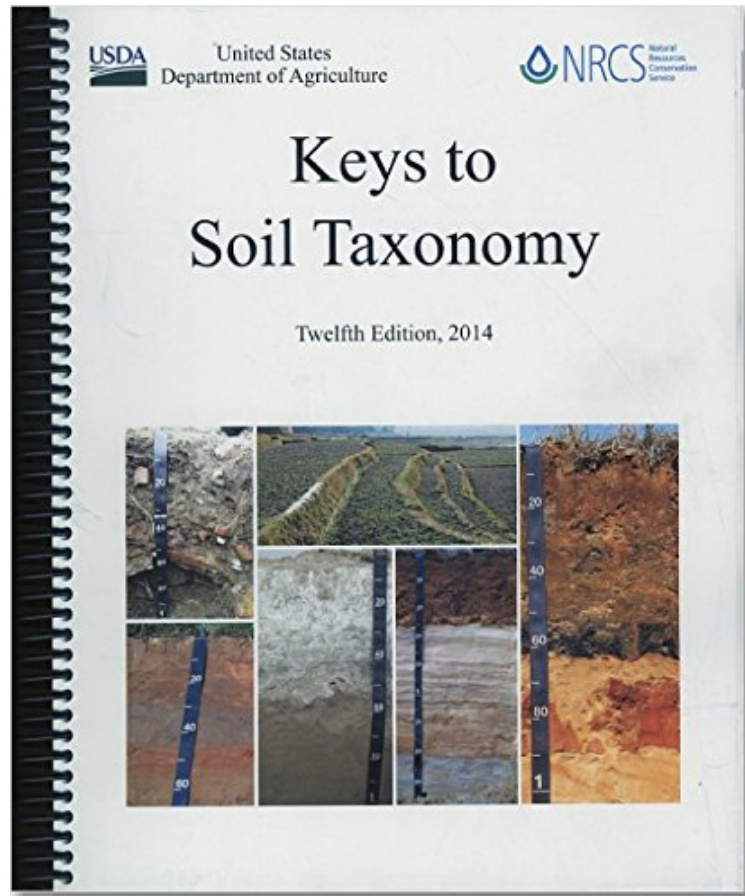


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This publication, Keys to Soil Taxonomy, Twelfth Edition, 2014, coincides with the 20th World Congress of Soil Science, to be held on Jeju Island, Korea in June 2014. The Keys to Soil Taxonomy serves two purposes. It provides the taxonomic keys necessary for the classification of soils in a form that can be used easily in the field. It also acquaints users of soil taxonomy with recent changes in the classification system. The twelfth edition of the Keys to Soil Taxonomy incorporates all changes approved since the publication in 1999 of the second edition of Soil Taxonomy: A Basic System of Soil Classification for Making and Interpreting Soil Surveys.

Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Excerpt from Keys to Soil Taxonomy Foreword by David W. Smith, Social Science Division Director, Natural Resources Conservation Service. This publication, Keys to Soil Taxonomy, Twelfth Edition, 2014, coincides with the 20th World Congress of Soil Science, to be held on Jeju Island, Korea in June 2014. The Keys to Soil Taxonomy serves two purposes. It provides the taxonomic keys necessary for the classification of soils in a form that can be used easily in the field. It also acquaints users of soil taxonomy with recent changes in the classification system. The twelfth edition of the Keys to Soil Taxonomy incorporates all changes approved since the publication in 1999 of the second edition of Soil Taxonomy: A Basic System of Soil Classification for Making and Interpreting Soil Surveys. The authors of the Keys to Soil Taxonomy are identified as the Soil Survey Staff. This term is meant to include all of the soil classifiers in the National Cooperative Soil Survey program and in the international community who have made significant contributions to the improvement of the taxonomic system. The authors plan to continue issuing updated editions of the Keys to Soil Taxonomy as changes warrant new editions. One change in this edition is recognizing the occurrence of anhydrite (CaSO_4) in soils with the addition of a new diagnostic horizon, a new mineralogy class, and new Anhydritic subgroups for use in soil survey. These are significant improvements to soil taxonomy which resulted from international collaboration with soil scientists of the United Arab Emirates, where the soils with anhydrite were discovered. Pedologists in Argentina have also contributed to this edition with amendments to improve classification of the Mollisols of the Pampean region and to recognize the abrupt textural change in more soils having this important genetic characteristic. Another major change is the incorporation of many of the final recommendations of the International Committee on Anthropogenic Soils (ICOMANTH). This international committee began in 1995 under the chairmanship of Dr. Ray Bryant and has continued under Dr. John Galbraith of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Some of the recommendations of ICOMANTH broadly expand the use of geomorphic positions as taxonomic criteria for soils which occur on artificial (i.e., anthropogenic) landforms and microfeatures. One of the attributes of soil taxonomy states that the differentiae selected for classification are soil properties. Characteristics of a site, such as geomorphic position, are not used as criteria for classifying natural, undisturbed soils. Geomorphic position had previously been used only in the required characteristics of the plaggen epipedon; now, its appropriateness for classifying other human-altered and human-transported soils is being tested. In addition, the definition of the anthropic epipedon has been expanded and simplified, two major materials have been defined, higher taxa have been consolidated at the subgroup category under seven defined extragrades, and a new family category class has been introduced to convey information on the safety and origin of human-altered and human-transported material. Dr. Galbraith's diligent efforts chairing ICOMANTH have yielded amendments which have improved the morphologic description and taxonomic classification of human-altered and human-transported soils as well as the recognition of anthropogenic earth-surface features. Keys to Soil Taxonomy may interest soil scientists, wetland and environmental scientists as well as agriculturists and land-use planners that may be able to use this resource in their field of work. High school and college level students may wish to consult this volume in preparation for State-level Land and Soil Judging Contests.