounts of N-enriched and partly decomposed coarse organic fragments (Morvan *et al.*, 2006; He *et al.*, 2014), which would preferentially favor coarse-MAOM, and eventually fine-MAOM formation in the topsoil (Maillard *et al.* 2015, Samson *et al.* 2020).

As compared to organic nutrient sources, the positive effect of inorganic fertilizers on SOM content is variable (Luo *et al.*, 2018). Inorganic fertilizers can indeed increase SOM content through their effect on crop yields and consequent C input as compared to unfertilized arable soils (Ladha *et al.*, 2011). In fact, increasing crop yields could increase LF and even favor the conversion of fresh plant inputs to MAOM (Moran *et al.*, 2005; Gillespie *et al.*, 2014b) by helping microorganisms reach their stoichiometric constraints (Kirkby *et al.*, 2014; Mooshammer *et al.*, 2014). However, most studies show that inorganic nutrient sources are not as effective as organic nutrient sources to produce coarse and fine-MAOM (Christensen, 1988; Triberti *et al.*, 2008; Maillard *et al.*, 2015; Li *et al.*, 2018). In fact many studies showed that as compared to mineral fertilizers, animal manures significantly increased protein and protein-like content in soil (Gillespie *et al.*, 2014b; He *et al.*, 2014; Li *et al.*, 2018). This probably contributes more readily to the formation of coarse and fine-MAOM given the strong affinity of N-rich organic compounds with mineral surfaces (Knicker, 2011; Kopittke *et al.*, 2018).

Summary, perspectives and challenges

In the quest for finding the best strategies to sequester carbon in agricultural soils to mitigate climate change, emphasis is generally put on enhancing C content of fine and stable MAOM complexes. However, this strategy would imply the immobilization of large amounts of N (Van Groenigen *et al.*, 2017) and would not necessarily be possible in all soil types (Samson et al. 2020a, 2020b). To sustain both C storage and N supply functions of soil, the coarse-MAOM fraction must also be fueled. Even if the coarse-MAOM fraction is not the largest, nor the most stable fraction of SOM, it can still result in rapid and significant changes in soil C content (Lambie *et al.*, 2019). Since a significant proportion of this N-enriched SOM fraction could turn over every year, increasing its SOM content would also contribute to increase soil fertility. Another advantage of targeting this fraction to increase SOM content is that, as opposed to the fine-MAOM, the coarse-MAOM fraction theoretically has no saturation limit and can be increased in both coarse and fine-textured soils (Lavallee *et al.*, 2019).

Increasing the labile SOM fractions in agricultural soils is, however, subject to increase the risk of nutrient loss to the environment, especially in cropping systems where the soil is left bare at some periods (e.g. post-harvest without cover crops). Because of the frequent lack of timing between main crop requirements and nutrient released by the soil, large quantities of SOM and nutrients can be lost from the system (Dinnes *et al.*, 2002). This is inevitably favored by the global increase in acreage under arable crops at the expanse of acreage under perennial plant covers, as studies show a much greater accumulation of SOM after labile organic matter application under forages, as compared to monoculture (Nyiraneza *et al.*, 2010a; Maillard *et al.*, 2016). The best way to promote climate-smart and resilient agroecosystems would be to develop strategies that efficiently fuel both the coarse and fine-MAOM fractions, while limiting environmental losses from the coarse-MAOM. Strategies could include the use of cover crops, rotations with perennial plants and/or a better synchronisation between soil nutrient supply and plants needs.
However, further investigations will be required to validate the specific role of the coarse-MAOM fraction in soil fertility and to develop a standardized and reproductible fractionation method. In fact, it must be recognised that although widely utilized, the physical fractionation of SOM can create artefacts in the yielded SOM fractions and be especially sensitive to the method (Poeplau and Don, 2013; Poeplau *et al.* 2018). Furthermore, it has been argued that fractionation methods yield SOM fractions that are not necessarily homogeneous in term of turnover rates, especially when compared among different systems (von Lützow *et al.* 2007). Further work will then be needed to assess the effect of soil, climatic and management factors, on coarse-MAOM formation and turnover rate. Ultimately, this could help to further improve predictive models that integrate C and N cycles. This framework is proposed to stimulate research on the subject and improve our mechanistic understanding of SOM cycling and soil fertility in agricultural systems.

Conclusion

We revisited state-of-the-art literature and the latest knowledge breakthroughs in SOM dynamics to provide a simple integrative framework of C and N cycling in agricultural soils. This framework considers the coarse-MAOM fraction as a functionally relevant and pivotal fraction for both C storage and N supply soil functions. Agricultural management practices, such as reduced tillage and manuring could favor the formation of coarse-MAOM in the topsoil and therefore contribute to long-term soil fertility. Ultimately, the maturing of these complexes could also foster the formation of fine-MAOM complexes, and contribute to long-term C storage, especially in clay-rich soils. With this framework, we hope to stimulate research on the subject and attempt to integrate N cycling within a framework that was initially built on a mechanistic understanding of the biogeochemical processes involved in SOM formation and C stabilization. Further research will be needed to validate the relevance of the coarse-MAOM for N cycling and to better quantify the effect of pedoclimatic and management factors on its formation and turnover rate. Ultimately, this could help to develop a model that improves the assessment of management and policy action on sustainability of arable soils and help optimize their ecosystem services.

References

- Achard, F.K. 1786. Chemische Untersuchung des Torfs. Crell's Chemical Annals 2, 391–403.
- Alvarez, C., Alvarez, R., Grigera, M., Lavado, R., 1998. Associations between organic matter fractions and the active soil microbial biomass. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 30, 767-773.
- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 86, 225-229.
- Aoyama, M., Angers, D., N'Dayegamiye, A., 1999. Particulate and mineral-associated organic matter in water-stable aggregates as affected by mineral fertilizer and manure applications. Canadian Journal Of Soil Science 79, 295-302.
- Baisden, W., Amundson, R., Cook, A., Brenner, D., 2002. Turnover and storage of C and N in five density fractions from California annual grassland surface soils. Global Biogeochemical Cycles 16, 61-64.
- Balesdent, J., Chenu, C., Balabane, M., 2000. Relationship of soil organic matter dynamics to physical protection and tillage. Soil and tillage research 53, 215-230.
- Bertrand, I., Viaud, V.r., Daufresne, T., Pellerin, S., Recous, S., 2019. Stoichiometry constraints challenge the potential of agroecological practices for the soil C storage. A review. Agronomy for Sustainable Development : Official journal of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) 39.
- Bimüller, C., Mueller, C.W., von Lützow, M., Kreyling, O., Kölbl, A., Haug, S., Schloter, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2014. Decoupled carbon and nitrogen mineralization in soil particle size fractions of a forest topsoil. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 78, 263-273.
- Bingham, A.H., Cotrufo, M.F., 2016. Organic nitrogen storage in mineral soil: implications for policy and management. Science of the Total Environment 551, 116-126.
- Boone, R.D., 1994. Light-fraction soil organic matter: origin and contribution to net nitrogen mineralization. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 26, 1459-1468.
- Bosshard, C., Frossard, E., Dubois, D., Mader, P., Manolov, I., Oberson, A., 2008. Incorporation of nitrogen-15-labeled amendments into physically separated soil organic matter fractions. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 72, 949-959.
- Bu, R., Lu, J., Ren, T., Liu, B., Li, X., Cong, R., 2015. Particulate organic matter affects soil nitrogen mineralization under two crop rotation systems. PLoS One 10, e0143835.
- Cambardella, C., Elliott, E., 1992. Particulate soil organic-matter changes across a grassland cultivation sequence. Soil science society of America journal 56, 777-783.
- Cambardella, C., Elliott, E., 1994. Carbon and nitrogen dynamics of soil organic matter fractions from cultivated grassland soils. Soil Science Society of America Journal 58, 123-130.
- Castellano, M.J., Mueller, K.E., Olk, D.C., Sawyer, J.E., Six, J., 2015. Integrating plant litter quality, soil organic matter stabilization, and the carbon saturation concept. Global change biology 21, 3200-3209.
- Cavalli, D., Bechini, L., Gallina, P.M., 2014. Measuring and modeling soil carbon respiration following repeated dairy slurry application. Soil Science Society of America Journal 78, 1414-1425.
- Chan, K., 2001. Soil particulate organic carbon under different land use and management. Soil use and management 17, 217-221.

- Christensen, B.T., 1988. Effects of animal manure and mineral fertilizer on the total carbon and nitrogen contents of soil size fractions. Biology and Fertility of Soils 5, 304-307.
- Christensen, B.T., 2001. Physical fractionation of soil and structural and functional complexity in organic matter turnover. European Journal of Soil Science 52, 345-353.
- Colman, B.P., Schimel, J.P., 2013. Drivers of microbial respiration and net N mineralization at the continental scale. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 60, 65-76.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Ranalli, M.G., Haddix, M.L., Six, J., Lugato, E., 2019. Soil carbon storage informed by particulate and mineral-associated organic matter. Nature Geoscience, 1-6.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Soong, J.L., Horton, A.J., Campbell, E.E., Haddix, M.L., Wall, D.H., Parton, W.J., 2015. Formation of soil organic matter via biochemical and physical pathways of litter mass loss. Nature Geoscience 8, 776.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Wallenstein, M.D., Boot, C.M., Denef, K., Paul, E., 2013. The M icrobial E fficiency-M atrix S tabilization (MEMS) framework integrates plant litter decomposition with soil organic matter stabilization: do labile plant inputs form stable soil organic matter? Global Change Biology 19, 988-995.
- Curtin, D., Beare, M.H., Weiwen, Q., Sharp, J., 2019. Does particulate organic matter fraction meet the criteria for a model soil organic matter pool? Pedosphere 29, 195-203.
- Darrouzet-Nardi, A., Weintraub, M.N., 2014. Evidence for spatially inaccessible labile N from a comparison of soil core extractions and soil pore water lysimetry. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 73, 22-32.
- DeGryze, S., Six, J., Paustian, K., Morris, S.J., Paul, E.A., Merckx, R., 2004. Soil organic carbon pool changes following land-use conversions. Global Change Biology 10, 1120-1132.
- Denef, K., Six, J., Bossuyt, H., Frey, S.D., Elliott, E.T., Merckx, R., Paustian, K., 2001. Influence of dry–wet cycles on the interrelationship between aggregate, particulate organic matter, and microbial community dynamics. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 33, 1599-1611.
- Dinnes, D.L., Karlen, D.L., Jaynes, D.B., Kaspar, T.C., Hatfield, J.L., Colvin, T.S., Cambardella, C.A., 2002. Nitrogen management strategies to reduce nitrate leaching in tile-drained Midwestern soils. Agronomy journal 94, 153-171.
- Diochon, A., Gillespie, A., Ellert, B., Janzen, H., Gregorich, E., 2016. Recovery and dynamics of decomposing plant residue in soil: an evaluation of three fractionation methods. European Journal of Soil Science 67, 196-205.
- Dungait, J.A., Hopkins, D.W., Gregory, A.S., Whitmore, A.P., 2012. Soil organic matter turnover is governed by accessibility not recalcitrance. Global Change Biology 18, 1781-1796.
- Elliott, E., 1986. Aggregate structure and carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus in native and cultivated soils 1. Soil science society of America journal 50, 627-633.
- Elliott, E., Cambardella, C., 1991. Physical separation of soil organic matter. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment 34, 407-419.
- Fornara, D.A., Bardgett, R., Steinbeiss, S., Zak, D.R., Gleixner, G., Tilman, D., 2011. Plant effects on soil N mineralization are mediated by the composition of multiple soil organic fractions. Ecological research 26, 201-208.
- Foster, R., 1988. Microenvironments of soil microorganisms. Biology and fertility of soils 6, 189-203.

- Fulton-Smith, S., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Pathways of soil organic matter formation from above and belowground inputs in a Sorghum bicolor bioenergy crop. GCB Bioenergy 11, 971-987.
- Gärdenäs, A.I., Ågren, G.I., Bird, J.A., Clarholm, M., Hallin, S., Ineson, P., Kätterer, T., Knicker, H., Nilsson, S.I., Näsholm, T., 2011. Knowledge gaps in soil carbon and nitrogen interactions–from molecular to global scale. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 702-717.
- Gillespie, A., Diochon, A., Ma, B., Morrison, M., Kellman, L., Walley, F., Regier, T., Chevrier, D., Dynes, J., Gregorich, E., 2014a. Nitrogen input quality changes the biochemical composition of soil organic matter stabilized in the fine fraction: a long-term study. Biogeochemistry 117, 337-350.
- Gillespie, A., Diochon, A., Ma, B., Morrison, M., Kellman, L., Walley, F., Regier, T., Chevrier, D., Dynes, J., Gregorich, E., 2014b. Nitrogen input quality changes the biochemical composition of soil organic matter stabilized in the fine fraction: a long-term study. Biogeochemistry 117, 337-350.
- Golchin, A., Baldock, J., Oades, J., 1997. A model linking organic matter decomposition, chemistry, and aggregate dynamics. Soil processes and the carbon cycle. CRC Press, Boca Raton, 245-266.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J., Skjemstad, J., Clarke, P., 1994a. Soil structure and carbon cycling. Soil Research 32, 1043-1068.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J., Skjemstad, J., Clarke, P., 1994b. Study of free and occluded particulate organic matter in soils by solid state 13C CP/MAS NMR spectroscopy and scanning electron microscopy. Soil Research 32, 285-309.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J., Skjemstad, J., Clarke, P., 1995. Structural and dynamic properties of soil organic-matter as reflected by 13C natural-abundance, pyrolysis mass-spectrometry and solid-state 13C NMR-spectroscopy in density fractions of an oxisol under forest and pasture. Soil Research 33, 59-76.
- Gosling, P., Parsons, N., Bending, G., 2013. What are the primary factors controlling the light fraction and particulate soil organic matter content of agricultural soils? Biology and Fertility of Soils 49, 1001-1014.
- Grandy, A.S., Neff, J.C., 2008. Molecular C dynamics downstream: the biochemical decomposition sequence and its impact on soil organic matter structure and function. Science of the Total Environment 404, 297-307.
- Grandy, A.S., Robertson, G.P., 2007. Land-use intensity effects on soil organic carbon accumulation rates and mechanisms. Ecosystems 10, 59-74.
- Grandy, A.S., Strickland, M.S., Lauber, C.L., Bradford, M.A., Fierer, N., 2009. The influence of microbial communities, management, and soil texture on soil organic matter chemistry. Geoderma 150, 278-286.
- Gregorich, E., Beare, M., McKim, U., Skjemstad, J., 2006. Chemical and biological characteristics of physically uncomplexed organic matter. Soil Science Society Of America Journal 70, 975-985.
- Haddix, M.L., Gregorich, E.G., Helgason, B.L., Janzen, H., Ellert, B.H., Cotrufo, M.F., 2020. Climate, carbon content, and soil texture control the independent formation and persistence of particulate and mineral-associated organic matter in soil. Geoderma 363, 114160.
- Haddix, M.L., Paul, E.A., Cotrufo, M.F., 2016. Dual, differential isotope labeling shows the preferential movement of labile plant constituents into mineral-bonded soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 22, 2301-2312.

- Hai, L., Li, X.G., Li, F.M., Suo, D.R., Guggenberger, G., 2010. Long-term fertilization and manuring effects on physically-separated soil organic matter pools under a wheat–wheat– maize cropping system in an arid region of China. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 42, 253-259.
- Harrison, R.B., Footen, P.W., Strahm, B.D., 2011. Deep soil horizons: contribution and importance to soil carbon pools and in assessing whole-ecosystem response to management and global change. Forest Science 57, 67-76
- Hassink, J., 1997. The capacity of soils to preserve organic C and N by their association with clay and silt particles. Plant and Soil 191, 77-87.
- Hassink, J., Bouwman, L.A., Zwart, K.B., Bloem, J., Brussaard, L., 1993. Relationships between soil texture, physical protection of organic matter, soil biota, and c and n mineralization in grassland soils. Geoderma 57, 105-128.
- He, Z., Olk, D.C., Waldrip, H.M., 2014. Soil amino compound and carbohydrate contents influenced by organic amendments. Applied Manure and Nutrient Chemistry for Sustainable Agriculture and Environment. Springer, pp. 69-82.
- Henderson, D.C., Ellert, B.H., Naeth, M.A., 2004. Utility of 13C for ecosystem carbon turnover estimation in grazed mixed grass prairie. Geoderma 119, 219-231.
- Fazhu, Z., Jiao, S., Chengjie, R., Di, K., Jian, D., Xinhui, H., Gaihe, Y., Yongzhong, F., Guangxin, R., 2015. Land use change influences soil C, N, and P stoichiometry under 'Grain-to-Green Program'in China. Scientific reports 5, 10195.
- Janzen, H.H., 2006. The soil carbon dilemma: Shall we hoard it or use it? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 38, 419-424.
- Jastrow, J., 1996. Soil aggregate formation and the accrual of particulate and mineralassociated organic matter. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 28, 665-676.
- Jastrow, J., Miller, R., Owensby, C., 2000. Long-term effects of elevated atmospheric CO2 on below-ground biomass and transformations to soil organic matter in grassland. Plant and Soil 224, 85-97.
- Jilling, A., Keiluweit, M., Contosta, A.R., Frey, S., Schimel, J., Schnecker, J., Smith, R.G., Tiemann, L., Grandy, A.S., 2018. Minerals in the rhizosphere: overlooked mediators of soil nitrogen availability to plants and microbes. Biogeochemistry 139, 103-122.
- Kallenbach, C., Grandy, A.S., 2011. Controls over soil microbial biomass responses to carbon amendments in agricultural systems: A meta-analysis. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment 144, 241-252.
- Kallenbach, C., Grandy, A.S., Frey, S., Diefendorf, A., 2015. Microbial physiology and necromass regulate agricultural soil carbon accumulation. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 91, 279-290.
- Kallenbach, C.M., Frey, S.D., Grandy, A.S., 2016. Direct evidence for microbial-derived soil organic matter formation and its ecophysiological controls. Nature communications 7, 13630.
- Kiem, R., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2002. Refractory organic carbon in particle-size fractions of arable soils II: organic carbon in relation to mineral surface area and iron oxides in fractions< 6 μm. Organic Geochemistry 33, 1699-1713.
- Kirkby, C.A., Richardson, A.E., Wade, L.J., Passioura, J.B., Batten, G.D., Blanchard, C., Kirkegaard, J.A., 2014. Nutrient availability limits carbon sequestration in arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 68, 402-409.

- Kleber, M., Lehmann, J., 2019. Humic substances extracted by alkali are invalid proxies for the dynamics and functions of organic matter in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Journal of Environmental Quality 48, 207-216.
- Kleber, M., Nico, P.S., Plante, A., Filley, T., Kramer, M., Swanston, C., Sollins, P., 2011. Old and stable soil organic matter is not necessarily chemically recalcitrant: implications for modeling concepts and temperature sensitivity. Global Change Biology 17, 1097-1107.
- Knicker, H., 2011. Soil organic N-An under-rated player for C sequestration in soils? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 1118-1129.
- Kögel-Knabner, I., Guggenberger, G., Kleber, M., Kandeler, E., Kalbitz, K., Scheu, S., Eusterhues, K., Leinweber, P., 2008. Organo-mineral associations in temperate soils: Integrating biology, mineralogy, and organic matter chemistry. Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science 171, 61-82.
- Kononova, M., 1966. Soil Organic Matter (Translat. Nowakowski TZ and Newman ACD). Pergamon Press, Oxford.
- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Ladha, J.K., Reddy, C.K., Padre, A.T., van Kessel, C., 2011. Role of nitrogen fertilization in sustaining organic matter in cultivated soils. Journal of Environmental Quality 40, 1756-1766.
- Lambie, S.M., Ghani, A., Mudge, P.L., Stevenson, B.A., 2019. Decadal Changes in Soil Organic Matter Due to Microaggregate and Hot Water Extractable Pools. Soil Science Society of America Journal 83, 78.
- Lavallee, J.M., Soong, J.L., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Conceptualizing soil organic matter into particulate and mineral-associated forms to address global change in the 21st century. Global change biology.
- Lehmann, J., Kleber, M., 2015. The contentious nature of soil organic matter. Nature 528, 60-68.
- Li, C., Zhao, L., Sun, P., Zhao, F., Kang, D., Yang, G., Han, X., Feng, Y., Ren, G., 2016. Deep soil C, N, and P stocks and stoichiometry in response to land use patterns in the loess hilly region of China. PloS one 11, e0159075.
- Li, J., Wen, Y., Li, X., Li, Y., Yang, X., Lin, Z., Song, Z., Cooper, J.M., Zhao, B., 2018. Soil labile organic carbon fractions and soil organic carbon stocks as affected by long-term organic and mineral fertilization regimes in the North China Plain. Soil and Tillage Research 175, 281-290.
- Li, X.G., Chen, Z.M., Li, X.H., Ma, Q., Lin, Y., 2013. Chemical characteristics of physically separated soil organic matter fractions in contrasting arable soils. Soil Science 178, 128-137.
- Liang, B., McConkey, B., Schoenau, J., Curtin, D., Campbell, C., Moulin, A., Lafond, G., Brandt, S., Wang, H., 2003. Effect of tillage and crop rotations on the light fraction organic carbon and carbon mineralization in Chernozemic soils of Saskatchewan. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 83, 65-72.
- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., 2011. Nitrogen dynamics and indices to predict soil nitrogen supply in humid temperate soils. Advances in agronomy. Elsevier, pp. 55-102.

- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., 2016. Net nitrogen mineralization enhanced with the addition of nitrogen-rich particulate organic matter. Geoderma 262, 112-118.
- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., Chantigny, M.H., 2014. Labile organic nitrogen transformations in clay and sandy-loam soils amended with 15N-labelled faba bean and wheat residues. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 68, 208-218.
- Ludwig, M., Achtenhagen, J., Miltner, A., Eckhardt, K.-U., Leinweber, P., Emmerling, C., Thiele-Bruhn, S., 2015. Microbial contribution to SOM quantity and quality in density fractions of temperate arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 81, 311-322.
- Luo, G., Li, L., Friman, V.-P., Guo, J., Guo, S., Shen, Q., Ling, N., 2018. Organic amendments increase crop yields by improving microbe-mediated soil functioning of agroecosystems: A meta-analysis. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 124, 105-115.
- Lützow, M.v., Kögel-Knabner, I., Ekschmitt, K., Matzner, E., Guggenberger, G., Marschner, B., Flessa, H., 2006. Stabilization of organic matter in temperate soils: mechanisms and their relevance under different soil conditions—a review. European journal of soil science 57, 426-445.
- Magid, J., Kjærgaard, C., 2001. Recovering decomposing plant residues from the particulate soil organic matter fraction: size versus density separation. Biology and Fertility of Soils 33, 252-257.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Bittman, S., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Hunt, D., Parent, L.-É., 2015. Carbon accumulates in organo-mineral complexes after long-term liquid dairy manure application. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 202, 108-119.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Lafond, J., Pageau, D., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Leclerc, M.-L., Parent, L.-É., 2016. Greater accumulation of soil organic carbon after liquid dairy manure application under cereal-forage rotation than cereal monoculture. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 233, 171-178.
- Marriott, E.E., Wander, M., 2006. Qualitative and quantitative differences in particulate organic matter fractions in organic and conventional farming systems. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 38, 1527-1536.
- Marschner, B., Brodowski, S., Dreves, A., Gleixner, G., Gude, A., Grootes, P.M., Hamer, U., Heim, A., Jandl, G., Ji, R., 2008. How relevant is recalcitrance for the stabilization of organic matter in soils? Journal of plant nutrition and soil science 171, 91-110.
- Mikutta, R., Mikutta, C., Kalbitz, K., Scheel, T., Kaiser, K., Jahn, R., 2007. Biodegradation of forest floor organic matter bound to minerals via different binding mechanisms. Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta 71, 2569-2590.
- Miltner, A., Bombach, P., Schmidt-Brücken, B., Kästner, M., 2012. SOM genesis: microbial biomass as a significant source. Biogeochemistry 111, 41-55.
- Minasny, B., Malone, B.P., McBratney, A.B., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., Chambers, A., Chaplot, V., Chen, Z.-S., Cheng, K., Das, B.S., 2017. Soil carbon 4 per mille. Geoderma 292, 59-86.
- Mooshammer, M., Wanek, W., Hämmerle, I., Fuchslueger, L., Hofhansl, F., Knoltsch, A., Schnecker, J., Takriti, M., Watzka, M., Wild, B., 2014. Adjustment of microbial nitrogen use efficiency to carbon: nitrogen imbalances regulates soil nitrogen cycling. Nature communications 5, 3694.

- Moran, K.K., Six, J., Horwath, W.R., van Kessel, C., 2005. Role of mineral-nitrogen in residue decomposition and stable soil organic matter formation. Soil Science Society of America Journal 69, 1730-1736.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., 2009. Role of organic fractions on C decomposition and N mineralization of animal wastes in soil. Biology and Fertility of Soils 45, 477-486.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., Péan, L., 2006. Biochemical composition and kinetics of C and N mineralization of animal wastes: a typological approach. Biology and Fertility of Soils 42, 513-522.
- Murty, D., Kirschbaum, M.U., Mcmurtrie, R.E., Mcgilvray, H., 2002. Does conversion of forest to agricultural land change soil carbon and nitrogen? A review of the literature. Global Change Biology 8, 105-123.
- Niu, S., Classen, A.T., Dukes, J.S., Kardol, P., Liu, L., Luo, Y., Rustad, L., Sun, J., Tang, J., Templer, P.H., 2016. Global patterns and substrate-based mechanisms of the terrestrial nitrogen cycle. Ecology Letters 19, 697-709.
- Nyiraneza, J., Chantigny, M., N'Dayegamiye, A., Laverdiere, M., 2010a. Long-Term Manure Application and Forages Reduce Nitrogen Fertilizer Requirements of Silage Corn-Cereal Cropping Systems. AGRONOMY JOURNAL 102, 1244-1251.
- Nyiraneza, J., N'Dayegamiye, A., Gasser, M., Giroux, M., Grenier, M., Landry, C., Guertin, S., 2010b. Soil and Crop Parameters Related to Corn Nitrogen Response in Eastern Canada. Agronomy Journal 102, 1478-1490.
- Nyiraneza, J., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., Sharifi, M., Burton, D.L., Drury, C.F., Bittman, S., Grant, C.A., 2012. Prediction of soil nitrogen supply in corn production using soil chemical and biological indices. Soil Science Society of America Journal 76, 925-935.
- Oades, J., 1984. Soil organic matter and structural stability: mechanisms and implications for management. Plant and Soil 76, 319-337.
- Oades, J., Waters, A., 1991a. Aggregate hierarchy in soils. Soil Research 29, 815-828.
- Oades, J., Waters, A.G., 1991b. Aggregate hierarchy in soils. Australian Journal Of Soil Research 29, 815-828.
- Poeplau, C., Don, A., 2013. Sensitivity of soil organic carbon stocks and fractions to different land-use changes across Europe. Geoderma 192, 189-201.
- Poeplau, C., Don, A., Six, J., Kaiser, M., Benbi, D., Chenu, C., Cotrufo, M.F., Derrien, D., Gioacchini, P., Grand, S., 2018. Isolating organic carbon fractions with varying turnover rates in temperate agricultural soils–A comprehensive method comparison. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 125, 10-26.
- Poeplau, C., Helfrich, M., Dechow, R., Szoboszlay, M., Tebbe, C.C., Don, A., Greiner, B., Zopf, D., Thumm, U., Korevaar, H., 2019. Increased microbial anabolism contributes to soil carbon sequestration by mineral fertilization in temperate grasslands. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 130, 167-176.
- Poirier, V., Basile-Doelsch, I., Balesdent, J., Borschneck, D., Whalen, J.K., Angers, D.A., 2020. Organo-Mineral Interactions Are More Important for Organic Matter Retention in Subsoil Than Topsoil. Soil Systems 4, 4.
- Riley, H., 2016. Residual value of inorganic fertilizer and farmyard manure for crop yields and soil fertility after long-term use on a loam soil in Norway. Nutrient cycling in agroecosystems 104, 25-37.
- Robertson, A.D., Paustian, K., Ogle, S., Wallenstein, M.D., Lugato, E., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Unifying soil organic matter formation and persistence frameworks: the MEMS model. Biogeosciences 16, 1225-1248.

- Robinson, J., 1967. Soil Particle-size fractions and nitrogen mineralization. Journal of Soil Science 18, 109-117.
- Ros, G.H., 2012. Predicting soil N mineralization using organic matter fractions and soil properties: A re-analysis of literature data. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 45, 132-135.
- Rumpel, C., Eusterhues, K., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2010. Non-cellulosic neutral sugar contribution to mineral associated organic matter in top-and subsoil horizons of two acid forest soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 42, 379-382.
- Rumpel, C., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2011. Deep soil organic matter—a key but poorly understood component of terrestrial C cycle. Plant and Soil 338, 143-158.
- Samson, M. E., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Chantigny, M. H., Angers, D. A., Royer, I., & Vanasse, A. 2019. Crop response to soil management practices is driven by interactions among practices, crop species and soil type. Field Crops Research, 243, 107623.
- Samson, M. E., Chantigny, M. H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Royer, I., & Angers, D. A. 2020 a. Management practices differently affect particulate and mineral-associated organic matter and their precursors in arable soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 107867.
- Samson, M. É., Chantigny, M. H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., & Angers, D. A. 2020
 b. Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fraction for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 149, 107935.
- Schimel, J.P., Bennett, J., 2004. Nitrogen mineralization: challenges of a changing paradigm. Ecology 85, 591-602.
- Schmidt, M.W., Torn, M.S., Abiven, S., Dittmar, T., Guggenberger, G., Janssens, I.A., Kleber, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Lehmann, J., Manning, D.A., 2011. Persistence of soil organic matter as an ecosystem property. Nature 478, 49.
- Schroder, J., Jansen, A.G., Hilhorst, G., 2005. Long-term nitrogen supply from cattle slurry. Soil Use And Management 21, 196-204.
- Schröder, J., Uenk, D., Hilhorst, G., 2007. Long-term nitrogen fertilizer replacement value of cattle manures applied to cut grassland. Plant and soil 299, 83-99.
- Schweizer, S.A., Bucka, F.B., Graf-Rosenfellner, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2019. Soil microaggregate size composition and organic matter distribution as affected by clay content. Geoderma 355, 113901.
- Six, J., Bossuyt, H., Degryze, S., Denef, K., 2004. A history of research on the link between (micro) aggregates, soil biota, and soil organic matter dynamics. Soil and Tillage Research 79, 7-31.
- Six, J., Paustian, K., Elliott, E.T., Combrink, C., 2000. Soil structure and organic matter I. Distribution of aggregate-size classes and aggregate-associated carbon. Soil Science Society of America Journal 64, 681-689.
- Skjemstad, J., Swift, R., McGowan, J., 2006. Comparison of the particulate organic carbon and permanganate oxidation methods for estimating labile soil organic carbon. Soil Research 44, 255-263.
- Sollins, P., Spycher, G., Glassman, C., 1984. Net nitrogen mineralization from light-and heavy-fraction forest soil organic matter. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 16, 31-37.
- Sorensen, L., 1981. Carbon-nitrogen relationships during the humification of cellulose in soils containing different amounts of clay. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 13, 313-321.
- Sørensen, P., Jensen, E., 1995. Mineralization-immobilization and plant uptake of nitrogen as influenced by the spatial distribution of cattle slurry in soils of different texture. Plant and Soil 173, 283-291.

- Stevenson, F.J., 1994. Humus chemistry: genesis, composition, reactions. John Wiley & Sons.
- Tisdall, J.M., Oades, J.M., 1982. Organic matter and water-stable aggregates in soils. Journal of Soil Science 33, 141-163.
- Triberti, L., Nastri, A., Giordani, G., Comellini, F., Baldoni, G., Toderi, G., 2008. Can mineral and organic fertilization help sequestrate carbon dioxide in cropland? European Journal of Agronomy 29, 13-20.
- Van Groenigen, J.W., Van Kessel, C., Hungate, B.A., Oenema, O., Powlson, D.S., Van Groenigen, K.J., 2017. Sequestering soil organic carbon: a nitrogen dilemma. ACS Publications.
- Vinther, F.P., Hansen, E.M., Eriksen, J., 2006. Leaching of soil organic carbon and nitrogen in sandy soils after cultivating grass-clover swards. Biology and Fertility of Soils 43, 12-19.
- Von Lützow, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Ekschmitt, K., Flessa, H., Guggenberger, G., Matzner, E., Marschner, B., 2007. SOM fractionation methods: Relevance to functional pools and to stabilization mechanisms. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 39, 2183-2207.
- Waksman, S.A., 1936. Humus origin, chemical composition, and importance in nature. LWW.
- Wander, M., 2004. Soil organic matter fractions and their relevance to soil function. Soil organic matter in sustainable agriculture. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 67-102.
- Webb, J., Sorensen, P., Velthof, G., Amon, B., Pinto, M., Rodhe, L., Salomon, E., Hutchings, N., Burczyk, P., Reid, J., 2013. An Assessment of the Variation of Manure Nitrogen Efficiency throughout Europe and an Appraisal of Means to Increase Manure-N Efficiency. Advances In Agronomy, Vol 119 119, 371-442.
- Whalen, J.K., Bottomley, P.J., Myrold, D.D., 2000. Carbon and nitrogen mineralization from light- and heavy-fraction additions to soil. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 32, 1345-1352.
- Wiesmeier, M., Urbanski, L., Hobley, E., Lang, B., von Lützow, M., Marin-Spiotta, E., van Wesemael, B., Rabot, E., Ließ, M., Garcia-Franco, N., 2019. Soil organic carbon storage as a key function of soils-A review of drivers and indicators at various scales. Geoderma 333, 149-162.
- Xu, X., Thornton, P.E., Post, W.M., 2013. A global analysis of soil microbial biomass carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in terrestrial ecosystems. Global Ecology and Biogeography 22, 737-749.
- Zaher, H., Caron, J., Ouaki, B., 2005. Modeling aggregate internal pressure evolution following immersion to quantify mechanisms of structural stability. Soil Science Society of America Journal 69, 1-12.

Figures



Figure 4-1. Fractionation scheme and main characteristics of the light fraction (LF), the coarse mineral-associated organic matter fraction (coarse-MAOM) and the fine mineral-associated organic matter fraction (fine-MAOM), emphasizing the difference between light and heavy components of particulate organic matter (POM).



Figure 4-2. Micropcopic photography of the LF (2 mm scale) and coarse-MAOM (500 µm scale) from Maillard *et al.* (2015).



Figure 4-3. Scheme that demonstrates the evolution of fresh plant inputs from the light fraction (LF) to the coarse mineral-associated organic matter fraction (coarse-MAOM) and the fine mineral-associated organic matter fraction (fine-MAOM) following the physical pathway of SOM formation. This scheme emphasizes the potential pivotal role of the coarse-MAOM fraction in both carbon storage and nitrogen supply functions of soils.



Figure 4-4. Graphical representation of results obtained by Nyiraneza *et al.* (2010) showing a disproportionate increase in soil nitrogen supply capacity, as compared to total soil nitrogen increase following 28 years of manure addition to soil and manure additions coupled with the inclusion of forages in the rotation.



Figure 4-5. Conceptual framework that integrates C and N partitioning within the light fraction (LF), the coarse mineral-associated fraction (coarse-MAOM), the dissolved organic matter fraction (DOM) and the fine mineral-associated organic-matter fraction (fine-MAOM) as affected by agricultural management practices and soil type.

Chapitre 5 - Subsoil C and N stocks changes drove whole-soil response to different combinations of agricultural management practices

Marie-Élise Samson^{abc}, Martin H. Chantigny^b, Anne Vanasse^a, Safya Menasseri-Aubry^c, Isabelle Royer^b, and Denis A. Angers^b

^aUniversité Laval, Département de Phytologie, 2425 rue de l'Agriculture, Québec, QC,

Canada, G1V 0A6

^b Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Québec Research and Development Centre, 2560

Hochelaga Boulevard, Québec, QC, Canada, G1V 2J3

^c Agrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 65, rue de St-Brieuc 35042 Rennes Cedex - France

Copie de l'article « Samson, M.-É., Chantigny, M.H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Royer, I., Angers, D.A., 2020. Subsoil C and N stocks changes drove whole-soil response to different combinations of agricultural management practices» qui sera soumis à la revue *Agriculture, ecosystems and environment* à l'automne 2020.

Résumé

Les horizons de sols sous la couche de surface (> 15 cm) ont été identifiés comme ayant un grand potentiel pour la séquestration du carbone (C) à l'échelle mondiale. Cependant, comme le C et l'azote (N) compris dans ces horizons semblent être particulièrement stables, leur réactivité aux pratiques de gestions agricoles reste à déterminer. Cette étude a été réalisée dans le cadre d'un essai de huit années comparant 20 systèmes de gestion différents, combinant deux régimes de travail du sol (travail réduit ou labour), deux types de gestion des résidus de culture (retournés au sol ou exportés) et cinq sources fertilisantes différentes (engrais minéral complet (NPK), contrôle minéral sans azote (PK), fumier de volaille, lisier de bovin et lisier de porc) sur deux Brunisols aux textures contrastées (loam sableux et argile limoneuse). Nous avons étudié l'effet de ces traitements sur les stocks de C et de N de différentes couches du sol (0-15, 15-30, 30-45 et 45-60 cm de profondeur). Dans l'ensemble, les différences de stocks entre les traitements dans la couche 0-15 cm étaient relativement faibles, variant entre 0,36 et 0,76 kg C m⁻² et entre 0,01 à 0,04 kg N m⁻². Dans les couches plus profondes, cependant, des interactions complexes ont été constatées entre le type de sol, le travail du sol, la gestion des résidus et les sources fertilisantes. Dans les couches sous l'horizon de surface (15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm) du loam sableux, les systèmes combinant le labour, le retour des résidus au sol et l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme liquides (et spécialement de lisier de porc) ont engendré les stocks de C et de N les plus élevés. Inversement, lorsque le labour était combiné à l'utilisation d'engrais minéraux, les stocks de C et N en profondeur étaient plus élevés lorsque les résidus étaient récoltés. Les stocks de C et de N en profondeur semblaient donc particulièrement sensibles aux différentes combinaisons de sources fertilisantes et gestion des résidus de culture, lorsque combinées au labour dans le loam sableux. Dans l'argile limoneuse, indépendamment du type de travail du sol, les stocks de N étaient les plus élevés dans la couche 30-45 cm lorsque les résidus de culture étaient récoltés et que du lisier de porc était utilisé comme fertilisant, probablement puisque cette combinaison de pratiques a favorisé le transport préférentiel du lisier riche en N par les fentes de retrait du sol. Pour les deux sols, les variations des stocks de C et de N en profondeur étaient si considérables (jusqu'à 3,9 kg C m⁻² et 0,3 kg N m⁻²), par rapport à celles en surface, qu'elles ont dicté la réponse de l'ensemble du profil du sol (0-60 cm) aux pratiques agricoles. Ces résultats démontrent que le C et le N des horizons plus profonds doit être pris en compte dans les modèles et les politiques de gestion qui visent à quantifier l'effet des pratiques de gestion agricole sur les bilans de C et N, du moins sous des conditions froides et humides.

Abstract

Subsurface soil (> 15 cm) has been identified as having a large potential for carbon (C) sequestration at the global scale. However, since C and nitrogen (N) in the subsurface layers are assumed to be very relatively stable, their reactivity to agricultural management practices remains to be determined. This study was carried out on an 8-yr field trial comparing 20 different management systems, combining two tillage regimes (inversion tillage vs minimum tillage), two crop residue managements (retained vs harvested) and five different fertilizer sources (liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure, solid poultry manure), complete mineral fertilizer (NPK) and a no-N control (PK)) on two Brunisols with contrasting textures (sandy loam and silty clay). We studied the effects of these treatments on C and N stocks of multiple soil layers (0-15, 15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm depths). Overall, stock differences among management systems were relatively small in the top 15 cm, varying from 0.36 to 0.76 kg C m-2 and 0.01 to 0.04 kg N m-2. In deeper soil layers, however, management practices considerably influenced C and N stocks. In the subsurface layers (15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm) of the sandy loam soil, systems combining mouldboard plowing, residue retention, and liquid animal manure (especially swine manure) resulted in the greatest C and N stocks. Conversely, systems combining mouldboard plowing to mineral fertilizer was used, C and N stocks in the subsurface layers were higher when residues were harvested. Subsurface C and N stocks therefore appeared to be particularly responsive to different combinations of fertilizer sources and residue management practices under mouldboard plowing in the coarsetextured sandy loam soil. In the silty clay, irrespective of tillage treatments, N stocks were the highest in the subsurface (30-45 cm) when residues were harvested and liquid swine manure was used, probably because this combination favored the preferential transport of Nrich manures likely through shrinking cracks which are observed in this soil. Ultimately, changes in subsurface C and N stocks were so considerable (up to 3.9 kg C m-2 and 0.3 kg N m-2), as compared to those in the topsoil, that they determined the response of the whole soil profile to management practices in both soil types. These results demonstrate that subsurface C and N dynamics must be specifically considered in models and management recommendations that aim at quantifying the effect of agricultural management practices on C and N budgets, at least under cold and humid conditions.

Introduction

Cultivated soils have lost 20 to 70% of their original C due to conversion of native ecosystems to intensive agricultural systems (Lal, 2001). By adopting conservation management practices, some of this soil C could be regained. Not only storing C and N in cultivated soils could contribute to climate change mitigation (Minasny et al., 2017), but it could also increase soil fertility and resilience (Lal et al., 2011). In the last decades, a large body of work has been done to better understand soil organic matter dynamics and stabilization mechanisms under different management practices (Paustian et al., 1997; Lal, 2002; Jarecki and Lal, 2003). This work was mostly focused on the topsoil layer, since it has been assumed that deeper C was relatively stable and unresponsive to changes in management practices. This assumption is based on the fact that radiocarbon dating studies found that subsurface C could hundreds to thousands of years old (Wang et al., 1999; Chabbi et al., 2009; Hobley et al., 2017). However, recent work suggests that part of subsurface C could turn over much faster (Baisden and Parfitt, 2007; Chabbi et al., 2009; Don et al., 2011), be responsive to land use change (Rumpel and Kögel-Knabner, 2011; Balesdent et al., 2018) and even to agricultural management practices (Harrison et al., 2011; Shahbaz et al., 2017; Osanai et al., 2020).

Despite lower C concentrations than in topsoil, it is estimated that subsurface horizons account for more than half the global soil C stocks (Jobbágy and Jackson, 2000; Harrison *et al.*, 2011; Balesdent *et al.*, 2018). Because of their lower C concentration and presumed slower turnover rate as compared to topsoil, subsurface horizons may have a large potential for C sequestration and be a significant sink for atmospheric CO_2 (Lorenz and Lal, 2005; Chen *et al.*, 2018). However, further experimental evidence is required before we can assert if and how subsurface C can be manipulated in managed agricultural soils.

Subsurface C has a different natures and dynamic than topsoil C. Whereas plant debris are the main inputs of fresh organic matter to the topsoil, inputs to the subsurface mainly comprise roots and their exudates, as well as dissolved organic matter leaching from the topsoil (Rumpel and Kögel-Knabner, 2011). As depth increases, N-rich microbial products

contribute more organic matter than C-rich plant components (Torn *et al.*, 2002; Angst *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, while aggregation plays a major role in topsoil organic matter stabilization, most organic matter in the subsurface appears to be stabilized through organomineral associations between chemically labile organic matter and clay minerals, and/or Fe and Al oxides (Poirier *et al.*, 2020). Long-term preservation of organic matter in the subsurface has recently been attributed to the spatial separation between microorganisms and their substrates (Fontaine *et al.*, 2007; Chabbi *et al.*, 2009; Preusser *et al.*, 2017). However, in arable soils, management practices, such as tillage and/or the use of highly soluble organic compounds (e.g., liquid animal manures) can have a major effect on fresh organic matter inputs to subsurface layers and influence organic matter dynamics at depth.

