



## **A short history of the soil science discipline**

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Since people have cultivated the land they have generated and created knowledge about its soil. By the 4th century most civilizations around had various levels of soil knowledge and that includes irrigation, the use of terraces to control soil erosion, methods to maintain and improve soil fertility. The early soil knowledge was largely empirical and based on observations. Many famous scientists, for example, Francis Bacon, Robert Boyle, Charles Darwin, and Leonardo da Vinci worked on soil issues. Soil science became a true science in the 19th century with the development of genetic soil science, lead by the Russian Vasilii V. Dokuchaev. In the beginning soil science had strong ties to both geology and agriculture but in the 20th century, soil science is now being applied in residential development, the planning of highways, building foundations, septic systems, wildlife management, environmental management, and many other applications. The discipline is maturing and soil science plays a crucial role in many of the current issues that confront the world like climate change, water scarcity, biodiversity and environmental degradation.