Organic inputs to subsurface through leaching of dissolved organic matter can be substantial (Kindler *et al.*, 2011). Climate and water balance are among the main factors driving water and vertical solute transport in soil (Radcliffe *et al.*, 2002; Camino-Serrano *et al.*, 2014). However, soil texture and structure influence its hydraulic conductivity and, therefore, influence water flow and solute transport at depth (Horn and Baumgartl, 2002; Miyazaki, 2005). In soils where preferential flow is favored through macropores and/or shrinkage cracks, transport to subsurface horizons might be faster. However, the interactions of solutes with the mineral matrix are spatially restricted to mineral surfaces along the preferential flow paths (Don and Schulze, 2008), leading to a minor role of dissolved organic matter to the accumulation of organic matter in subsurface (Kaiser and Kalbitz, 2012). By contrast, dissolved organic matter percolating more slowly in soil through matrix flow could favor sorption/co-precipitation processes and microbial processing in the subsurface (Kaiser and Kalbitz, 2012).

Given the difference between topsoil and subsurface organic matter, both in terms of inputs, composition, and stabilization mechanisms, and the scarcity of knowledge regarding subsurface organic matter dynamics, it is difficult to predict if and how subsurface C and N stocks respond to agricultural management practices, especially when different practices are combined. Our objective was to examine how varied management systems, combining tillage regimes, crop residue management and fertilizer sources, affected C and N stocks in the

profile of two Brunisols with contrasting textures (silty clay and sandy loam), after 8 yrs under a cold and humid climate.

Material and method

Experimental Site and Treatments

The experimental site is located at the Laval University Agronomic Research Station in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, near Québec City, Canada (46°44′ N, 71°31′ W). Experimental fields and treatments were thoroughly described by Samson *et al.* (2019). Briefly, the experimental site is comprised of two field sites, a poorly drained Tilly series silty clay (432 g clay kg⁻¹, 163 g sand kg⁻¹), gleyed melanic Brunisol (Soil Classification Working Group 1998) (US classification: Mixed Frigid Dystric Eutrudept (SSS, 1994)), and a well-drained Batiscan series sandy loam (170 g clay kg⁻¹, 680 g sand kg⁻¹), orthic dystric Brunisol (US classification: Mixed Frigid Typic Dystrudept (SSS, 1994)). The two field sites are located approximately 0.9 km apart.

In spring 2009, a factorial experiment was laid out as a randomized complete block design with split-split-plot restriction and three replicates on each soil type. Tillage treatments were assigned to main plots and consisted of either inversion tillage (moldboard plowing at 0.2 m) in the fall with shallow harrowing (0.025 to 0.05 m) in the spring after fertilization, or minimum tillage (shallow harrowing in the spring after fertilization). Fertilizer treatments were ascribed to subplots and comprised a no-N control (mineral P and K [PK]), a complete mineral fertilizer (NPK), liquid swine manure, liquid dairy manure and solid poultry manure. Crop residue management treatments (residues harvested, and residues retained) were randomly ascribed to sub-subplots. Twenty different "management systems" were therefore compared, each including a specific combination of tillage x fertilizer source x residue management practices. All systems were cropped to wheat in 2009 and 2010, and to a maize-soybean-wheat rotation afterwards.

All fertilizer sources were surface broadcast before planting in the spring, and all plots were harrowed within three hours following applications. Fertilizer treatments were based on crop N requirements and local recommendations (CRAAQ, 2003): 90 kg N ha⁻¹ for wheat, 120 kg N ha⁻¹ for corn, 0 kg N ha⁻¹ for soybean. The N availability of liquid swine manure and solid poultry manure was assumed to be 80%, whereas that of liquid dairy manure was assumed to be 80% from 2009 to 2013 and 70% thereafter (CRAAQ, 2010). For the PK and NPK treatments, P and K were provided in mineral forms based on crop requirements (CRAAQ, 2003). In the manured plots, P and K were applied as provided with the manure. Fertilizer and manure treatments were not applied to soybean.

Sampling and Analyses

Animal manures

The origin and characteristics of manures were described in detail in Samson *et al.* (2019). Briefly, raw liquid dairy manure was collected after about six months of storage in an earthen concrete tank on a dairy operation. Liquid swine manure came from a commercial farrow-to-finish operation and was usually collected in the holding tank below the slatted floor. Fresh solid poultry manure was obtained from a commercial broiler operation and included bedding material composed of wood shavings. On the day of application, each manure type was mixed prior to application and small subsamples were repeatedly collected during the application to create a 2-L composite sample for each manure type. Composite samples were mixed in the laboratory before analysis; all analyses were made in triplicates. Total N was determined by Kjeldahl acid digestion on fresh subsamples, whereas total C concentration was measured by dry combustion (Model TruMac, Leco Corp., St-Joseph, MI, USA) on lyophilized subsamples. Total amounts of C and N applied to soil with manures and mineral fertilizers for each treatment are detailed in Table 5-4 (S1). Van Soest analysis were also performed on manures to assess their biochemical composition; these results were published in Samson *et al.* (2020).

Crop residues

Plants were harvested at maturity using a small-plot harvester (Classic 2004, Wintersteiger, Ried, im Innkreis, Austria) for wheat and soybean, and by hand for corn. All aboveground material was removed from the plots. Grains were separated from the vegetative parts and weighed separately to determine yield. A 500-g subsample of vegetative materials was taken

and dried at 55°C for 3 days to determine crop residue dry matter yield. The rest of residue materials was returned to and evenly distributed on the RR plots; residues were not returned to the RH plots. The C and N concentrations of the grains and crop residues were determined by dry combustion, and the amount of C and N returned to soil with the residues was calculated by multiplying residue dry matter yield with C and N concentration (Table S1). Grain yields and N uptake were published in Samson *et al.* (2019).

Soil sampling

In autumn 2009 and 2016, after wheat harvest, three randomly located cores were collected to 60 cm in each experimental plot with a hydraulic coring equipment (Giddings Machine Company; model XHDGSRTS). Sampling depth was set at 60 cm since bedrock material was found at about 65 cm in the sandy loam soil. Each core was divided in four depths: 0– 15, 15–30, 30–45 and 45–60 cm, and the three cores of each depth were pooled to make one composite sample per depth in each plot. The composite samples were sieved at 6 mm and air-dried at room temperature in the laboratory. Stainless steel cylinders (5-cm diameter; 5-cm height) were also pressed horizontally at each depth (three cylinders per plot) and the samples were dried to 105 °C to determine the bulk density at each depth.

Carbon and nitrogen analyses and stock calculations

Air-dried soil subsamples were ground with a ball mill and total C and N concentrations (g kg soil⁻¹) were determined with a CNS analyzer (Model TRUSPEC, LECO Corp., Saint-Joseph, MI, USA). For each soil layer, the total C and N stock (kg m⁻²) was calculated by multiplying the C and N concentration (g kg soil⁻¹) by the layer thickness (m) and the respective bulk density (g cm⁻³). To account for different soil bulk density values between treatments, stocks were corrected using the equivalent soil mass approach (Ellert and Bettany, 1995; Ellert et al., 2006).

Statistical Analysis

Treatment effects on C and N stocks were tested for each soil layer and the entire profile (0-60 cm), for each soil type separately. A factorial ANOVA model was used with the Mixed procedure of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS Institute, 1999). Treatments were considered as fixed effects and replicates were considered as random effects. Assumptions of homogeneity of variance and normality of residuals were verified graphically. Normality of residuals was also tested using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The effects were considered significant at $p \le 0.05$. Treatment means were separated by the protected least significant difference (LSD) with a Tukey adjustment, calculated at p=0.05. Detailed statistical results are given in (Table 1).

Results

At the beginning of the experiment (2009), differences in C and N stocks among experimental units were not statistically significant. It was therefore assumed that statistical differences found in 2016 were due to the treatments, and not to the inherent variability of the sites.

C and N stocks of the sandy loam soil

After 8 yrs of management, soil C stocks in the top layer (0-15 cm) were higher under minimum than inversion tillage in the sandy loam soil, but tillage did not significantly influence N stocks (Table 5-1). Crop residue management and fertilizer source did not influence topsoil C and N stocks.

A significant three-way interaction was found in the 15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm layers (Table 5-1). Under inversion tillage, the soil fertilized with liquid swine manure contained significantly greater C and N stocks in the 15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm layers when crop residues were retained than harvested (Figure 5-1); a similar trend (not significant) was also found for liquid dairy manure. The opposite effect was observed with the NPK treatment which resulted in generally greater C and N stocks in the 15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm layers when crop residues were harvested rather than retained; the same trend (not significant) was observed in the PK treatment at the 30-45 and 45-60 cm depths. Conversely to inversion tillage, no significant interactions were found between residue management and fertilizer source under minimum tillage. However, harvesting crop residues tended to favor C and N accumulation in the 30-45 and 45-60 cm layers, especially when combined with the use of liquid swine and dairy manure (Figure 5-1).

When considering the whole profile (0-60 cm) of the sandy loam soil, the three-way interaction was also significant for C and N stocks (Figure 5-2). Under inversion tillage, total C and N stocks were significantly higher when liquid swine manure was combined with residue retention, as compared to residue harvesting (Figure 5-2). By contrast, total C and N stocks were greater when NPK was combined with residue harvesting, as compared to residue retention.

Globally, after 8 yrs, most management systems resulted in similar or smaller C and N stocks when compared to the 2009 average in most soil layers (Figure 5-2; Figure 5-3). The only treatments with greater C and N stocks in 2016 than in 2009 were those that favored C and N accumulation at depth, more specifically when liquid swine and dairy manures were combined with crop residue retention under inversion tillage, and when NPK was combined with residue harvesting, also under inversion tillage (Figure 5-2).

C and N stocks of the silty clay soil

C stocks in the surface layer were numerically higher (0.47 kg m⁻²) in soils under minimum tillage than under inversion tillage (Table 5-2), although the difference was not statistically significant (Table 5-1). However, N stocks were statistically greater where crop residues were retained, and greater with all manure types as compared to the PK treatment. No statistical difference was found between the N stock of the NPK and PK treatments, and solid poultry manure was the only manure type with a statistically greater N stock than the NPK treatment in the 0-15 cm layer.

The only significant effect observed at depth was the interaction between residue management and fertilizer source on soil N stocks in the 30-45 cm layer (Table 5-1). More specifically, when liquid swine manure was used, the N stock of the 30-45 cm layer was greater when crop residues were harvested than retained (Table 5-3).

The various management systems did not significantly affect C stock of the whole profile (0-60 cm) of the silty clay soil. However, the interactive effect of fertilizer source and residue management on N stocks found in the 30-45 cm layer was also significant for the whole soil profile (Table 1). When liquid swine manure was used, N stock of the whole soil profile was greater with crop residues harvested than with residues retained (Figure 4).

Discussion

Moderate management effects on surface C and N stocks

After 8 years of management, C stocks in the top 15 cm of soils were greater under minimum tillage, as compared to inversion tillage; the difference was not statistically significant in the silty clay soil likely because of the spatial variability of C concentrations in this soil. This is in agreement with previous studies under similar climatic conditions that reduced tillage intensity favors the accumulation of C in surface soil (Angers *et al.*, 1997; Angers and Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Gregorich *et al.*, 2009). However, these studies also demonstrated that inversion tillage can increase C concentration at depth by placing organic matter where decomposition rates are slower, especially in cold and humid climates (Angers *et al.*, 1997; MacDonald et al., 2010). In our study, tillage did not significantly influence C stocks at the lower soil depths. However, the absence of tillage effect when considering the whole soil profile indicates that C accumulation at depth with inversion tillage tended to offset C accumulation in surface soil under minimum tillage. After 8 yrs of management, tillage did not influence soil N stocks at any sampling depth or in the entire profile.

The fact that crop residue management did not influence C and N stocks in the 0-15 cm layer of the sandy loam soil and only affected N stocks in the silty clay soil was noteworthy. This discrepancy between the two soil types could be due to the fact that fresh organic matter inputs generally turn over more quickly in coarse-textured soils (Sorensen, 1981; Colman and Schimel, 2013), whereas soils with higher clay contents, such as our silty clay soil, have a greater capacity to protect organic matter through sorption to fine mineral surfaces (Poirier *et al.*, 2020). Similarly to crop residue management, fertilization also had a positive impact on C and N stocks of the 0-15 cm layer (especially when comparing animal manured with PK) only in the silty clay soil, which was more susceptible than the sandy loam to protect C and N brought with the manures and additional crop residues

Complex interactive effects of management practices on subsurface C and N stocks

As observed by Osanai et al. (2020), our study showed contrasted effects of agricultural management practices on soil C and N stocks between topsoil and subsurface. In fact, the C and N stocks at depth were sensitive to specific combinations of practices in the management systems tested (tillage x fertilizer sources x crop residue management) in the sandy loam soil. Under inversion tillage, C and N stocks were considerably higher when crop residues were retained and combined with liquid swine manure (statistically significant) and liquid dairy manure (trend). When considering the sum of the three subsurface soil layers (15-60 cm), we found that when liquid animal manure was used, C and N stocks were considerably greater when residues were retained, rather than harvested. Differences between these treatments were large, varying from 1.68 to 4.99 kg m⁻² for subsurface C stocks and 0.15 to 0.37 kg m⁻ ² for subsurface N stocks. It is noteworthy that the differences were generally as large or even greater in soil layers below 15 cm. In fact, both liquid manures, and especially swine manure, contain substantial amounts of soluble organic compounds (Morvan et al., 2006) that may have migrated below the ploughing depth (Angers et al., 2010). We hypothesize that, under inversion tillage, C-rich crop residues accumulated within the plow layer (15-30 cm) and retained a portion of soluble organic matter and N present in the liquid animal manures, whereas a portion may have migrated deeper. The slower mineralization rate at depth under cold and humid conditions (MacDonald et al., 2010), may have favored the production of soluble of both residues and manure in the plow layer, and most probably contributed the substantial gains observed in C and N stocks at depth with time.

Interestingly, the opposite effect was found with the mineral fertilizers (significant effect with NPK; trend with PK) where subsurface soil C stocks were greater when crop residues were harvested than when they were retained. Although these findings appear counterintuitive given the fact that the NPK treatment resulted in large amounts of crop residues (Table 5-4 (S1)), we hypothesize that it was due to a priming effect of the crop residues on subsurface indigenous organic matter (Fontaine *et al.*, 2007). Organic matter C:N ratio is usually lower in subsurface than in top soil (Schmidt *et al.*, 2011; Poirier *et al.*, 2020), and inputs of C-rich and N-poor organic matter, such as mature crop residues may lead the

microbial community to mine N in indigenous organic matter (Fontaine *et al.*, 2007; Perveen *et al.*, 2019), resulting in increased mineralization and loss of indigenous organic matter at depth. Conversely, the concomitant presence of C-rich crop residues and N-rich animal manures in the organic fertilization treatments may have prevented and/or counterbalance N mining from indigenous soil organic matter.

These results are consistent with the assumption that long-term preservation of organic matter in subsurface soil is mainly attributed to the physical separation between subsurface microorganisms and fresh organic substrates (Fontaine et al., 2007; Chabbi et al., 2009; Preusser et al., 2017). Consequently, management practices that favor fresh inputs of organic C and N to subsurface soil layers, such as tillage and/or inputs with soluble organic components (e.g. liquid manure), could drastically influence organic matter dynamics at depth. The interactive effects that we found between residue management and fertilizer source also suggest that subsurface soil organic matter can be particularly responsive to the stoichiometry of the organic input. Most organic matter in the subsurface is in a relatively labile form (Kaiser and Kalbitz, 2012) primarily stabilized through associations with clay minerals, and/or Fe and Al oxides (Poirier *et al.*, 2020). The priming of this indigenous subsurface organic matter could therefore rapidly occur when a C-rich (or N-rich) organic amendment is placed or migrates at depth and creates an imbalance between indigenous and fresh organic matter stoichiometry.

Under minimum tillage, fresh organic matter inputs were only superficially incorporated in the top 5 cm of soil, which explains that the differences in C and N stocks in subsurface soil as a function of fertilizer source and crop residue management were much smaller than under inversion tillage, and not statistically significant. In the sandy loam, however, with all fertilizer sources, and especially with the liquid animal manures, exporting crop residues under minimum tillage from 2009 to 2016 resulted in greater C and N stocks in subsurface soil layers. The fact that the presence of residues at the soil surface could reduce C stocks at depth is counterintuitive. However, organic matter formation in subsurface is primarily driven by roots and dissolved C leaching from the topsoil (Rumpel and Kögel-Knabner, 2011; Liebmann *et al.*, 2020). A previous analysis of crop and residue yields in the present experiment (Samson et al. 2019) revealed that residue management did not influence crop yields in this soil type, suggesting that it did not significantly influence root growth neither. We therefore propose that the presence of crop residues at or near the soil surface under minimum tillage influenced organic matter leaching through the profile in two ways. Firstly, it could have reduced the mineralization rate of fresh and indigenous soil organic matter in the topsoil by reducing soil temperature (Unger, 1988) and increasing soil moisture content (Mulumba and Lal, 2008). As a result, the production rate of soluble organic compounds would be reduced, decreasing the amount of C and N potentially available for leaching and stabilization at depth. Secondly, leaving crop residues at the surface could have fostered the assimilation and immobilization of manure-derived soluble compounds in the topsoil, limiting their migration at depth (Shahbaz *et al.*, 2017).

In the silty clay soil, the effects of management systems were much weaker than in the sandy loam. This discrepancy between soils of different texture might partly be due to different solute transport mechanisms. In fact, the silty clay soil contains swelling clays, which cause soil shrinking and cracking during drying periods (Simard *et al.* 1990). These cracks favor the rapid transport of water and solutes at depth through preferential flow (Jarvis, 2007; Koestel *et al.*, 2012). Conversely, in the sandy loam soil, matric flow transport was likely dominant (Koestel *et al.*, 2012) and favored more intimate interactions between the leachates and the mineral surfaces. Nevertheless, soil N stocks in the 30-45 cm layer of the silty clay soil differed depending on residue management and fertilizer source combinations (Table 5-3). Once again, opposite patterns were observed between liquid animal manures and NPK, although a statistically significant effect was only found for liquid swine manure. The N stock at this depth was greater when liquid swine manure was combined with residue harvesting than when residues were retained. This is likely because the absence of crop residues favored the leaching of the soluble C and N compounds in liquid swine manure through the swelling cracks, which favored their accumulation in the 30-45 cm soil layer.

Subsurface changes determined the response of the whole-soil profile C and N to management systems

In this study, changes in C and N stocks from 2009 to 2016 were considerably greater in subsurface (15-60 cm) than in top soil (0-15 cm). This challenges the concept of subsurface as a repository of stable organic carbon that does not respond to management practices in the short to medium term. Despite that some radiocarbon studies found C of several millennia in subsurfaces (Wang et al., 1999; Hobley et al., 2017), many authors recently demonstrated that a fraction of deep soil C could be relatively dynamic (Baisden and Parfitt, 2007; Chabbi et al., 2009; Don et al., 2011). According to the current knowledge, the cycling of organic matter in the subsurface would be mainly limited by inputs of energy and/or nutrient supply (Fontaine et al., 2007; Kuzyakov, 2010; Scott and Rothstein, 2014). That is particularly true for undisturbed soils in natural ecosystems (Balesdent et al., 2018). In agricultural soils, however, management practices such as tillage and/or the use of animal manure with a high proportion of soluble and nutrient-rich compounds can facilitate C and N supply to subsurface layers (Angers and Eriksen-Hamel, 2008; Angers et al. 2010), as observed in the present study. The effect of agricultural management systems on subsurface C and N could therefore be greater than in natural ecosystems, even in the short to medium term. Under the conditions of the present study, the effect of agricultural management systems on subsurface C and N stocks could also have been exacerbated by the high water balance, which probably facilitated the transport of dissolved organic matter at depth (Lundquist et al., 1999; Hobley et al., 2017; Balesdent et al., 2018). Moreover, soils that favor matrix flow water movement, such as our sandy loam soil, could further favor changes in subsurface C and N stocks by increasing the intimacy of interactions between reactive minerals and dissolved organic matter (Chabbi et al., 2009), as opposed to heavier clayey soils, such as the silty clay, where dissolved C and N may by-pass most of the soil matrix by preferential flow through shrinkage cracks (Kaiser and Kalbitz, 2012).

In our study, management-induced changes at depth were so large that they were still statistically significant when the whole soil profile was considered. When compared to initial (2009) average C and N stocks, most treatments resulted in either similar or lower stocks in 2016, and most changes were observed in subsurface soil layers (Figure 5-3). The greatest

increases in soil C and N stocks in 2016 was found in plots where liquid swine manure was combined to residue retention under inversion tillage, which favored the accumulation of both C and N-rich organic inputs to subsurface soil layers from 2009 to 2016. This treatment resulted in a C increase of 2.8 kg m⁻², corresponding to a retention rate of 15% of the C added to the soil (Table 5-4 (S1)). This is well in the range of crop residue and manure retention rate typically observed in the literature (Kong *et al.*, 2005; Thomsen and Christensen, 2010; Maillard and Angers, 2014).

Under most of the other treatments, however, the two studied soil profiles did not accumulate but rather lost carbon between 2009 and 2016 (Figure 5-2; Figure 5-3), mainly because of losses from subsurface soil layers (Figure 5-1; Figure 5-3; Table 5-3). Steinmann *et al.* (2016) also found important decadal losses of subsurface C in agricultural soils, even after the adoption of conservation practices. They attributed this continued loss to past conversion of grasslands to croplands many decades before. This scenario is typical of eastern Canada, where a large proportion of grassland soils were converted to cropland soils in the last century (Statistics Canada, 2020). Soil C stocks in top and subsurface drastically decrease following land use change from grassland to cropland (Gregory *et al.*, 2016), and this gradual C loss can perpetuate for many decades after conversion (Minasny *et al.*, 2011; Gregory *et al.*, 2016), despite the use of conservation management practices (Steinmann *et al.*, 2016).

Conclusion

Our results demonstrated after only 8 years of management history that subsurface soil C and N stocks can be more responsive to changes in agricultural management systems than topsoil stocks. Subsurface soil C and N stocks responded to specific combinations of tillage intensity, fertilizer source and crop residue management. Changes in subsurface layers were so large, as compared to those in topsoil, that they dominated stock changes in the whole profile, especially in the coarse-textured sandy loam soil. This study clearly demonstrates that specific combinations of agricultural management practices can have a major effect on subsurface C and N stocks, even at a decadal time scale. Our results showed that increasing surface soil organic C does not necessarily result in net C storage in the whole soil profile. This stresses the need to better understand and quantify stock changes in the subsurface as

influenced by management practices. Since subsurface C accounts for more than half of the global C stocks, a better understanding of these processes will be necessary to develop adequate soil organic matter models and recommend appropriate evidence-based management policies.

Acknowledgement

Special thanks are extended to the staff of Université Laval and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (Johanne Tremblay, Gabriel Lévesque, Annie Robichaud and Francis Gagnon) for their meticulous work and their precious collaboration in all phases of this work.

Funding

This work was financially supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The Senior author was financially supported by scholarships from the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program, the Fonds de Recherche Québécois Nature et Technologies, Équiterre, the Erasmus+ exchange program, and the Choquette family foundation.

References

- Angers, D., Bolinder, M., Carter, M., Gregorich, E., Drury, C., Liang, B., Voroney, R., Simard, R., Donald, R., Beyaert, R., 1997. Impact of tillage practices on organic carbon and nitrogen storage in cool, humid soils of eastern Canada. Soil and Tillage Research 41, 191-201.
- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 86, 225-229.
- Angers, D., Eriksen-Hamel, N., 2008. Full-inversion tillage and organic carbon distribution in soil profiles: A meta-analysis. SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA JOURNAL 72, 1370-1374.
- Angst, G., Messinger, J., Greiner, M., Häusler, W., Hertel, D., Kirfel, K., Kögel-Knabner, I., Leuschner, C., Rethemeyer, J., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Soil organic carbon stocks in topsoil and subsoil controlled by parent material, carbon input in the rhizosphere, and microbial-derived compounds. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 122, 19-30.
- Baisden, W.T., Parfitt, R.L., 2007. Bomb 14 C enrichment indicates decadal C pool in deep soil? Biogeochemistry 85, 59-68.
- Balesdent, J., Basile-Doelsch, I., Chadoeuf, J., Cornu, S., Derrien, D., Fekiacova, Z., Hatté, C., 2018. Atmosphere–soil carbon transfer as a function of soil depth. Nature 559, 599-602.
- Camino-Serrano, M., Gielen, B., Luyssaert, S., Ciais, P., Vicca, S., Guenet, B., Vos, B.D., Cools, N., Ahrens, B., Altaf Arain, M., 2014. Linking variability in soil solution dissolved organic carbon to climate, soil type, and vegetation type. Global Biogeochemical Cycles 28, 497-509.
- Chabbi, A., Kögel-Knabner, I., Rumpel, C., 2009. Stabilised carbon in subsoil horizons is located in spatially distinct parts of the soil profile. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 41, 256-261.
- Chen, S., Martin, M.P., Saby, N.P., Walter, C., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., 2018. Fine resolution map of top-and subsoil carbon sequestration potential in France. Science of the Total Environment 630, 389-400.
- Colman, B.P., Schimel, J.P., 2013. Drivers of microbial respiration and net N mineralization at the continental scale. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 60, 65-76.
- CRAAQ, 2003. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- Don, A., Schulze, E.-D., 2008. Controls on fluxes and export of dissolved organic carbon in grasslands with contrasting soil types. Biogeochemistry 91, 117-131.
- Don, A., Schumacher, J., Freibauer, A., 2011. Impact of tropical land-use change on soil organic carbon stocks-a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 17, 1658-1670.
- Fontaine, S., Barot, S., Barré, P., Bdioui, N., Mary, B., Rumpel, C., 2007. Stability of organic carbon in deep soil layers controlled by fresh carbon supply. Nature 450, 277-280.
- Gregorich, E., Carter, M., Angers, D., Drury, C., 2009. Using a sequential density and particle-size fractionation to evaluate carbon and nitrogen storage in the profile of tilled and no-till soils in eastern Canada. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 89, 255-267.
- Gregory, A., Dungait, J., Watts, C., Bol, R., Dixon, E., White, R., Whitmore, A., 2016. Long-term management changes topsoil and subsoil organic carbon and nitrogen dynamics in a temperate agricultural system. European Journal of Soil Science 67, 421-430.

- Harrison, R.B., Footen, P.W., Strahm, B.D., 2011. Deep soil horizons: contribution and importance to soil carbon pools and in assessing whole-ecosystem response to management and global change. Forest Science 57, 67-76.
- Hobley, E., Baldock, J., Hua, Q., Wilson, B., 2017. Land-use contrasts reveal instability of subsoil organic carbon. Global Change Biology 23, 955-965.
- Horn, R., Baumgartl, T., 2002. Dynamic properties of soils. Soil physics companion 389.
- Jarecki, M.K., Lal, R., 2003. Crop management for soil carbon sequestration. Critical Reviews in Plant Sciences 22, 471-502.
- Jarvis, N., 2007. A review of non-equilibrium water flow and solute transport in soil macropores: Principles, controlling factors and consequences for water quality. European Journal of Soil Science 58, 523-546.
- Jobbágy, E.G., Jackson, R.B., 2000. The vertical distribution of soil organic carbon and its relation to climate and vegetation. Ecological applications 10, 423-436.
- Kaiser, K., Kalbitz, K., 2012. Cycling downwards–dissolved organic matter in soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 52, 29-32.
- Kindler, R., Siemens, J., Kaiser, K., Walmsley, D.C., Bernhofer, C., Buchmann, N., Cellier, P., Eugster, W., Gleixner, G., Grünwald, T., 2011. Dissolved carbon leaching from soil is a crucial component of the net ecosystem carbon balance. Global Change Biology 17, 1167-1185.
- Knicker, H., 2011. Soil organic N-An under-rated player for C sequestration in soils? Soil Biology and Biochemistry 43, 1118-1129.
- Koestel, J., Moeys, J., Jarvis, N., 2012. Meta-analysis of the effects of soil properties, site factors and experimental conditions on solute transport. Hydrology & Earth System Sciences 16.
- Kong, A., Six, J., Bryant, D.C., Denison, R., van Kessel, C., 2005. The relationship between carbon input, aggregation, and soil organic carbon stabilization in sustainable cropping systems. SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA JOURNAL 69, 1078-1085.
- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Kuzyakov, Y., 2010. Priming effects: Interactions between living and dead organic matter. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 42, 1363-1371.
- Lal, R., 2001. World cropland soils as a source or sink for atmospheric carbon.
- Lal, R., 2002. Soil carbon dynamics in cropland and rangeland. Environmental pollution 116, 353-362.
- Lal, R., Delgado, J., Groffman, P., Millar, N., Dell, C., Rotz, A., 2011. Management to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Journal of soil and water conservatiobn 66, 276-285.
- Liebmann, P., Wordell-Dietrich, P., Kalbitz, K., Mikutta, R., Kalks, F., Don, A., Woche, S.K., Dsilva, L.R., Guggenberger, G., 2020. Relevance of aboveground litter for soil organic matter formation–a soil profile perspective. Biogeosciences 17 (2020).
- Lorenz, K., Lal, R., 2005. The depth distribution of soil organic carbon in relation to land use and management and the potential of carbon sequestration in subsoil horizons. Advances in agronomy 88, 35-66.
- Lundquist, E.J., Jackson, L., Scow, K., 1999. Wet–dry cycles affect dissolved organic carbon in two California agricultural soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 31, 1031-1038.
- MacDonald, J.D., Angers, D.A., Rochette, P., Chantigny, M.H., Royer, I., Gasser, M.-O., 2010. Plowing a poorly drained grassland reduced soil respiration. Soil Science Society of America Journal 74, 2067-2076.

- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Mathieu, J.A., Hatté, C., Balesdent, J., Parent, É., 2015. Deep soil carbon dynamics are driven more by soil type than by climate: a worldwide meta-analysis of radiocarbon profiles. Global Change Biology 21, 4278-4292.
- Minasny, B., Malone, B.P., McBratney, A.B., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., Chambers, A., Chaplot, V., Chen, Z.-S., Cheng, K., Das, B.S., 2017. Soil carbon 4 per mille. Geoderma 292, 59-86.
- Minasny, B., Sulaeman, Y., Mcbratney, A.B., 2011. Is soil carbon disappearing? The dynamics of soil organic carbon in Java. Global Change Biology 17, 1917-1924.
- Miyazaki, T., 2005. Water flow in soils. CRC Press.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., Péan, L., 2006. Biochemical composition and kinetics of C and N mineralization of animal wastes: a typological approach. Biology and Fertility of Soils 42, 513-522.
- Mulumba, L.N., Lal, R., 2008. Mulching effects on selected soil physical properties. Soil and Tillage Research 98, 106-111.
- Paustian, K., Collins, H., Paul, E.A., 1997. Management controls on soil carbon. Soil organic matter in temperate agroecosystems: Long-term experiments in North America., 15-49.
- Perveen, N., Barot, S., Maire, V., Cotrufo, M.F., Shahzad, T., Blagodatskaya, E., Stewart, C.E., Ding, W., Siddiq, M.R., Dimassi, B., 2019. Universality of priming effect: an analysis using thirty five soils with contrasted properties sampled from five continents. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 134, 162-171.
- Poirier, V., Basile-Doelsch, I., Balesdent, J., Borschneck, D., Whalen, J.K., Angers, D.A., 2020. Organo-Mineral Interactions Are More Important for Organic Matter Retention in Subsoil Than Topsoil. Soil Systems 4, 4.
- Preusser, S., Marhan, S., Poll, C., Kandeler, E., 2017. Microbial community response to changes in substrate availability and habitat conditions in a reciprocal subsoil transfer experiment. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 105, 138-152.
- Radcliffe, D.E., Rasmussen, T.C., Warrick, A., 2002. Soil water movement. Soil physics companion, 85-126.
- Rumpel, C., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2011. Deep soil organic matter—a key but poorly understood component of terrestrial C cycle. Plant and Soil 338, 143-158.
- Samson, M.-É., Chantigny, M.H., Vanasse, A., Menasseri-Aubry, S., Angers, D.A., 2020. Coarse mineral-associated organic matter is a pivotal fraction for SOM formation and is sensitive to the quality of organic inputs. Soil Biology and Biochemistry, 107935.
- Schmidt, M.W., Torn, M.S., Abiven, S., Dittmar, T., Guggenberger, G., Janssens, I.A., Kleber, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Lehmann, J., Manning, D.A., 2011. Persistence of soil organic matter as an ecosystem property. Nature 478, 49.
- Scott, E.E., Rothstein, D.E., 2014. The dynamic exchange of dissolved organic matter percolating through six diverse soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 69, 83-92.
- Shahbaz, M., Kuzyakov, Y., Maqsood, S., Wendland, M., Heitkamp, F., 2017. Decadal nitrogen fertilization decreases mineral-associated and subsoil carbon: a 32-year study. Land degradation & development 28, 1463-1472.
- Sorensen, L., 1981. Carbon-nitrogen relationships during the humification of cellulose in soils containing different amounts of clay. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 13, 313-321.
- Steinmann, T., Welp, G., Wolf, A., Holbeck, B., Große-Rüschkamp, T., Amelung, W., 2016. Repeated monitoring of organic carbon stocks after eight years reveals carbon losses from
intensively managed agricultural soils in Western Germany. Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science 179, 355-366.

- Thomsen, I.K., Christensen, B.T., 2010. Carbon sequestration in soils with annual inputs of maize biomass and maize-derived animal manure: Evidence from 13C abundance. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 42, 1643-1646.
- Torn, M.S., Lapenis, A.G., Timofeev, A., Fischer, M.L., Babikov, B.V., Harden, J.W., 2002. Organic carbon and carbon isotopes in modern and 100-year-old-soil archives of the Russian steppe. Global Change Biology 8, 941-953.
- Unger, P.W., 1988. Residue management effects on soil temperature. Soil Science Society of America Journal 52, 1777-1782.
- Wang, Y., Amundson, R., Trumbore, S., 1999. The impact of land use change on C turnover in soils. Global Biogeochemical Cycles 13, 47-57

Tables

Table 5-1. Analysis of the variance (p values) for the effects of tillage, residue management, fertilizer source and their interactions on C and N stocks of different soil layers (0-15, 15-30, 30-45 and 45-60 cm) as well as the whole soil profile (0-60 cm) in a Sandy loam and a Silty clay soil after 8 yrs.

	0-15 cm		15-30 cm		30-45 cm		45-60 cm		0-60 cm	
	С	Ν	С	Ν	С	Ν	С	Ν	С	Ν
Sandy loam	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F	Pr > F
Tillage	0.022	0.988	0.850	0.200	0.405	0.246	0.483	0.330	0.738	0.389
Fertilizer	0.638	0.746	0.333	0.353	0.625	0.708	0.494	0.718	0.227	0.390
Tillage x Fertilizer	0.834	0.450	0.591	0.375	0.908	0.747	0.988	0.468	0.953	0.493
Residue	0.207	0.320	0.836	0.815	0.706	0.693	0.544	0.737	0.902	0.856
Tillage x Residue	0.107	0.082	0.404	0.577	0.101	0.132	0.109	0.077	0.083	0.084
Fertilizer x Residue	0.902	0.981	0.060	0.033	0.211	0.269	0.370	0.733	0.168	0.279
Tillage x Fertilizer x Residue	0.180	0.057	0.032	0.008	0.034	0.044	0.013	0.045	0.018	0.021
Silty clay										
Tillage	0.437	0.069	0.863	0.389	0.633	0.766	0.899	0.050	0.988	0.842
Fertilizer	0.051	0.006	0.327	0.227	0.560	0.740	0.517	0.684	0.404	0.366
Tillage x Fertilizer	0.279	0.199	0.167	0.251	0.409	0.434	0.621	0.939	0.477	0.580
Residue	0.099	0.039	0.592	0.773	0.679	0.973	0.722	0.533	0.525	0.870
Tillage x Residue	0.967	0.611	0.412	0.283	0.938	0.912	0.089	0.142	0.724	0.981
Fertilizer x Residue	0.536	0.682	0.453	0.180	0.061	0.040	0.808	0.440	0.212	0.053
Tillage x Fertilizer x Residue	0.579	0.358	0.486	0.543	0.433	0.565	0.212	0.645	0.329	0.509

Table 5-2. Effects of tillage, residue management and fertilizer source on C and N stocks (kg m²) of the top layer (0-15 cm) of sandy loam and silty clay soils after 8 yrs. Different uppercase letters indicate statistical differences in C stocks, whereas different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks.

	Sandy	loam	Silty	clay
	С	Ν	С	Ν
	kg m ⁻²	kg m ⁻²	kg m ⁻²	kg m ⁻²
Minimum tillage	4.75 A	0.37	7.13	0.60
Mouldboard plowing	4.39 B	0.37	6.66	0.57
Residues retained	4.67	0.38	7.03	0.59 a
Residues harvested	4.47	0.37	6.76	0.57 b
Solid poultry manure	4.46	0.36	7.28 A	0.6 a
Liquid dairy manure	4.76	0.38	7.09 A	0.59 ab
Liquid swine manure	4.71	0.38	6.82 AB	0.59 ab
NPK	4.46	0.36	6.78 AB	0.57 bc
РК	4.47	0.36	6.52 B	0.56 c

Table 5-3. Interactive effects of fertilizer source and crop residue management on N stocks in the 30-45 cm layer of the silty clay soil. Different lowescase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks across treatments.

Fertilizer source	Residue	N stock (
	management	m⁻⁄)				
Solid poultry manure	Retained	0.34 abc				
	Harvested	0.36 abc				
Liquid dairy manure	Retained	0.36 abc				
	Harvested	0.38 ac				
Liquid swine manure	Retained	0.28 cd				
	Harvested	0.40 a				
NPK	Retained	0.39 ab				
	Harvested	0.34 abc				
РК	Retained	0.38 ab				
	Harvested	0.28 bd				





Figure 5-1. Interactive effects of soil tillage, fertilizer source and crop residue management on C (a) and N (b) stocks in the sandy loam soil at different detpths (0-15 cm, 15-30 cm, 30-45 cm and 45-60 cm). Different uppercase letters indicate statistical differences in C stocks, whereas different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stocks. The dashed lines represent the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment (2009), when no statistical differences were found among plots.



Figure 5-2. Interactive effects of soil tillage, fertilizer source and crop residue management on total C and N stocks in the sandy loam soil. Different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stock. The dashed lines represent the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment (spring 2009), when no statistical differences were found among plots.



Figure 5-3. Interactive effects of soil tillage, fertilizer source and crop residue management on total C (a) and N (b) stocks in the sandy loam soil. Different lowercase letters indicate statistical differences in N stock. The dashed lines represent the average C and N stocks at the beginning of experiment (spring 2009), when no statistical differences were found among plots.

Supplementary material

Table 5-4 (S1). Total (2009-2016) C and N input from crop residues and manures for all treatment combinations in the sandy loam and the silty clay soil.

		Sandy loam							Silty clay						
		Cstrow	Cfertillizer	Total C	N straw	N fertilizer	Total N		Cstraw	Cfertilizer	Total C	N straw	N fertilizer	Total N	
		T ha-1	Tha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1	Tha-1	T ha-1		T ha-1	Tha-1	T ha-1	T ha-1	Tha-1	T ha-1	
Mou	Idboard plowing							-							
Poultry	Residus harvested	0.00	9.52	9.52	0.00	0.79	0.79		0.00	8.23	8.23	0.00	0.79	0.79	
	Residus retained	15.17	9.52	24.69	0.22	0.79	1.01		15.16	8.23	23.39	0.26	0.79	1.05	
Dairy	Residus harvested	0.00	8.71	8.71	0.00	0.82	0.82		0.00	7.84	7.84	0.00	0.82	0.82	
	Residus retained	13.65	8.71	22.36	0.22	0.82	1.04		13.37	7.84	21.21	0.20	0.82	1.02	
Swine	Residus harvested	0.00	4.46	4.46	0.00	0.72	0.72		0.00	3.75	3.75	0.00	0.72	0.72	
	Residus retained	14.72	4.46	19.18	0.22	0.72	0.94		15.38	3.75	19.13	0.27	0.72	0.99	
NPK	Residus harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.60		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.60	
	Residus retained	17.45	0.00	17.45	0.31	0.60	0.91		17.12	0.00	17.12	0.36	0.60	0.96	
РК	Residus harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Residus retained	11.02	0.00	11.02	0.17	0.00	0.17		13.76	0.00	13.76	0.21	0.00	0.21	
M	linimum tillage														
Poultry	Residus harvested	0.00	9.52	9.52	0.00	0.79	0.79		0.00	8.23	8.23	0.00	0.79	0.79	
	Residus retained	13.42	9.52	22.94	0.20	0.79	0.99		15.37	8.23	23.60	0.24	0.79	1.03	
Dairy	Residus harvested	0.00	8.71	8.71	0.00	0.82	0.82		0.00	7.77	7.77	0.00	0.82	0.82	
	Residus retained	13.62	8.71	22.33	0.20	0.82	1.02		14.50	7.77	22.27	0.23	0.82	1.05	
Swine	Residus harvested	0.00	4.46	4.46	0.00	0.72	0.72		0.00	3.75	3.75	0.00	0.72	0.72	
	Residus retained	14.62	4.46	19.08	0.23	0.72	0.95		15.14	3.75	18.88	0.24	0.72	0.96	
NPK	Residus harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.60		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.60	
	Residus retained	15.21	0.00	15.21	0.25	0.60	0.85		17.06	0.00	17.06	0.31	0.60	0.91	
РК	Residus harvested	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Residus retained	9.06	0.00	9.06	0.14	0.00	0.14		11.53	0.00	11.53	0.17	0.00	0.17	

Chapitre 6 - Discussion générale

Ce projet de recherche est basé sur un essai de long terme (9 ans) situé à St-Augustinde-Desmaures, près de Québec, au Canada. L'essai au champ, répété sur deux Brunisols à texture contrastée, permet de comparer l'effet de 20 itinéraires techniques combinant différents régimes de travail du sol, de gestion des résidus de culture et cinq différentes sources fertilisantes sur le rendement des cultures, sur différents paramètres liés à la santé et à la fertilité du sol de surface ainsi que sur les stocks totaux de carbone et d'azote sur toute la profondeur du profil. Dans cette discussion, nous ferons d'abord un retour sur les hypothèses de départ et verrons comment les différents chapitres de la thèse ont pu y répondre. S'en suivra ensuite une synthèse des résultats et des principales contributions de ce projet ainsi qu'une discussion sur les implications pratiques de ces résultats dans un contexte agroenvironnemental. Finalement, nous aborderons quelques perspectives de recherche futures inspirées par les résultats obtenus dans cette thèse.

Retour sur les hypothèses

Voici un rappel des hypothèses qui ont été posées ainsi que les grandes conclusions qui en ressortent.

Hypothèses 1 à 4, chapitre 1 ó Rendement des cultures

- L'effet des pratiques de conservation du sol sur le rendement des cultures est influencé par le type de sol et les contions météorologiques de la saison de croissance.
- (2) En travail réduit, les rendements sont inférieurs si les résidus sont retournés au sol, peu importe la texture de sol et particulièrement lors des premières années de transition.
- (3) L'engrais minéral complet permet d'obtenir de meilleurs rendements de maïs et de blé dans les premières années, mais une utilisation répétée d'engrais de

ferme permet de diminuer cet écart après quelques années, en raison de l'arrière-effet des engrais de ferme sur la fertilité du sol.

(4) Parmi les engrais de ferme, le lisier de porc produit de meilleurs rendements que le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille en raison de sa plus forte proportion en azote facilement assimilable et de son faible rapport C/N.

L'hypothèse 1 a été confirmée dans le chapitre 1, puisque la réponse des cultures aux différents itinéraires techniques variait selon le type de sol et les conditions météorologiques annuelles, mais aussi parfois selon l'espèce végétale. Dans l'argile limoneuse, le travail réduit du sol a permis d'obtenir des rendements en grain moyens supérieurs (8 à 30 %) à ceux du labour dans toutes les cultures, après une période de transition de 6 ans (figure 6 -1). Dans le loam sableux, toutefois, l'effet du travail réduit sur le rendement dépendait principalement de l'espèce végétale cultivée; il avait un effet bénéfique sur le rendement du soya, un effet négatif sur le rendement du maïs et peu d'effet sur le rendement du blé (figure 6 -1).



Figure 6-1. Gains ou pertes de rendement (%) avec le travail réduit du sol, lorsque comparé au labour, selon le type de sol, l'année et la culture. L'astérisque indique les différences statistiquement significatives.

L'effet des engrais de ferme sur le rendement dépendait lui aussi de l'espèce cultivée, du type de sol, mais aussi des conditions météorologiques de la saison de croissance. De façon générale, mais surtout dans l'argile limoneuse, les engrais de ferme donnaient des rendements en blé semblables à ceux de l'engrais minéral. Dans le maïs, toutefois, les engrais de ferme ne semblaient pas couvrir les besoins nutritifs de la culture, surtout lorsque les conditions climatiques ne favorisaient pas la minéralisation de la matière organique du sol. Si les conditions de croissance étaient plutôt favorables en 2011, la saison 2014 a été marquée par un début de saison froid et humide et la saison 2017, par un été très sec. Ainsi, l'écart de rendement entre les engrais de ferme et l'engrais minéral variait entre 0 et 38 %, dépendamment de l'année de croissance (figure 6 -2). Dans le soya, nous avons plutôt observé un « arrière-effet » positif des engrais de ferme sur le rendement en grain, mais dans le loam sableux seulement.



Figure 6-2. Représentation graphique de l'effet de l'année de croissance sur le rendement moyen de maïs grain obtenu avec différentes sources fertilisantes.

Cet essai a également permis de confirmer partiellement la deuxième hypothèse. Le retour des résidus de culture au champ a diminué les rendements lorsque combiné au travail réduit du sol, mais pour la culture de maïs seulement, du fait des importantes quantités de résidus au sol laissées par la culture de blé précédente. Les conditions froides et humides prévalant sur les sites à l'étude (13°C et 757 mm de pluie pendant la saison de croissance, en moyenne) et la fertilisation azotée correspondant aux plus faibles doses recommandées peuvent également contribuer à expliquer ce résultat. En

effet, le maïs est particulièrement sensible aux conditions froides et humides et à la faible disponibilité de l'azote qu'aurait pu engendrer la présence de résidus au sol.

L'hypothèse 3 a été infirmée (Chapitre 1). En effet, l'écart de rendement entre l'engrais minéral et les engrais de ferme était principalement modulé par le type de culture et par les conditions météorologiques annuelles. Les résultats obtenus ne nous ont donc pas permis d'observer un arrière-effet positif des engrais de ferme sur le rendement des cultures de maïs et de blé pour la période étudiée (9 ans). En revanche, l'année du soya, aucun engrais n'était appliqué à la culture et nous avons pu noter des rendements en grain plus élevés sur les parcelles fertilisées avec de l'engrais de ferme les années précédentes, mais sur le loam sableux seulement. Notre dispositif ne permettait toutefois pas de définir si cela était dû à une meilleure capacité du sol à fournir de l'azote aux plantes (arrière-effet des engrais de ferme), ou à l'effet positif des engrais de ferme sur la biomasse microbienne du sol et donc, sur la nodulation du soya.

L'hypothèse 4 a été confirmée. Selon les analyses d'engrais, le rapport C/N moyen du lisier de porc était de 6,3 alors que ceux du fumier de volaille et du lisier de bovin étaient de 12,8 et 10,8, respectivement. La concentration moyenne de NH₄-N était également plus élevée dans le lisier de porc (5 g kg⁻¹) que dans le fumier de volaille (3 g kg⁻¹) et le lisier de bovin (1 g kg⁻¹). Si l'utilisation des trois engrais de ferme a généralement permis d'obtenir des rendements semblables pour le soya et le blé dans l'argile limoneuse, l'utilisation du lisier de porc s'est favorablement démarquée pour le blé dans le loam sableux et pour le maïs, dans les deux types de sol. Il semble donc que la plus grande disponibilité de l'azote dans le lisier de porc ait été favorable au rendement lorsque le sol possède une capacité à fournir de l'azote à la plante (loam sableux) moins élevée et/ou pour des cultures très exigeantes en azote (maïs).

- (5) Les pratiques de conservation du sol améliorent les indicateurs de santé du sol (concentration en C organique, biomasse microbienne, diamètre des agrégats, etc...) en surface, peu importe la texture du sol.
- (6) Lorsque combiné au travail réduit du sol, le retour des résidus de culture et l'utilisation des engrais de ferme ont un effet encore plus positif sur les indicateurs de santé du sol en surface.
- (7) Comme en milieu naturel, la matière organique particulaire (POM) des sols arables est associée aux résidus végétaux alors que la matière organique fine (FOM) est majoritairement associée aux produits issus de l'activité microbienne.
- (8) Les résidus de culture améliorent la stabilité des agrégats, mais ont des effets bénéfiques modérés sur l'accumulation de carbone et d'azote dans les fractions fines et stables de la matière organique du sol.
- (9) Les engrais de ferme favorisent l'accumulation de carbone et d'azote à la fois dans les fractions grossières et labiles et dans les fractions fines et stables de la matière organique du sol.

Les pratiques de conservation des sols ont généralement permis d'atteindre des valeurs des indicateurs de santé du sol supérieures à celles obtenues avec les pratiques conventionnelles, peu importe le type de sol (Hypothèse 5; Figure 6-3). Toutefois, l'effet du travail du sol était généralement plus important dans le loam sableux que dans l'argile limoneuse alors que l'effet positif des engrais de ferme et des résidus de

culture sur la biomasse microbienne et la matière organique en surface était plus important dans l'argile limoneuse que dans le loam sableux (Chapitre 2).



Figure 6-3. Résumé graphique des différences (%) entre les engrais de ferme et le contrôle minéral sans N, le retour des résidus au sol et leur récolte ainsi que le travail réduit du sol et le labour) pour différents indicateurs de santé du sol en surface (matière organique, biomasse microbienne, diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables à l'eau).

Nos résultats ont permis de confirmer partiellement l'hypothèse 6; le retour des résidus avait généralement un effet positif plus marqué sur le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables et sur la biomasse microbienne en surface lorsque combiné au travail réduit du sol que lorsque combiné au labour (Chapitre 2). Sous travail réduit, le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables était de 10 à 13 % supérieur lorsque les résidus étaient retournés au sol que lorsqu'ils étaient exportés. La biomasse microbienne était pour sa part 19 % plus élevée lorsque le travail réduit du sol était jumelé au retour des résidus plutôt qu'à leur récolte. L'interaction entre les deux pratiques n'était toutefois pas significative pour la biomasse microbienne dans le loam sableux. De plus, aucune interaction significative n'a été observée entre le travail du sol et la source fertilisante.

L'hypothèse 7 a été confirmée par une analyse en composantes principales. Peu importe la texture du brunisol étudié (loam sableux ou argile limoneuse), la matière organique particulaire (POM) a été associée aux hydrates de carbone végétaux, alors que la matière organique fine (FOM) a été associée aux sucres aminés microbiens (Chapitre 2).

L'hypothèse 8 a également été confirmée grâce aux résultats obtenus dans les chapitres 2 et 3. Le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables était plus élevé lorsque les résidus de culture étaient retournés au sol (Chapitre 2), mais n'a pas engendré d'accumulation de matière organique stable (fine-MAOM) dans la couche de surface (Chapitre 3).

L'hypothèse 9 a également été partiellement confirmée. Les engrais de ferme n'ont eu aucun effet sur la fraction légère (LF) en surface, mais l'utilisation de fumier de volaille et de lisier de bovin a favorisé l'accumulation de carbone (et parfois d'azote) dans la fraction particulaire lourde (coarse-MAOM) dans les deux types de sols, et dans la fraction fine et lourde (fine-MAOM) dans l'argile limoneuse seulement (Chapitre 3). L'utilisation de lisier de porc, quant à elle, n'a engendré aucune différence dans les concentrations de carbone et d'azote de la coarse-MAOM et la fine-MAOM, lorsque comparée à l'engrais minéral. Ceci a été attribué à une concentration élevée en azote disponible, qui ont pu favoriser respectivement le lessivage du carbone sous la couche d'échantillonnage (Chapitre 5) et/ou favoriser la minéralisation de la matière organique indigène du sol.

Hypothèses 10 et 11, chapitres 3 et 4 ó Fertilité du sol

- (10) L'utilisation d'engrais de ferme favorise l'accumulation préférentielle de C organique au sein de la coarse-MAOM
- (11) La coarse-MAOM est une fraction clé dans le cycle de l'azote des sols agricoles et contribue au phénomène d'arrière-effet des engrais de ferme.

L'hypothèse 10 a été confirmée. Le fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovin ont favorisé l'accumulation de carbone (deux sols) et l'accumulation d'azote (argile limoneuse) dans la coarse-MAOM. Cette fraction s'est révélée être la plus réactive aux apports de matière organique fraîche et à la qualité biochimique de ceux-ci (Chapitre 3). Sans être confirmée ou infirmée, l'hypothèse 11 a été longuement développée dans une revue de littérature faisant l'objet d'un article d'opinion (Chapitre 4). Cette revue de littérature porte à croire que la coarse-MAOM pourrait effectivement être une fraction ayant un rôle dans le relargage de l'azote, pouvant être associée au phénomène d'arrière-effet des engrais de ferme. Ce chapitre pose donc les bases pour stimuler la recherche sur le sujet afin de mieux intégrer les notions de fertilité du sol dans les modèles actuels de stabilisation du carbone dans le sol.

Hypothèses 12 à 13, chapitres 5 ó Uv q e m c i g "f g "e c t d q p g "g v "f ø c / q

- (12) Lorsque tout le profil (0-60 cm) est considéré, le travail du sol n'a aucun effet sur le stock total de carbone du sol, mais le retour des résidus et l'utilisation d'engrais organique favorisent le stockage de carbone.
- (13) Dans un horizon décennal, les effets des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de C et de N des couches profondes du sol sont faibles par rapport aux effets sur les couches de surface.

L'hypothèse 12 a été partiellement confirmée, mais nos résultats ont contribué à nuancer cette affirmation en fonction des combinaisons de pratiques culturales en jeu et du type de sol (Chapitre 5). Dans le loam sableux, les stocks de carbone étaient plus élevés en surface sous travail réduit, mais les stocks de carbone et d'azote étaient les plus élevés dans les couches profondes lorsque le labour était jumelé au retour des résidus et à l'utilisation d'engrais organique liquide (particulièrement le lisier de porc). Il a été supposé qu'une accumulation de matière organique dans les couches profondes du sol, où le taux de minéralisation de la matière organique est réduit, favorise la préservation de la matière organique y étant accumulée. Inversement, dans l'argile limoneuse, les résidus de culture et les engrais organiques ont contribué à augmenter les stocks de carbone et d'azote, mais l'utilisation de lisier de porc a contribué à augmenter les stocks d'azote en profondeur lorsque les résidus étaient récoltés.

L'hypothèse 13 a été infirmée (Chapitre 5). Nos résultats ont démontré que sous des conditions froides et humides, l'effet des pratiques culturales sur les stocks de carbone et d'azote dans les couches profondes du sol pouvait être substantiel, même à une échelle de temps décennale. Les changements de stock en profondeur étaient différents de ceux observés en surface et étaient numériquement assez importants pour contribuer de façon significative aux changements de stocks lorsque l'ensemble du profil était considéré.

Synthèse des résultats et principales contributions du projet Rendement

Ce projet a permis de mettre en lumière l'effet déterminant des interactions entre les pratiques agricoles sur le rendement des cultures (Chapitre 1). Il a été démontré que l'importance de ces interactions pouvait être modulée par l'espèce de plante, le type de sol et/ou les conditions climatiques annuelles. Ces résultats rappellent qu'une compréhension intégrée de tous les facteurs d'influence du système est nécessaire afin de prédire les effets de différentes pratiques agricoles sur le rendement (Van Den Putte *et al.*, 2010; Rusinamhodzi *et al.*, 2011; Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015).

Par exemple, dans l'argile limoneuse, le travail réduit du sol a permis d'obtenir des rendements supérieurs au labour dans toutes les cultures, mais seulement à partir de la sixième année. Ce résultat confirme donc qu'une période de transition de quelques années puisse être nécessaire avant d'observer un effet positif du travail réduit du sol sur le rendement (Pagliai *et al.*, 2004). Nos résultats ont également confirmé qu'une quantité importante de résidus retournée au sol en travail réduit pouvait affecter les rendements sous un climat froid et humide (Nyborg *et al.*, 1995; Cantero-Martínez *et al.*, 2003; Turmel *et al.*, 2015). Bien que ces informations soient déjà assez bien reconnues dans la littérature, nos résultats ont également mis en lumière des résultats et des interactions beaucoup moins connus.

L'engrais minéral complet était souvent associé à des rendements supérieurs dans le maïs et parfois aussi dans le blé. Toutefois, les engrais de ferme ont toujours permis d'obtenir des rendements supérieurs à ceux obtenus avec le contrôle minéral sans azote (PK). Une des forces de ce dispositif était de pouvoir comparer, sous les mêmes conditions pédoclimatiques, l'utilisation de trois engrais de ferme différents ayant des propriétés biochimiques contrastées. Parmi les engrais de ferme étudiés, le lisier de porc était celui qui permettait généralement d'obtenir les meilleurs rendements, sans doute en raison de son faible rapport C/N et de sa concentration élevée en NH4-N (Morvan et Nicolardot, 2009; Webb *et al.*, 2013). Par contre, lorsque des engrais organiques liquides tels que le lisier de bovin et le lisier de porc étaient combinés au retour des résidus au sol dans l'argile limoneuse, une diminution des rendements en maïs était observée. Cet effet n'était pas observé lorsque le retour des résidus était combiné à des engrais solides (engrais minéral et fumier de volaille). Il est donc probable que l'importante quantité de résidus de blé laissée au sol ait absorbé les engrais liquides, rendant les éléments nutritifs moins disponibles pour la plante.

L'efficacité des différentes sources fertilisantes était également étroitement liée aux conditions climatiques lors de la saison de croissance, particulièrement dans le maïs. Alors que l'engrais minéral permettait d'obtenir des rendements acceptables de maïs, peu importe les années, le rendement des cultures fertilisées avec les engrais de ferme était de beaucoup inférieur lorsque les conditions climatiques ne favorisaient pas la minéralisation de ces engrais et de la matière organique du sol. Cette différence de rendement entre l'engrais minéral et les engrais de ferme variait entre 0 et 38 %, selon l'année. Cela s'explique sans doute en raison de la forte exigence de cette culture en azote combinée au fait que la fertilisation azotée appliquée à cette culture dans notre essai correspondait aux plus faibles doses recommandées pour la région (120 kg N ha⁻¹), en raison des contraintes liées au phosphore lorsque des engrais de ferme sont utilisés (CRAAQ, 2010).

De plus, de façon générale, les rendements étaient davantage sensibles à la source fertilisante (minérale ou organique) dans le loam sableux que dans l'argile limoneuse.

Il a donc été proposé qu'en raison de sa teneur en matière organique initiale plus élevée, le sol fournit plus facilement les nutriments nécessaires à la plante dans l'argile limoneuse, alors que dans le loam sableux, elle dépend davantage des apports exogènes de matière organique et de nutriments (Bloom *et al.*, 1988; Webb *et al.*, 1998). Dans le loam sableux, ayant une capacité potentiellement plus faible à fournir de l'azote à la plante (Schipanski *et al.*, 2010), les différences de rendement en fonction de la source fertilisante étaient plus élevées et un arrière-effet positif des engrais de ferme sur le rendement du soya a également été observé. Cet arrière-effet positif des engrais de fermit du sol suivant une application répétée de ces engrais organiques (Nyiraneza *et al.* 2010; Webb *et al.*, 2013) et/ou en raison d'une meilleure nodulation sous ces conditions (Ganeshamurthy et Sammi Reddy, 2000).

Le chapitre 1 de cette thèse a donc mis en lumière l'importance de considérer les interactions entre les différentes pratiques agricoles et les facteurs pédoclimatiques du site afin de prédire convenablement la réponse des cultures à l'adoption de pratiques de conservation des sols. Les observations faites dans ce chapitre permettront donc de contribuer à une meilleure interprétation de la variabilité des résultats observée dans la littérature en améliorant notre compréhension des interactions complexes qui soustendent l'effet net de différentes pratiques agricoles sur le rendement. Ultimement, ces résultats pourraient donc contribuer à l'amélioration des modèles mathématiques mécanistiques qui visent à prédire l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur le rendement des cultures dans différents contextes pédoclimatiques et culturaux.

Santé et fertilité du sol

Les résultats issus du chapitre 2 ont permis de confirmer que les pratiques de conservation sont généralement bénéfiques pour les indicateurs de santé du sol (concentration en C organique, biomasse microbienne et diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables) dans la couche de surface (Blanco et Lal, 2008). Nos résultats ont démontré que même dans un horizon décennal, l'influence des pratiques agricoles sur les indicateurs de santé du sol peut être substantielle et peut aussi varier en fonction

des combinaisons de pratiques et/ou du type de sol. Tel que déjà proposé par certains auteurs (Bissonnette et al., 2001; Viaud et al., 2011), nos résultats ont démontré une synergie entre le travail réduit et le retour de résidus et d'engrais de ferme au sol. Ce résultat s'explique entre autres par le fait que le travail réduit concentre les amendements organiques en surface alors que le labour dilue les apports organiques sur une plus grande profondeur (Angers et Eriksen-Hamel, 2008). Par ailleurs, l'interaction triple entre le travail du sol, la gestion des résidus et la source fertilisante était plus importante pour le lisier de porc que pour les autres sources fertilisantes. En effet, sous travail réduit, la gestion des résidus de culture avait un impact majeur sur l'effet positif du lisier de porc sur la POM. Toutefois, le lisier de porc n'avait aucun effet positif sur la POM en surface lorsque les résidus étaient exportés. Une tendance semblable (mais moins forte) a aussi été observée pour le lisier de bovin. Tel qu'avancé dans le chapitre sur les rendements, la présence de résidus de culture en surface a probablement favorisé l'absorption des engrais organiques liquides et leur rétention à la surface du sol. En cas d'absence de résidus de culture, ces engrais à haute concentration en composés solubles (Morvan et al., 2006) ont possiblement migré plus facilement vers des couches plus profondes, ce qui explique qu'ils aient pu avoir moins d'effets bénéfiques sur la concentration de POM en surface, mais un effet important sur les stocks de carbone et d'azote plus en profondeur (Chapitre 5).

Par ailleurs, malgré des rendements beaucoup plus élevés avec l'engrais minéral complet (NPK) par rapport au contrôle minéral sans azote (PK), l'utilisation d'engrais minéral n'a généralement pas engendré d'amélioration des attributs de santé du sol en surface. Tel qu'observé par Le Guillou *et al.* (2012), l'utilisation d'engrais de synthèse a peut-être favorisé la présence de populations de bactéries opportunistes qui consomment les agents de liaison organiques bio disponibles associés à la formation des macro-agrégats, ce qui risque de diminuer le potentiel de stabilisation de la POM et, par le fait même, le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats. Selon Khan et al. (2007), l'ajout d'azote minéral au sol pourrait également accélérer la minéralisation de la matière organique du sol.

Grâce à une analyse multivariée évaluant les relations entre les différentes propriétés de sol étudiées, le chapitre 2 a permis de démontrer que dans les deux types de sols, la POM était reliée aux hydrates de carbone végétaux alors que la matière organique fine (FOM) était plutôt reliée aux acides aminés microbiens. Cette observation est en phase avec les modèles conceptuels de stabilisation de la matière organique qui attribuent la formation de matière organique fine et stable dans le sol à l'efficacité d'utilisation microbienne (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). Elle supporte également les récentes publications qui suggèrent que la nécromasse microbienne constitue une part importante de la matière organique stable dans le sol (Miltner *et al.*, 2012; Kallenbach *et al.*, 2015). Nos résultats ont démontré que le travail réduit du sol et le retour des résidus étaient les meilleures stratégies pour augmenter la concentration de POM en surface, quel que soit le type de sol. Cependant, l'utilisation de certains engrais de ferme (fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovin) a eu un effet important sur certains précurseurs de la FOM (acides muramiques microbiens), mais dans l'argile limoneuse seulement.

Les résultats obtenus au chapitre 2 ont été développés dans le chapitre 3. En effet, si le fractionnement de la matière organique du sol effectué dans le chapitre 2 n'était fait que sur la base de la taille des particules (POM > 53 μ m et FOM < 53 μ m), le fractionnement utilisé au chapitre 3 a permis de joindre les notions de taille et de densité, ce qui a permis de préciser les résultats et de mieux comprendre les mécanismes biogéochimiques et physiques impliqués dans les cycles du carbone et de l'azote. Dans ce chapitre, la matière organique du sol était divisée en matière organique légère (> 53 μ m et < 1.7 g cm⁻³; LF), en POM lourde (> 53 μ m et > 1.7 g cm⁻³; coarse-MAOM) et en FOM lourde (< 53 μ m et > 1.7 g cm⁻³; fine-MAOM), sous prémisse que la densité, jumelée à la taille, est un bon indicateur du degré d'association de la matière organique aux particules minérales et donc, de son degré de stabilité dans le sol. Une fois de plus, les résultats obtenus ont contribué à (1) l'avancement des connaissances concernant la stabilisation de la matière organique dans le sol ainsi qu'à (2) une meilleure compréhension des cycles du carbone et de l'azote sous différentes combinaisons de pratiques culturales.

Nos résultats ont montré que les résidus de culture matures à rapport C/N élevé et contenant une concentration importante de composés structuraux augmentent la concentration en carbone de la LF et de la coarse-MAOM, mais n'ont aucun effet sur la concentration en azote de ces fractions, ni sur la concentration en carbone et en azote de la fine-MAOM. Inversement, le fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovin n'ont eu aucun effet sur la LF, mais ont permis d'augmenter la concentration de carbone et d'azote de la coarse-MAOM et de la fine-MAOM dans l'argile limoneuse et la concentration de carbone dans la coarse-MAOM dans le loam sableux. Le lisier de porc, quant à lui, ne s'est pas différencié de l'engrais minéral complet (NPK) et du contrôle minéral sans azote (PK). Ces résultats confirment l'importance de la qualité biochimique de l'apport sur la répartition du C et du N organique au sein de fractions plus ou moins stables de la matière organique du sol (Cotrufo et al., 2013). Ils ont également confirmé une hypothèse posée par Hassink et al. (1997) stipulant que la quantité de carbone dans les fractions grossières de la matière organique du sol dépend principalement des pratiques culturales, alors que l'accumulation de carbone dans les fractions plus fines et stables est largement modulée par la texture du sol. Finalement, en accord avec Li et al. (2013), nos résultats ont montré des réponses différentes de la LF et la coarse-MAOM aux différentes pratiques culturales (gestion des résidus et source fertilisante) ainsi qu'une différence biochimique évidente entre ces deux fractions (C/N 26-30 et 15-16, respectivement). Nous avons proposé que la coarse-MAOM, qui contient des fragments organiques grossiers partiellement dégradés et recouverts de fines particules minérales (Maillard et al., 2015) représente l'une des premières étapes de la stabilisation des apports frais de matière organique au sol, résultant de la colonisation des fragments organiques grossiers par les microorganismes (Golchin et al., 1995). Lors de leur maturation, ces complexes grossiers pourraient également contribuer à la formation de fine-MAOM et donc, à la formation de complexes organo-minéraux stables dans le sol (Robertson et al., 2019) par la voie physique de formation de la matière organique du sol telle que décrite par Cotrufo et al. (2015).

Dans le chapitre 4, nous avons utilisé les résultats issus des 4 premiers chapitres et fait une revue exhaustive de la littérature pour évaluer la pertinence de considérer la coarse-MAOM comme une fraction pivot de la matière organique du sol constituant une fraction primordiale pouvant mener à la stabilisation des apports organiques dans le sol et assurer une partie substantielle du phénomène de relargage de l'azote incluant le phénomène d'arrière-effet. Le modèle conceptuel proposé suggère que les composés organiques végétaux qui se retrouvent physiquement intégrés à la matrice du sol soient rapidement colonisés par les microorganismes, car ils représentent pour eux une source d'énergie facilement disponible. Les microorganismes qui se nourrissent de cette matière fraîche se multiplient et produisent du mucilage et autres métabolites qui favorisent l'enrichissement en azote du noyau organique et son enrobage par des particules minérales fines et réactives (Tisdall et Oades, 1982 ; Golchin et al., 1994), ce qui donne lieu à la formation de la fraction « coarse-MAOM ». Puisque ces complexes sont majoritairement stabilisés dans le sol par des agents biologiques temporaires (Elliott, 1986; Oades et Waters, 1991; Golchin et al., 1994), la perturbation mécanique de ses agents de stabilisation temporaires et/ou la maturation de la coarse-MAOM pourrait mener au relargage de molécules riches en azote dans le sol et éventuellement à leur minéralisation, ce qui pourrait contribuer à la fertilité du sol et au phénomène d'arrière-effet (Figure 6 -4). De leur côté, les fines particules minérales ayant enrobé les complexes de la coarse-MAOM pourraient conserver certaines de leurs associations étroites avec des produits microbiens et même faciliter l'accumulation ultérieure de particules organiques sur ces surfaces minérales pour former la fine-MAOM (Kopittke et al., 2018). Ainsi, nous avons conclu qu'il pourrait être pertinent de considérer la coarse-MAOM comme une fraction d'intérêt pour intégrer la fertilité du sol dans les modèles récents de stabilisation de la matière organique du sol, tel que celui décrit par Robertson *et al.* (2019).

Nous avons également intégré à ce modèle conceptuel l'effet potentiel des pratiques agricoles sur la formation et la stabilité de la coarse-MAOM. Nous avons conclu que si le labour pouvait favoriser le taux d'oxydation de la coarse-MAOM en surface, et donc, la fertilité du sol à court terme ainsi que la formation de complexes plus fins et plus stables (fine-MAOM), il risquait aussi de réduire, à plus long terme, les réserves de nutriments du sol (Balesdent *et al.*, 2000). La répartition des apports frais de matière organique au sein de fractions plus ou moins labiles de la matière organique du sol dépend quant à elle de la qualité biochimique de l'apport (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). Ainsi, les résidus de cultures contenant des concentrations élevées en composés structuraux et un rapport C/N relativement élevé passent d'abord par la LF avant d'être dégradés par les microorganismes du sol et intégrés dans la coarse-MAOM. Leur intégration au



Figure 6-4. Schéma montrant l'évolution de la coarse-MAOM dans le sol suite à sa maturation et/ou à la perturbation mécanique de ses agents de stabilisation.

sein de ces complexes est donc dictée par l'efficacité d'utilisation microbienne laquelle est elle-même influencée par différents facteurs biotiques et abiotiques (Cotrufo *et al.*, 2013). En revanche, nous avons estimé que les engrais de ferme contenant une certaine proportion de fragments organiques grossiers, mais également une concentration importante de molécules organiques riches en azote (lisier de bovin et fumier de volaille) puissent favoriser à la fois l'accumulation de carbone et d'azote dans la coarse-MAOM et aussi dans la fine-MAOM, lorsque la présence de surfaces minérales réactives le permet. Le lisier de porc, quant à lui, semble être un cas à part, peut-être en raison de sa plus faible concentration en carbone et en fragments grossiers et de sa haute concentration en NH₄-N et en composés solubles (Morvan *et al.*, 2006). Ces caractéristiques pourraient stimuler la minéralisation de la matière organique du sol (Angers *et al.*, 2010) et donc possiblement expliquer l'influence moins marquée de ce type d'effluent sur la formation de coarse-MAOM.

Jusqu'à maintenant, la coarse-MAOM a reçu très peu d'attention dans la littérature. Le chapitre 4 pose donc de nouvelles bases pour stimuler la recherche sur les rôles spécifiques de cette fraction physique de la matière organique du sol dans les cycles du carbone et de l'azote. Dans ce chapitre, nous reconnaissons également que les méthodes utilisées pour le fractionnement granulo-densimétrique de la matière organique du sol peuvent causer des artéfacts (Magid *et al.*, 1996) ou encore que les résultats puissent être particulièrement sensibles aux spécificités de la méthode mise en œuvre et même à l'utilisateur (Poeplau *et al.*, 2013). Plus d'études seront donc également nécessaires pour évaluer la pertinence et la reproductivité de cette méthode de fractionnement ainsi que pour confirmer le rôle fonctionnel de la coarse-MAOM dans la fertilité des sols.

Stocks de carbone $g v " f \phi c / q v g$

Dans le chapitre 5, un échantillonnage du sol en profondeur (jusqu'à 60 cm) a permis d'évaluer l'effet des différentes pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de carbone et d'azote dans les différentes couches de sol et sur tout le profil de sol. Tel qu'observé dans les chapitres 2 et 3, les pratiques de conservation des sols (travail réduit, retour des résidus et utilisations d'engrais organiques) ont généralement (mais pas toujours) engendré des stocks de carbone et d'azote plus élevés que leurs homologues conventionnels dans la couche 0-15 cm. Les effets positifs des pratiques de conservation observés en surface dans les chapitres 2 (0-10 cm) et 3 (0-5 cm) étaient sans doute plus importants que dans le chapitre 5 (0-15 cm) en raison d'une concentration importante des effets à la surface du sol. Le chapitre 5 nous a toutefois permis d'observer des effets très différenciés et complexes des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks de carbone et d'azote en profondeur. Nos travaux ont donc démontré que les pratiques qui améliorent les indicateurs de qualité du sol en surface (Chapitres 2 et 3), ne sont pas nécessairement les mêmes que celles qui permettent de stocker le plus de carbone dans le sol lorsque la totalité du profil est considérée (Chapitre 5).

Dans le loam sableux, sous labour, le retour des résidus a engendré des stocks de carbone et d'azote plus élevés en profondeur que l'exportation des résidus, lorsque combinés à l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme liquide. En accord avec les résultats des chapitres 2 et 3, nous avons supposé que la teneur élevée en matière organique soluble des engrais organiques liquides (et particulièrement du lisier de porc) (Morvan et al., 2006) ait favorisé le lessivage et l'accumulation de la matière organique issue de ces engrais vers les couches plus profondes de sol (Angers *et al.*, 2010). Cette accumulation de C et de N en profondeur était particulièrement marquée lorsque la présence de résidus de culture sous la couche de labour en permettait la rétention. Inversement, lorsque la parcelle était fertilisée avec de l'engrais minéral complet (NPK), le retour des résidus, jumelé au labour engendrait des stocks de carbone et d'azote plus faibles en profondeur. Nous avons avancé que cela puisse être lié à une question de stœchiométrie. En effet, puisque le C/N de la matière organique du sol est généralement plus faible en profondeur (Schmidt et al., 2011; Poirier et al., 2020), l'apport de matière organique riche en carbone a pu pousser la communauté microbienne à miner de l'azote dans la matière organique indigène pour arriver à métaboliser cet apport accru d'énergie (Fontaine et al., 2007; Perveen et al., 2019). Ceci serait en appui à certaines études qui soulignent l'importance de la stœchiométrie entre les apports de matière organique fraîche et la matière organique indigène (Mooshammer et al., 2014). Ce phénomène pourrait même être tout particulièrement important en profondeur, puisque

la matière organique y possède généralement une forme biochimique particulièrement labile et une protection physique plus limitée que la matière organique de surface dû à un plus faible degré d'agrégation (Rumpel et Kögel-Knabner, 2011).

Dans l'argile limoneuse, nous avons observé une interaction entre la gestion des résidus de culture et la source fertilisante dans la couche 30-45 cm. Les stocks d'azote étaient plus élevés à cette profondeur lorsque le lisier de porc était combiné à l'exportation des résidus que lorsqu'il était combiné au retour des résidus. L'absence de résidus a probablement favorisé le lessivage des composés solubles riches en azote contenus dans le lisier de porc vers les couches plus profondes (Angers *et al.*, 2010) via les fentes de retrait présentes dans ce sol contenant des argiles gonflantes (Simard et al. 1990). Dans les deux sols, lorsque l'ensemble du profil (0-60 cm) était considéré, les changements en profondeur après seulement 8 ans étaient tellement plus importants que les changements en surface, qu'ils dictaient la réponse globale (profil entier) des stocks de carbone et d'azote aux pratiques agricoles. Ce résultat est très important et représente une avancée majeure dans nos connaissances. En effet, ils remettent en question l'idée largement acceptée que les couches profondes du sol constituent un pool de carbone très stable et relativement peu sensible aux changements de pratiques (Wang et al., 1999). Plusieurs éléments peuvent contribuer à expliquer pourquoi, dans notre projet, des changements aussi importants ont été observés en profondeur. En effet, il est de plus en plus reconnu que le carbone profond soit relativement labile, mais que le principal facteur expliquant son temps de résidence élevé dans le sol soit la quantité limitée de carbone et de nutriments atteignant ces profondeurs (Fontaine et al., 2007; Chabbi et al., 2009; Preusser et al., 2017). Dans notre dispositif, toutefois, le labour, ainsi que l'utilisation d'engrais organique liquide ont pu favoriser l'apport de matière organique fraîche et de nutriments aux couches profondes. De plus, le climat humide et le bilan hydrique élevé du site à l'étude, typique du climat de l'est canadien, ont également pu favoriser le transport vertical de l'eau et des solutés. À cet effet, nos résultats ont également permis de montrer que dans de telles circonstances, la texture du sol peut influencer les changements de stocks en profondeur sous différentes combinaisons de pratiques agricoles, probablement parce qu'ils ont favorisé des modes

de transport de l'eau et des solutés différents. Ainsi, un transport majoritairement matriciel pourrait favoriser les interactions entre les solutés et la matrice de sol et donc favoriser les phénomènes de sorption-coprécipitation et l'activité microbienne en profondeur (Kaiser et Kalbitz, 2012). Ceci pourrait expliquer pourquoi les changements de stocks dans les couches profondes étaient si importants dans le loam sableux. Inversement, dans l'argile limoneuse, le transport de l'eau et des solutés se faisait probablement majoritairement par écoulement préférentiel (fentes de retrait). En effet, ces sols riches en dépôts fluvio-glaciaires issus du retrait de la mer de Champlain contiennent des argiles gonflantes qui engendrent la formation de fentes de retrait lors de l'assèchement des sols (Simard et al., 1990). Ceci pourrait concentrer le passage de l'eau et des nutriments au niveau des fentes de retrait et ainsi limiter leurs interactions avec le reste de la matrice du sol, expliquant pourquoi l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur les stocks profonds dans l'argile limoneuse était différent que dans le loam sableux. Ces résultats suggèrent que les modes de transport de l'eau, en plus des pratiques agricoles, puissent avoir un effet majeur sur les stocks profonds, du moins en climat froid et humide et lorsque le bilan hydrique est élevé.

Intégration des chapitres et applications pratiques des résultats

Les résultats obtenus dans les cinq chapitres de cette thèse ont bien démontré la complexité des facteurs anthropiques, climatiques, biogéochimiques et physiques pouvant affecter l'efficacité agroenvironnementale des systèmes de production en grandes cultures. À cette complexité intrinsèque, s'ajoutent également les enjeux financiers, sociaux et environnementaux liés à la gestion des entreprises agricoles. En effet, pour subsister sur le long terme, les productions agricoles doivent évidemment être rentables, et donc, obtenir des rendements acceptables. Les producteurs doivent également tenir compte de la durabilité de leur entreprise. Celle-ci passe inévitablement par le maintien, ou encore l'amélioration de la santé de leurs sols. Finalement les producteurs agricoles doivent également tenir compte des préoccupations croissantes de la population et des institutions gouvernementales liées à l'impact de l'agriculture

sur l'environnement et sur la santé humaine. À l'échelle locale et internationale, on sent donc une mouvance vers le développement d'une approche agroécologique en agriculture afin de faire face aux enjeux économiques, sociaux et environnementaux liés à la production de denrées alimentaires. Bien qu'il soit aisé de s'imaginer qu'en adoptant une pratique agricole dite de « conservation » un producteur s'assure d'optimiser à la fois les services agronomiques et environnementaux rendus par les sols agricoles, la réalité s'avère un peu plus complexe.

Ce projet de thèse présente l'avantage majeur de pouvoir intégrer, sous les mêmes conditions climatiques, sur deux types de sol, l'effet des pratiques agricoles et de leurs combinaisons à la fois sur le rendement des cultures, la santé du sol en surface et les stocks de carbone et d'azote sur la totalité du profil (0-60 cm). Cela nous permet donc, pour un même système, de tirer des conclusions plus générales concernant l'efficacité agroenvironnementale des différents itinéraires techniques à l'étude et d'avoir une perspective plus globale et critique concernant les meilleures pratiques à adopter pour assurer la durabilité de nos systèmes de productions agricoles.

Le travail réduit du sol est présenté comme étant le principal pilier des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures. Ses effets bénéfiques sur certaines propriétés biologiques, chimiques et physiques du sol en surface sont bien établis (Hobbs et al., 2008) et se répercutent parfois positivement sur le rendement des cultures, particulièrement sous les climats secs où la disponibilité de l'eau est un des principaux facteurs limitant le rendement des cultures (Ogle *et al.* 2012). Cependant, nos résultats, comme ceux de plusieurs autres chercheurs (Van den Putte *et al.*, 2010; Toliver *et al.*, 2012; Pittelkow *et al.*, 2015) ont démontré que sous des conditions froides et humides, l'effet du travail réduit du sol sur le rendement pouvait être plus variable. De petites réductions de rendements peuvent être acceptées par le producteur en semis direct ou en travail réduit du sol en raison des coûts de production inférieurs (Soane *et al.*, 2012). Ces diminutions de rendements pourraient toutefois être amoindries en considérant la réalité culturale et pédoclimatique de chaque entreprise, en adaptant l'itinéraire technique pour faciliter la transition vers ce mode de production. Dans notre étude, par

exemple, les rendements en maïs étaient significativement plus bas sous travail réduit du sol que sous labour, mais seulement si les résidus de paille étaient retournés au sol l'année précédente. Puisque les rendements de blé étaient très élevés, la quantité importante de paille laissée en surface l'année précédant la culture du maïs a pu ralentir le réchauffement du sol au printemps et/ou contribuer à immobiliser l'azote des engrais appliqués au printemps (Chapitre 1). Le fait que le maïs soit une plante particulièrement exigeante en termes de chaleur et d'azote (van Wijk *et al.* 1959) explique sans doute pourquoi l'effet de cette interaction sur le rendement a été observé seulement pour cette culture et non pour le blé et le soya. Une solution possible pourrait être d'adapter l'itinéraire technique en fonction de la rotation de culture et de la quantité de paille produite. Dans le cas du blé, la récolte et la vente de la paille offre un avantage financier non négligeable et pourrait améliorer grandement les rendements subséquents de maïs.

Outre l'accumulation de résidus à la surface du sol, le travail réduit peut également impacter les rendements en complexifiant la lutte aux mauvaises herbes, et particulièrement celle des adventices pérennes (Brainard et al., 2013). Dans notre essai, nous avons d'ailleurs observé une plus grande prévalence de sétaire glauque dans le loam sableux, lorsque les parcelles de maïs étaient cultivées sous travail réduit du sol (Chapitre 1). La gestion des adventices est un enjeu bien connu des producteurs ayant remis en cause le labour (Brainard et al., 2013). En raison de l'absence de travail mécanique du sol en profondeur, le travail réduit s'accompagne souvent d'une utilisation accrue d'herbicides (Day et al. 1999). Entre autres choses, cet enjeu fait en sorte que les bienfaits du travail réduit du sol sur l'environnement sont parfois débattus (Lankoski et al. 2006). De plus en plus de chercheurs et de producteurs s'intéressent maintenant à l'utilisation des cultures intercalaires et/ou cultures de couverture pour faciliter la lutte aux mauvaises herbes dans les systèmes sous travail réduit, ou semis direct du sol (Teasdale, 1996; Mirsky et al., 2012; Masilionyte et al., 2017). Cette stratégie de lutte intégrée demande cependant le développement d'un plan de culture bien raisonné, afin d'éviter que ces espèces ne deviennent un foyer d'infection des pathogènes pour les cultures principales et/ou qu'elles entrent en compétition avec celles-ci pour l'eau et les nutriments (Mirsky et al., 2012). Pour une transition réussie,

l'adoption du travail réduit du sol devrait donc idéalement être encadrée par des professionnels, afin d'adapter au mieux l'application de cette pratique en tenant compte des spécificités pédoclimatiques et culturales de l'entreprise.

Cependant, sur le long terme, une transition réussie vers le travail réduit du sol pourrait s'accompagner d'un effet bénéfique sur l'accumulation de matière organique labile à la surface du sol (POM, Chapitres 2 et 5). Ceci pourrait éventuellement mener à une amélioration de la fertilité du sol (Benites, 2008). Or, dans les premières années de transition, il se peut qu'une fertilisation azotée accrue soit nécessaire pour maintenir les rendements (Ogle et al., 2012) tout en bâtissant la réserve de matière organique du sol en surface. D'ailleurs, nos résultats ont démontré l'importance de la qualité biochimique de la source fertilisante pour le rendement des cultures et pour l'amélioration de la santé et de la fertilité du sol. Ainsi, même si l'engrais minéral a généralement permis d'obtenir de meilleurs rendements de maïs que les engrais de ferme (Chapitre 1), aucune amélioration des paramètres de santé et de fertilité du sol n'a été notée sous fertilisation minérale (Chapitres 2 et 3). Inversement, le fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovin ont eu des impacts positifs évidents sur le sol (Chapitres 2 et 3), mais les rendements obtenus dans le maïs avec les engrais de ferme n'étaient pas toujours économiquement viables (par exemple, 5 à 6 T ha⁻¹ de maïs avec le lisier de bovin; Chapitre 1). En effet, un des principaux enjeux pour la valorisation des engrais de ferme est lié à leur forte concentration en phosphore, par rapport à leur concentration en azote. Les quantités d'engrais de ferme à appliquer pour combler convenablement les besoins en azote du maïs résultent presque inévitablement en un dépassement de ses besoins en phosphore de la culture (CRAAQ, 2010). Ceci peut avoir un impact environnemental important puisqu'un excès de phosphore appliqué au sol peut mener vers d'importants problèmes d'eutrophisation des plans d'eau (Daniel et al., 1998).

Puisque les rendements avec engrais de ferme étaient très acceptables dans le blé et ont parfois même engendré un arrière-effet positif sur le rendement du soya (Chapitre 1), l'idéal serait sans doute de valoriser les engrais de ferme dans le blé, mais de considérer une stratégie de fertilisation différente pour le maïs, étant donné ses besoins très élevés en azote. Instinctivement, il serait tentant de recommander l'application d'engrais de ferme au printemps suivi d'un application en post-levée d'engrais minéral pour combler les besoins en azote de la culture sans dépasser les doses recommandées de phosphore (CRAAQ, 2010). Or, certaines études ont suggéré que la fertilisation « mixte » puisse annuler l'effet positif des engrais de ferme sur les propriétés du sol en surface (Maillard et Angers, 2014; Maillard et al., 2015). Une stratégie intéressante permettant de conserver les effets positifs sur les propriétés du sol tout en permettant d'augmenter les rendements en maïs serait de considérer l'utilisation d'un engrais vert de légumineuses à l'automne précédant la culture du maïs. En effet, les légumineuses ont l'avantage de fixer de l'azote atmosphérique dans le sol tout en apportant une quantité limitée de phosphore lors de leur retour au sol. Une méta-analyse réalisée par Charles et al. (2017) a mis en évidence un apport équivalent en azote minéral de 86 kg N ha⁻¹ et un gain de rendement de 16 à 27 % lorsqu'une culture de couverture de légumineuses était implantée l'année précédant une culture principale de maïs ou de blé. De plus, jumelées à l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme, les cultures de couverture ont l'avantage d'améliorer la rétention de l'azote des engrais de ferme dans le sol et de diminuer le lessivage des éléments nutritifs vers les cours d'eau (Parkin et al., 2006; Cambardella et al., 2010). Puisque les engrais de ferme favorisent l'accumulation de carbone dans les fractions labiles de la matière organique des sols (POM, LF et coarse-MAOM; Chapitres 3 et 4) et contribuent de façon significative à la fertilité du sol sur le long terme (Nyiraneza et al. 2010; Webb et al., 2013), la combinaison d'engrais de ferme et de cultures de couverture pourrait être une stratégie de choix pour la durabilité de ces systèmes agronomiques, sans compromettre les rendements et la viabilité économique de l'entreprise.

D'autres problématiques peuvent toutefois découler de l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme. Par exemple, les engrais de ferme peuvent contenir des quantités significatives d'antibiotiques (Ji *et al.* 2012) et de métaux lourds (Nicholson *et al.*, 2003). Leur utilisation répétée peut ainsi contribuer à l'accumulation de ces éléments dans le sol et ultimement perturber l'abondance, la diversité et le fonctionnement du microbiome édaphique (Smejkalova *et al.*, 2003; Ji *et al.* 2012). Cet enjeu n'est pas sans rappeler l'interconnexion entre tous les éléments d'un agroécosystème, la complexité de leurs interactions et le défi que représente le développement de systèmes culturaux productifs, durables et respectueux de l'environnement.

À ce sujet, d'ailleurs, de plus en plus d'instances privées et gouvernementales s'intéressent actuellement au rôle potentiel des sols agricoles dans la lutte aux changements climatiques, en raison de leur potentiel de séquestration de carbone atmosphérique (Minasny *et al.*, 2017). Toutefois, le stockage de carbone dans les sols agricoles demeure, à l'heure actuelle, une question encore débattue (Bertrand *et al.* 2019; Ranganathan *et al.* 2020) et surtout, complexe à appliquer à grande échelle. En effet, les pratiques permettant d'améliorer le rendement des cultures et/ou d'améliorer la santé des sols ont un effet direct sur la rentabilité et la durabilité de l'entreprise agricole. Ceci peut faciliter l'acceptabilité de ces pratiques et leur adoption par un plus grand nombre de producteurs. En revanche, un producteur agricole sera peu enclin à adopter de son propre gré des pratiques permettant de stocker du carbone atmosphérique dans les sols, à moins qu'elles n'aient aussi un impact positif sur la santé du sol ou sur le rendement de ses cultures.

Au cours des dernières décennies, certains pays ont développé des politiques offrant des incitatifs financiers liés à la séquestration de carbone dans les sols agricoles. Dans ce contexte, les incitatifs doivent être basés sur des prédictions adaptées au contexte spécifique de la ferme en question, ou encore sur des mesures directes des stocks de carbone à la ferme. Chacune à leur manière, ces méthodes posent toutefois d'importants défis (Smith *et al.* 2020). En effet, le suivi des stocks de carbone à l'échelle de la ferme serait très coûteux, notamment en raison de la variabilité spatiale, qui exige un nombre élevé d'échantillons pour arriver à une évaluation représentative des changements de stocks sous différentes pratiques agricoles (de Gruijter *et al.*, 2018). De plus, il a été démontré que l'amplitude du changement annuel de stock de carbone causé par les conditions météorologiques annuelles puisse facilement dépasser les changements de stock liés à un changement de pratique agricole, du moins, sur une échelle de temps décennale (Antle *et al.*, 2003; Dimassi *et al.*, 2014; Paustian *et al.*, 2016). Les prédictions issues de modèles mathématiques prédictifs, quant à elles, devraient

théoriquement tenir compte des paramètres pédoclimatiques et culturaux liés à la réalité de l'entreprise, peu importe l'échelle de temps étudiée. Cependant, la précision de ces modèles demeure discutable, notamment en raison de l'importante variabilité spatiale à l'échelle de la ferme et de la pléiade de facteurs à considérer et à paramétrer dans le modèle pour obtenir des prédictions fiables (Otway *et al.*, 2020).

Il ne faut pas non plus que ces incitatifs financiers liés à la séquestration de carbone encouragent certaines pratiques agricoles qui pourraient permettre de stocker du carbone dans le sol, mais qui nuiraient à la santé du sol en surface et/ou au rendement des cultures. Or, tel qu'observé dans ce projet, les pratiques qui permettent d'améliorer les rendements et/ou la santé du sol en surface ne sont pas nécessairement toujours les mêmes que celles qui permettent de stocker le plus de carbone dans tout le profil, du mois dans un horizon d'une dizaine d'années (Chapitres 1, 2, 3 et 5). Par exemple, les stocks de carbone les plus élevés dans le loam sableux étaient mesurés lorsque le labour était combiné au retour de résidus au sol et à l'utilisation de lisier de bovin ou de lisier de porc. Ces combinaisons de pratiques menaient à une importante accumulation de carbone sous la couche de labour, où les conditions froides et humides en ralentissaient la décomposition. Cependant, tel que discuté dans les sections précédentes, le labour et le lisier de porc n'étaient pas favorables à la santé du sol en surface (Chapitres 2 et 3) et l'utilisation du lisier de bovin ne permettait pas toujours d'obtenir des rendements viables pour le producteur (Chapitre 1). La question se pose alors à savoir si le stockage de carbone dans le sol sous ces conditions revêt un véritable avantage agroenvironnemental.

Même s'ils n'ont pas été étudiés dans cette étude, il est important de prendre en compte les autres processus majeurs, mais parfois sous-estimés entrant également en jeu dans l'équation. Par exemple, lorsqu'on s'intéresse au rôle à jouer des sols agricoles dans la lutte aux changements climatiques, la séquestration de CO₂ est souvent mise de l'avant, mais il ne faut pas omettre de considérer dans l'équation les autres gaz à effet de serre qui peuvent être produits par les sols agricoles. Ainsi, si une pratique agricole permet de stocker du carbone dans le sol, mais qu'elle engendre une libération semblable ou supérieure d'équivalents CO_2 sous forme de N₂O, son impact sur les changements climatiques ne sera pas nécessairement celui attendu (Li *et al.*, 2005; Zaehle et al., 2011). Des mesures ont été réalisées sur le dispositif de ce projet expérimental et leur analyse permettra de répondre à cette question.

De plus, jusqu'à maintenant, très peu d'études se sont intéressées à l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur le carbone profond. Or, nos résultats ont démontré un grand potentiel de réactivité sous les 15 premiers centimètres de sol. Sous les conditions de cette étude, les changements de stocks de carbone en profondeur étaient même si importants, qu'ils ont dicté la réponse globale du sol aux différents itinéraires techniques étudiés (Chapitre 5). Or, la dynamique du carbone profond est encore méconnue (Rumple et Kögel-Knabner, 2011). De récentes études proposent également que les mécanismes de stabilisation du carbone et les principaux facteurs les influençant soient différents en surface et en profondeur (Poirier *et al.*, 2020), ce qui peut engendrer une réponse contrastée des stocks de carbone à certaines pratiques selon la profondeur considérée (Osanai *et al.*, 2020).

Ainsi, pour offrir aux producteurs agricoles des incitatifs financiers pour leur contribution à la lutte aux changements climatiques, il faudrait idéalement que tous les facteurs susmentionnés soient pris en compte. Pour y parvenir, la science devra continuer le raffinement des outils prédictifs à l'échelle de la ferme, ou encore développer des outils de mesure au champ fiables, permettant de faire un échantillonnage rapide et à faible coût. D'ici là, ce genre d'incitatifs ne pourrait être basé que sur des estimations encore assez grossières, ou sur la recommandation à grande échelle de pratiques agricoles présentant peu d'incertitudes en fonction du contexte pédoclimatique et un faible niveau de risque pour les autres services agroenvironnementaux rendus par les sols. Par exemple, la science s'entend pour dire que le mode d'utilisation des terres est l'un des facteurs ayant le plus grand impact sur les stocks de carbone du sol (Guo et Gifford, 2002), notamment en raison des contrastes au niveau de la couverture du sol par les plantes dans le temps et dans l'espace. Ainsi, tel que proposé dans une méta-analyse réalisée par Poeplau et Don (2015), l'ajout de
culture de couvertures dans les systèmes de production de cultures annuelles pourrait permettre de stocker significativement plus de carbone dans le sol (~ 0.32 ± 0.08 Mg C ha⁻¹ année⁻¹), en plus d'avoir un effet bénéfique sur la santé du sol en surface (Fageria *et al.*, 2005) et d'avoir des effets potentiels bénéfiques sur le rendement des cultures principales (Charles *et al.* 2017). Recommandée à grande échelle, cette stratégie semblerait donc représenter beaucoup d'avantages et peu de risques agroenvironnementaux.

Perspectives de recherche

Différentes perspectives de recherche peuvent être proposées en regard aux travaux réalisés dans cette thèse. D'abord, nos résultats ont démontré que l'efficacité des engrais de ferme pour la fertilisation dépendait prioritairement des conditions climatiques et de la synchronisation entre les besoins de la culture et la minéralisation de la matière organique des apports et du sol (Chapitre1). Ainsi, pour diminuer la dépendance de nos systèmes culturaux aux engrais de synthèse tout en maintenant des rendements élevés, il faudra développer une meilleure compréhension des facteurs pédoclimatiques influençant la disponibilité de l'azote du sol pour la plante (Tremblay et al., 2012) et peut-être développer des outils permettant de mieux prédire la minéralisation de l'azote dans le sol au cours de la saison de croissance en fonction de certaines propriétés du sol et des conditions météorologiques. Plusieurs auteurs ont déjà tenté de développer ce genre d'outils (Luce et al., 2011; Tremblay et al., 2011). Par contre, il apparaît que, globalement, les régressions statistiques ne sont pas très bien adaptées à la prédiction de la fourniture d'azote du sol étant donné la grande dépendance de cette relation à d'autres facteurs spécifiques au site à l'étude (Ros, 2012). Une meilleure compréhension des mécanismes impliqués dans la fertilité du sol pourrait donc être nécessaire pour arriver à développer des modèles mécanistiques plus puissants qui arrivent à rendre compte d'une majorité de facteurs et de leurs différentes combinaisons sur la libération de l'azote dans le sol. Tel que proposé au chapitre 4, nous croyons qu'il serait intéressant de considérer la coarse-MAOM comme étant une fraction clé à étudier en lien avec la fertilité du sol. Cependant, puisque cette hypothèse est basée principalement sur une revue de la littérature, de plus amples expérimentations devraient être menées afin d'affirmer ou infirmer cette hypothèse. Par exemple, une expérience combinant du fractionnement granulométrique de la matière organique du sol et des incubations en laboratoire pourrait permettre de définir si la coarse-MAOM est effectivement un site préférentiel pour la minéralisation et le relargage d'azote dans le sol malgré sa taille relativement petite (moins de 10 % du stock total de N). Si c'est le cas, plusieurs autres études seront également nécessaires pour comprendre l'influence des facteurs pédoclimatiques et culturaux sur la formation et le taux de résidence de cette fraction dans le sol.

Les résultats obtenus dans les chapitres 2 et 3 concernant l'effet des pratiques agricoles et de leurs interactions sur les indicateurs de santé du sol en surface (10 cm) étaient généralement cohérents avec la littérature des dernières décennies sur le sujet (Ugarte et al., 2014), et nous ont également permis d'obtenir des preuves terrain en appui à certains concepts théoriques récents proposés concernant la stabilisation de la matière organique dans le sol (Cotrufo et al., 2013; Robertson et al., 2019). Cependant, les résultats du chapitre 5 ont démontré une réponse très importante des stocks de carbone et d'azote profonds (15-60 cm) aux pratiques culturales. Ces changements dans les stocks profonds se distinguaient de ceux observés en surface, proposant une différence dans les mécanismes de stabilisation selon la profondeur (Poirier et al., 2020). Les résultats que nous avons obtenus portent donc à croire que beaucoup d'efforts devront être déployés dans les prochaines années pour améliorer notre compréhension des mécanismes de stabilisation de la matière organique profonde et des facteurs qui l'influencent en milieu agricole. En effet, puisque le carbone profond représente plus de la moitié du stock global de carbone du sol (Harrison et al., 2011), des changements dans leur concentration en carbone pourraient avoir un impact majeur sur le rôle du sol en tant que puits ou source de carbone atmosphérique. Nos résultats suggèrent que, même dans un horizon décennal, de très grandes différences dans les stocks profonds de carbone et d'azote peuvent être observées, du moins en contexte agricole et sous un climat favorisant un bilan hydrique élevé. Nous croyons donc que de futures recherches devraient non seulement s'intéresser à une meilleure compréhension des mécanismes de stabilisation en profondeur, mais aussi intégrer les concepts liés aux différents mécanismes du transport vertical de l'eau et des solutés tel qu'influencé par les caractéristiques du sol et le climat. Seulement alors, il sera plus aisé de prédire l'effet d'une pratique agricole sur le stockage de carbone global dans le sol. En effet, la simple considération de l'effet d'une pratique sur l'accumulation de carbone en surface pourrait facilement nous mener à des conclusions erronées concernant le rôle de ce sol en tant que source ou puits de carbone.

Ensuite, ce projet nous a menés à constater que les disciplines s'intéressant aux cycles du carbone et de l'azote ont majoritairement évolué de façon parallèle au cours des dernières décennies, utilisant des méthodes différentes et s'intéressant souvent à des pas de temps complètement différents. Cependant, puisque le carbone et l'azote ont des cycles intimement liés à l'échelle globale (Bertrand *et al.*, 2019), mais jouent des rôles spécifiques et distinctifs au sein de différentes fractions de la matière organique du sol, nous encourageons un effort collectif pour considérer parallèlement ces deux éléments dans la recherche future sur la matière organique des sols. Idéalement, les modèles qui évaluent l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur la matière organique du sol devraient intégrer à la fois le cycle du carbone et de l'azote, au-delà de la seule prise en compte du rapport stochiométrique qui les relie, en décrivant les mécanismes de stabilisation différents qui prévalent selon la profondeur de sol ainsi que les notions de transport vertical de l'eau et des solutés vers les couches profondes afin de tenir compte de l'ensemble du profil en tant que puits ou source de carbone et d'azote.

Finalement, nos travaux ont permis de mettre en lumière toute la complexité des agroécosystèmes et la panoplie de facteurs pouvant influencer les différentes composantes des systèmes agricoles. Pour développer une approche agroécologique des systèmes de production de grandes cultures, basés sur des combinaisons de pratiques de plus en plus complexes, il faudra donc continuer d'approfondir notre compréhension des mécanismes biogéochimiques en jeu et des différents facteurs biotiques et abiotiques susceptibles de les influencer. Si ce projet a contribué à faire un pas de plus dans cette direction, plus d'études seront nécessaires pour approfondir notre compréhension des mécanismes impliqués et ainsi raffiner les modèles visant à prédire

l'effet des pratiques agricoles sur les services agronomiques et environnementaux rendus par les sols.

Références

- Angers, D., Chantigny, M., MacDonald, J., Rochette, P., Côté, D., 2010. Differential retention of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus in grassland soil profiles with long-term manure application. Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 86, 225-229.
- Angers, D., Eriksen-Hamel, N., 2008. Full-inversion tillage and organic carbon distribution in soil profiles: A meta-analysis. Soil Science Society of America Journal 72, 1370-1374.
- Antle, J., Capalbo, S., Mooney, S., Elliott, E., Paustian, K., 2003. Spatial heterogeneity, contract design, and the efficiency of carbon sequestration policies for agriculture. Journal of environmental economics and management 46, 231-250.
- Balesdent, J., Chenu, C., Balabane, M., 2000. Relationship of soil organic matter dynamics to physical protection and tillage. Soil and tillage research 53, 215-230.
- Benites, J., 2008. Effect of no-till on conservation of the soil and soil fertility. In: Goddard, T., Zoebisch, MA, Gan, YT, Ellis, W., Watson, A. and S. Sombatpanit (eds.). No-Till Farming Systems. Special Publication No. 3, 59-72.
- Bertrand, I., Viaud, V.r., Daufresne, T., Pellerin, S., Recous, S., 2019. Stoichiometry constraints challenge the potential of agroecological practices for the soil C storage. A review. Agronomy for Sustainable Development : Official journal of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) 39.
- Bissonnette, N., Angers, D.A., Simard, R.R., Lafond, J., 2001. Interactive effects of management practices on water-stable aggregation and organic matter of a Humic Gleysol. Canadian journal of soil science 81, 545-551.
- Blanco, H., Lal, R., 2008. Principles of soil conservation and management. Springer New York.
- Bloom, T., Sylvester-Bradley, R., Vaidyanathan, L., Murray, A., 1988. Apparent recovery of fertilizer nitrogen by winter wheat. Nitrogen efficiency in agricultural soils, 27-37.
- Brainard, D.C., Haramoto, E., Williams, M.M., Mirsky, S., 2013. Towards a no-till nospray future? Introduction to a symposium on nonchemical weed management for reduced-tillage cropping systems. Weed Technology 27, 190-192.
- Cambardella, C.A., Moorman, T.B., Singer, J.W., 2010. Soil nitrogen response to coupling cover crops with manure injection. Nutrient cycling in agroecosystems 87, 383-393.
- Cantero-Martínez, C., Angas, P., Lampurlanés, J., 2003. Growth, yield and water productivity of barley (Hordeum vulgare L.) affected by tillage and N fertilization in Mediterranean semiarid, rainfed conditions of Spain. Field Crops Research 84, 341-357.
- Chabbi, A., Kögel-Knabner, I., Rumpel, C., 2009. Stabilised carbon in subsoil horizons is located in spatially distinct parts of the soil profile. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 41, 256-261.
- Charles, A., Vanasse, A., Van Eerd, L.L., Tremblay, N., Bourgeois, G., Lynch, D.H., 2017. Meta-analysis of cover cropping systems: The effects of cover crops on subsequent cash crop yields and nitrogen contribution. ASA, CSSA and SSSA International Annual Meetings. Tampa, FL.

- Cotrufo, M.F., Soong, J.L., Horton, A.J., Campbell, E.E., Haddix, M.L., Wall, D.H., Parton, W.J., 2015. Formation of soil organic matter via biochemical and physical pathways of litter mass loss. Nature Geoscience 8, 776.
- Cotrufo, M.F., Wallenstein, M.D., Boot, C.M., Denef, K., Paul, E., 2013. The M icrobial E fficiency-M atrix S tabilization (MEMS) framework integrates plant litter decomposition with soil organic matter stabilization: do labile plant inputs form stable soil organic matter? Global Change Biology 19, 988-995.
- CRAAQ, 2010. Guide de référence en fertilisation. Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec, Québec, Canada.
- Daniel, T., Sharpley, A., Lemunyon, J., 1998. Agricultural phosphorus and eutrophication: A symposium overview. Journal of environmental quality 27, 251-257.
- Day, J., Hallahan, C., Sandretto, C., Lindamood, W., 1999. Pesticide use in US corn production: Does conservation tillage make a difference? Journal of soil and water conservation 54, 477-484.
- de Gruijter, J.J., McBratney, A.B., Minasny, B., Wheeler, I., Malone, B.P., Stockmann, U., 2018. Farm-scale soil carbon auditing. Pedometrics. Springer, pp. 693-720.
- Dimassi, B., Mary, B., Wylleman, R., Labreuche, J., Couture, D., Piraux, F., Cohan, J.-P., 2014. Long-term effect of contrasted tillage and crop management on soil carbon dynamics during 41 years. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 188, 134-146.
- Elliott, E., 1986. Aggregate structure and carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus in native and cultivated soils 1. Soil science society of America journal 50, 627-633.
- Fageria, N., Baligar, V., Bailey, B., 2005. Role of cover crops in improving soil and row crop productivity. Communications in soil science and plant analysis 36, 2733-2757.
- Fontaine, S., Barot, S., Barré, P., Bdioui, N., Mary, B., Rumpel, C., 2007. Stability of organic carbon in deep soil layers controlled by fresh carbon supply. Nature 450, 277-280.
- Ganeshamurthy, A.N., Sammi Reddy, K., 2000. Effect of Integrated Use of Farmyard Manure and Sulphur in a Soybean and Wheat Cropping System on Nodulation, Dry Matter Production and Chlorophyll Content of Soybean on Swell-Shrink Soils in Central India. Journal of Agronomy and Crop Science 185, 91-97.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J., Skjemstad, J., Clarke, P., 1994. Study of free and occluded particulate organic matter in soils by solid state 13C CP/MAS NMR spectroscopy and scanning electron microscopy. Soil Research 32, 285-309.
- Golchin, A., Oades, J., Skjemstad, J., Clarke, P., 1995. Structural and dynamic properties of soil organic-matter as reflected by 13C natural-abundance, pyrolysis mass-spectrometry and solid-state 13C NMR-spectroscopy in density fractions of an oxisol under forest and pasture. Soil Research 33, 59-76.
- Guo, L.B., Gifford, R., 2002. Soil carbon stocks and land use change: a meta analysis. Global change biology 8, 345-360.
- Harrison, R.B., Footen, P.W., Strahm, B.D., 2011. Deep soil horizons: contribution and importance to soil carbon pools and in assessing whole-ecosystem response to management and global change. Forest Science 57, 67-76.
- Hassink, J., 1997. The capacity of soils to preserve organic C and N by their association with clay and silt particles. Plant and Soil 191, 77-87.

- Hobbs, P.R., Sayre, K., Gupta, R., 2008. The role of conservation agriculture in sustainable agriculture. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences 363, 543-555.
- Ji, X., Shen, Q., Liu, F., Ma, J., Xu, G., Wang, Y., Wu, M., 2012. Antibiotic resistance gene abundances associated with antibiotics and heavy metals in animal manures and agricultural soils adjacent to feedlots in Shanghai; China. Journal of Hazardous Materials 235, 178-185.
- Kaiser, K., Kalbitz, K., 2012. Cycling downwards–dissolved organic matter in soils. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 52, 29-32.
- Kallenbach, C., Grandy, A.S., Frey, S., Diefendorf, A., 2015. Microbial physiology and necromass regulate agricultural soil carbon accumulation. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 91, 279-290.
- Khan, S.A., Mulvaney, R., Ellsworth, T., Boast, C.W., 2007. The myth of nitrogen fertilization for soil carbon sequestration. Journal of Environmental Quality 36, 1821-1832.
- Kopittke, P.M., Hernandez-Soriano, M.C., Dalal, R.C., Finn, D., Menzies, N.W., Hoeschen, C., Mueller, C.W., 2018. Nitrogen-rich microbial products provide new organo-mineral associations for the stabilization of soil organic matter. Global Change Biology 24, 1762-1770.
- Lankoski, J., Ollikainen, M., Uusitalo, P., 2006. No-till technology: benefits to farmers and the environment? Theoretical analysis and application to Finnish agriculture. European Review of Agricultural Economics 33, 193-221.
- Le Guillou, C., Angers, D., Maron, P., Leterme, P., Menasseri-Aubry, S., 2012. Linking microbial community to soil water-stable aggregation during crop residue decomposition. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 50, 126-133.
- Li, C., Frolking, S., Butterbach-Bahl, K., 2005. Carbon sequestration in arable soils is likely to increase nitrous oxide emissions, offsetting reductions in climate radiative forcing. Climatic Change 72, 321-338.
- Li, X.G., Chen, Z.M., Li, X.H., Ma, Q., Lin, Y., 2013. Chemical characteristics of physically separated soil organic matter fractions in contrasting arable soils. Soil Science 178, 128-137.
- Luce, M.S., Whalen, J.K., Ziadi, N., Zebarth, B.J., 2011. Nitrogen dynamics and indices to predict soil nitrogen supply in humid temperate soils. Advances in agronomy. Elsevier, pp. 55-102.
- Magid, J., Gorissen, A., Giller, K., 1996. In search of the elusive "active" fraction of soil organic matter: Three size-density fractionation methods for tracing the fate of homogeneously 14C-labelled plant materials. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 28, 89-99.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., 2014. Animal manure application and soil organic carbon stocks: a meta-analysis. Global Change Biology 20, 666-679.
- Maillard, É., Angers, D.A., Chantigny, M., Bittman, S., Rochette, P., Lévesque, G., Hunt, D., Parent, L.-É., 2015. Carbon accumulates in organo-mineral complexes after long-term liquid dairy manure application. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 202, 108-119.
- Masilionyte, L., Maiksteniene, S., Kriauciuniene, Z., Jablonskyte-Rasce, D., Zou, L., Sarauskis, E., 2017. Effect of cover crops in smothering weeds and volunteer plants in alternative farming systems. Crop Protection 91, 74-81.

- Miltner, A., Bombach, P., Schmidt-Brücken, B., Kästner, M., 2012. SOM genesis: microbial biomass as a significant source. Biogeochemistry 111, 41-55.
- Minasny, B., Malone, B.P., McBratney, A.B., Angers, D.A., Arrouays, D., Chambers, A., Chaplot, V., Chen, Z.-S., Cheng, K., Das, B.S., 2017. Soil carbon 4 per mille. Geoderma 292, 59-86.
- Mirsky, S.B., Ryan, M.R., Curran, W.S., Teasdale, J.R., Maul, J., Spargo, J.T., Moyer, J., Grantham, A.M., Weber, D., Way, T.R., 2012. Conservation tillage issues: Cover crop-based organic rotational no-till grain production in the mid-Atlantic region, USA. Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems 27, 31-40.
- Mooshammer, M., Wanek, W., Hämmerle, I., Fuchslueger, L., Hofhansl, F., Knoltsch, A., Schnecker, J., Takriti, M., Watzka, M., Wild, B., 2014. Adjustment of microbial nitrogen use efficiency to carbon: nitrogen imbalances regulates soil nitrogen cycling. Nature communications 5, 3694.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., 2009. Role of organic fractions on C decomposition and N mineralization of animal wastes in soil. Biology and Fertility of Soils 45, 477-486.
- Morvan, T., Nicolardot, B., Péan, L., 2006. Biochemical composition and kinetics of C and N mineralization of animal wastes: a typological approach. Biology and Fertility of Soils 42, 513-522.
- Nicholson, F.A., Smith, S.R., Alloway, B., Carlton-Smith, C., Chambers, B., 2003. An inventory of heavy metals inputs to agricultural soils in England and Wales. Science of the total environment 311, 205-219.
- Nyborg, M., Solberg, E.D., Izaurralde, R.C., Malhi, S.S., Molina-Ayala, M., 1995. Influence of long-term tillage, straw and N fertilizer on barley yield, plant-N uptake and soil-N balance. Soil & Tillage Research 36, 165-174.
- Nyiraneza, J., N'Dayegamiye, A., Gasser, M., Giroux, M., Grenier, M., Landry, C., Guertin, S., 2010. Soil and Crop Parameters Related to Corn Nitrogen Response in Eastern Canada. Agronomy Journal 102, 1478-1490.
- Oades, J., Waters, A., 1991. Aggregate hierarchy in soils. Soil Research 29, 815-828.
- Ogle, S.M., Swan, A., Paustian, K., 2012. No-till management impacts on crop productivity, carbon input and soil carbon sequestration. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 149, 37-49.
- Osanai, Y., Knox, O., Nachimuthu, G., Wilson, B., 2020. Contrasting agricultural management effects on soil organic carbon dynamics between topsoil and subsoil. Soil Research.
- Otway, J., 2020. Farm-Scale Modelling for the Spatio-Temporal Prediction of Soil Carbon Sequestration in South-Western Australia: Bringing Soil Carbon Modelling to the Farm Gate.
- Pagliai, M., Vignozzi, N., Pellegrini, S., 2004. Soil structure and the effect of management practices. Soil & Tillage Research 79, 131-143.
- Parkin, T., Kaspar, T., Singer, J., 2006. Cover crop effects on the fate of N following soil application of swine manure. Plant and Soil 289, 141-152.
- Paustian, K., Lehmann, J., Ogle, S., Reay, D., Robertson, G.P., Smith, P., 2016. Climate-smart soils. Nature 532, 49-57.
- Perveen, N., Barot, S., Maire, V., Cotrufo, M.F., Shahzad, T., Blagodatskaya, E., Stewart, C.E., Ding, W., Siddiq, M.R., Dimassi, B., 2019. Universality of priming effect: an analysis using thirty five soils with contrasted properties sampled from five continents. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 134, 162-171.

- Pittelkow, C.M., Linquist, B.A., Lundy, M.E., Liang, X., van Groenigen, K., Lee, J., van Gestel, N., Six, J., Venterea, R., van Kessel, C., 2015. When does no-till yield more? A global meta-analysis. Field Crops Research 183, 156-168.
- Poeplau, C., Don, A., 2015. Carbon sequestration in agricultural soils via cultivation of cover crops–A meta-analysis. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment 200, 33-41.
- Poeplau, C., Don, A., Dondini, M., Leifeld, J., Nemo, R., Schumacher, J., Senapati, N., Wiesmeier, M., 2013. Reproducibility of a soil organic carbon fractionation method to derive RothC carbon pools. European Journal of Soil Science 64, 735-746.
- Poirier, V., Angers, D.A., Whalen, J.K., 2014. Formation of millimetric-scale aggregates and associated retention of 13C–15N-labelled residues are greater in subsoil than topsoil. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 75, 45-53.
- Poirier, V., Basile-Doelsch, I., Balesdent, J., Borschneck, D., Whalen, J.K., Angers, D.A., 2020. Organo-Mineral Interactions Are More Important for Organic Matter Retention in Subsoil Than Topsoil. Soil Systems 4, 4.
- Preusser, S., Marhan, S., Poll, C., Kandeler, E., 2017. Microbial community response to changes in substrate availability and habitat conditions in a reciprocal subsoil transfer experiment. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 105, 138-152.
- Ranganathan, J., Waite, R., Searchinger, T and Zionts, J. (2020). Regenerative Agriculture: Good for Soil Health, but Limited Potential to Mitigate Climate Change. https://www.wri.org/blog/2020/05/regenerative-agriculture-climatechange.
- Robertson, A.D., Paustian, K., Ogle, S., Wallenstein, M.D., Lugato, E., Cotrufo, M.F., 2019. Unifying soil organic matter formation and persistence frameworks: the MEMS model. Biogeosciences 16, 1225-1248.
- Ros, G.H., 2012. Predicting soil N mineralization using organic matter fractions and soil properties: A re-analysis of literature data. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 45, 132-135.
- Rumpel, C., Kögel-Knabner, I., 2011. Deep soil organic matter—a key but poorly understood component of terrestrial C cycle. Plant and Soil 338, 143-158.
- Rusinamhodzi, L., Corbeels, M., Wijk, M., Rufino, M., Nyamangara, J., Giller, K., 2011. A meta-analysis of long-term effects of conservation agriculture on maize grain yield under rain-fed conditions. Agronomy for Sustainable Development 31, 657-673.
- Schipanski, M., Drinkwater, L., Russelle, M., 2010. Understanding the variability in soybean nitrogen fixation across agroecosystems. Plant and Soil 329, 379-397.
- Schmidt, M.W., Torn, M.S., Abiven, S., Dittmar, T., Guggenberger, G., Janssens, I.A., Kleber, M., Kögel-Knabner, I., Lehmann, J., Manning, D.A., 2011. Persistence of soil organic matter as an ecosystem property. Nature 478, 49.
- Simard, R., Zizka, J., KIMPE, C.D., 1990. Le prélevement du K par la luzerne (Medicago sativa L.) et sa dynamique dans 30 sols du Québec. Canadian Journal of Soil Science 70, 379-393.
- Smejkalova, M., Mikanova, O., Boruvka, L., 2003. Effects of heavy metal concentrations on biological activity of soil micro-organisms. Plant Soil and Environment 49, 321-326.
- Smith, P., Soussana, J.F., Angers, D., Schipper, L., Chenu, C., Rasse, D.P., Batjes, N.H., van Egmond, F., McNeill, S., Kuhnert, M., 2020. How to measure, report and

verify soil carbon change to realize the potential of soil carbon sequestration for atmospheric greenhouse gas removal. Global Change Biology 26, 219-241.

- Soane, B.D., Ball, B.C., Arvidsson, J., Basch, G., Moreno, F., Roger-Estrade, J., 2012. No-till in northern, western and south-western Europe: A review of problems and opportunities for crop production and the environment. Soil and Tillage Research 118, 66-87.
- Teasdale, J.R., 1996. Contribution of cover crops to weed management in sustainable agricultural systems. Journal of production agriculture 9, 475-479.
- Tisdall, J.M., Oades, J.M., 1982. Organic matter and water-stable aggregates in soils. Journal of Soil Science 33, 141-163.
- Toliver, D., Larson, J., Roberts, R., English, B., Ugarte, D., West, T., 2012. Effects of No-Till on Yields as Influenced by Crop and Environmental Factors. Agronomy Journal 104, 530-541.
- Tremblay, N., Bouroubi, M.Y., Vigneault, P., Bélec, C., 2011. Guidelines for in-season nitrogen application for maize (Zea mays L.) based on soil and terrain properties. Field Crops Research 122, 273-283.
- Tremblay, N., Bouroubi, Y., Belec, C., Mullen, R.W., Kitchen, N., Thomason, W., Ebelhar, S., Mengel, D., Raun, W., Francis, D.D., Vories, E., Ortiz-Monasterio, I., 2012. Corn Response to Nitrogen is Influenced by Soil Texture and Weather. Agronomy Journal 104, 1658-1671.
- Turmel, M.-S., Speratti, A., Baudron, F., Verhulst, N., Govaerts, B., 2015. Crop residue management and soil health: A systems analysis. Agricultural Systems 134, 6-16.
- Ugarte, C.M., Kwon, H., Andrews, S., Wander, M.M., 2014. A meta-analysis of soil organic matter response to soil management practices: an approach to evaluate conservation indicators. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation 69, 422-430.
- Van Den Putte, A., Govers, G., Diels, J., Gillijns, K., Demuzere, M., 2010. Assessing the effect of soil tillage on crop growth: A meta-regression analysis on European crop yields under conservation agriculture. European Journal of Agronomy 33, 231-241.
- Viaud, V., Angers, D., Parnaudeau, V., Morvan, T., Menasseri-Aubry, S., 2011. Response of organic matter to reduced tillage and animal manure in a temperate loamy soil. Soil Use and Management 27, 84-93.
- Wang, Y., Amundson, R., Trumbore, S., 1999. The impact of land use change on C turnover in soils. Global Biogeochemical Cycles 13, 47-57.
- Webb, J., Seeney, F., Sylvester-Bradley, R., 1998. The response to fertilizer nitrogen of cereals grown on sandy soils. Journal of Agricultural Science 130, 271-286.
- Webb, J., Sorensen, P., Velthof, G., Amon, B., Pinto, M., Rodhe, L., Salomon, E., Hutchings, N., Burczyk, P., Reid, J., 2013. An Assessment of the Variation of Manure Nitrogen Efficiency throughout Europe and an Appraisal of Means to Increase Manure-N Efficiency. Advances In Agronomy, 119, 371-442.
- Zaehle, S., Ciais, P., Friend, A.D., Prieur, V., 2011. Carbon benefits of anthropogenic reactive nitrogen offset by nitrous oxide emissions. Nature Geoscience 4, 601-605.

Conclusion

Nos travaux ont comparé l'efficacité agronomique (rendement et efficacité de la fertilisation azotée) et environnementale (santé du sol et stockage de carbone et d'azote) de 20 itinéraires techniques combinant le type de travail du sol, la gestion des résidus de culture et cinq différentes sources fertilisantes (organiques et minérales) sur deux sols à texture contrastée (loam sableux et argile limoneuse) sur une période de 9 ans. Selon les itinéraires techniques étudiés et les conditions pédoclimatiques des sites à l'étude, il semblerait qu'un certain compromis soit à faire entre le rendement, la santé du sol en surface et la séquestration de carbone sur tout le profil de sol. Bien que le travail réduit du sol ait généralement été bénéfique à la santé du sol en surface, son effet sur le rendement variait en fonction du type de sol et de la culture. De plus, cette pratique ne permettait pas de contribuer au stockage de carbone lorsque toute la profondeur du profil était considérée (0-60 cm). Le retour des résidus au sol a parfois eu des effets négatifs sur le rendement, mais certains effets positifs ont été observés sur la concentration de carbone dans la matière organique grossière en surface et sur le diamètre moyen pondéré des agrégats stables. La gestion des résidus de culture a également interagi de façon évidente avec les autres pratiques de l'itinéraire technique pour influencer les stocks de carbone et d'azote totaux du sol. Par exemple, lorsqu'ils étaient enfouis avec le labour dans le loam sableux et jumelés à l'utilisation d'engrais de ferme liquides, les résidus permettaient d'accumuler du carbone et de l'azote en profondeur. Or, lorsque de l'engrais minéral était utilisé, l'enfouissement des résidus de culture avec le labour causait une diminution des stocks de carbone et d'azote en profondeur, probablement en raison d'un débalancement au niveau de la stœchiométrie de la matière organique en profondeur. Globalement, l'effet des engrais de ferme était influencé par leur qualité biochimique. Ainsi, le lisier de porc permettait parfois d'obtenir de meilleurs rendements que le lisier de bovin et le fumier de volaille, mais son effet positif sur la santé du sol en surface était moins important. En revanche, le fumier de volaille et le lisier de bovin ont favorisé l'accumulation préférentielle de carbone et d'azote dans la fraction lourde et grossière de la matière organique du sol (coarse-MAOM). Selon la littérature, nous estimons que cette fraction puisse jouer un rôle majeur dans le maintien de la fertilité du sol à plus long terme. Or, sur la période de temps étudiée, ces engrais de ferme ne permettaient pas toujours d'obtenir des rendements aussi élevés que l'engrais minéral, particulièrement dans le maïs, étant donné ses besoins élevés en azote. Ces résultats soulignent la nécessité de développer des stratégies de culture optimisant les services agroenvironnementaux rendus par les sols agricoles. Tel que démontré dans cette thèse, les itinéraires techniques permettant d'y parvenir devront être adaptés aux réalités culturales et pédoclimatiques propres à chaque site. Pour parvenir à développer une approche agroécologique applicable à grande échelle, il faudra donc continuer de développer les modèles prédictifs et cela passera par une meilleure compréhension des facteurs influençant les mécanismes qui sous-tendent ces modèles. Étant donné la variabilité intrinsèque des agroécosystèmes, ces connaissances seront nécessaires afin d'assurer la rentabilité, la durabilité et la résilience de nos systèmes de production en grandes cultures tout en contribuant à la lutte et la résilience aux changements climatiques.

ANNEXE 1

Identification des parcelles et des traitements (Plans de champ)

<u>Légende</u>	
Parcelles :	1 à 120
Blocs :	1 à 6 (1 à 3 = champ 40NE; 4 à 6 = champ 65-66)
Travail du sol :	Travail réduit, labour.
Fertilisation :	contrôle minéral sans azote (PK), engrais minéral (NPK), lisier de porc, lisier de bovin laitier, fumier de volaille.

Gestion des résidus : Retournés au champ (r), exportés du champ (e).



DOCTORAT / ECOLOGIE BRETAGNE \GEOSCIENCES LOIRE / AGRONOMIE ALIMENTATION



agriculture • alimentation • environnement



Titre : Efficacité agroenvironnementale des pratiques de conservation des sols en grandes cultures : Rendement des cultures et dynamique du carbone et de l'azote dans les sols

Mots clés : Agroécologie, santé du sol, fertilité du sol, stocks de carbone du sol

Résumé: L'objectif de cette étude était de comparer l'effet de 20 itinéraires techniques combinant le type de travail du sol (travail réduit, labour), la gestion des résidus de culture (récoltés ou retournés au sol) et cinq différentes sources fertilisantes (organiques et minérales) sur deux sols à texture contrastée (loam sableux et argile limoneuse) sur le rendement des cultures (maïs, soya, blé) et leur impact environnemental (santé du sol et stockage de C) sur une période de neuf ans dans l'Est du Canada. Après six ans, les rendements étaient de 8 à 30 % supérieurs sous travail réduit dans l'argile limoneuse, mais pas dans le loam sableux. Les engrais de ferme permettaient d'obtenir: des rendements semblables à l'engrais minéral dans le blé, un arrière-effet positif sur le rendement du soya dans le loam sableux et un effet très variable dans le maïs (0 à -38 %).

Les indicateurs de santé du sol en surface étaient de 14 à 58 % plus élevés dans le travail réduit que dans le labour. Alors que les résidus de culture favorisaient l'accumulation de C dans les fractions grossières de la matière organique du sol, l'utilisation de fumier de volaille et de lisier de bovin favorisait l'accumulation de C et de N dans les complexes organominéraux grossiers et fins, menant au développement d'un modèle conceptuel intégrant la notion de fertilité aux modèles de stabilisation du C dans les couches de surface du sol. L'effet des traitements sur les stocks de C était toutefois plus faible dans les 15 premiers cm de sol (0,36 à 0,76 kg C m⁻²) que dans les couches sousjacentes (jusqu'à 2,3 kg C m⁻²) et les itinéraires techniques avaient des effets contrastés sur les stocks de C du sol selon la profondeur.

Title : Agronomic and environmental effect of soil conservation management practices in field crops production : Crop yield and soil carbon and nitrogen dynamics

Keywords : agroecology, soil health, soil fertility, soil carbon stocks

Abstract: The objective of this study was to compare crops yield (corn, soybean, wheat) and environmental impact (soil health and C storage) of 20 different combinations of management practices including tillage regime (minimum tillage, mouldboard plowing), crop residue management (harvested or returned to soil) and five different fertilizer sources (organic and mineral) on two soils with contrasting textures (sandy loam and silty clay) over a nine-year period in eastern Canada. After six years, yields were 8-30% higher under reduced tillage in the silty clay, but not in the sandy loam soil. Similar wheat grain yields were obtained with the mineral fertilizer and farmyard manures and manures even had a positive legacy effect on soybean yield in sandy loam, but yield differences were

highly variable for corn (0-38%). Surface soil health indicators were 14 to 58% higher under minimum tillage than under mouldboard plowing. While crop residues favored C accumulation in the coarse fractions of soil organic matter, the use of poultry and liquid dairy manure fostered C and N accumulation in coarse and fine organomineral complexes. This led to the development of a conceptual model that integrates soil fertility within C stabilization models in the topsoil layer. However, changes С stocks under different treatment in combinations were smaller in the first 15 cm of soil (0.36-0.76 kg C m⁻²) than in deeper soil layers (up to 2.3 kg C m⁻²) and treatment combinations had contrasting effects on soil C stocks depending on depth.