



February 2021 Newsletter

Looking into the Future

2/10 10-12 Winter Soil Health Virtual Series

Livestock Integration: Timing, herbicides, infrastructure, etc (Tom Cotter & Kent Solberg) Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355507688?pwd=UGFBaHVQM2oyWjNxVXU4YkRlZW5tUT09>

Meeting ID: 883 5550 7688

Passcode: 282209

312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

2/12 11:30-1:30 Farming for the Future: A Forum Exploring Ecosystem Markets

Join the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership and organizations from Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, and Wisconsin for a free, national webinar exploring different environmental and carbon market opportunities for Midwest farmers. This event brings four prominent carbon markets to one table, Indigo Ag, Nori, Ecosystem Services Market Consortium, and the Soil and Water Outcomes Fund, providing farmers a side-by-side comparison of opportunities. Presentations will walk the audience through the process of program enrollment from start to finish, highlighting key contract terms and conditions, payment schedules, and verification requirements. <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8607664628327142926>

2/16 7:30-8:30 So... You Want Me to Change How I Farm?

This webinar features Rodney Rulon, Rulon Enterprises, who will discuss the financial and operational questions a farmer answers before deciding to adopt a conservation practice. It is important for anyone - conservation professional, landowner, land manager, etc. - to understand these decisions when they are asking farmers to adopt any conservation practice.

Rulon Enterprises is a family farm located in Arcadia, Indiana, that continues a seven-generation tradition of sustainable and environmentally responsible farming. Rodney is responsible for leading the farms development of a production system focused on Maximum Economic Yield. This approach includes the cost to society of erosion and nutrient leaching. He manages the farm's drainage system design, soil sampling and fertility, and conservation programs. He continues to develop the farms cover crop program to improve soil health. https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vTibC800SU-VFrAmR2AYvQ

2/16 1-4 Principles to Practices – Soil Health with Jay Fuhrer and Jon Stika

Come join us for a workshop with presentations from widely recognized soil health experts! Learn why soil health matters and how you can assess soil health on your farm. Along with how to incorporate soil health into practices. Hear information and data from planting cash crops into green cover crops (planting green) and grazing perennial/annual covers at Menoken Farm. There will also be opportunities for Q&A and networking with fellow attendees! <https://landstewardshipproject.org/events/item/1576>

2/10 10-12 Winter Soil Health Virtual Series

Small Grains: Herbicides, timing, management, equipment (Andy Linder & Jochum Wiersma). Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355507688?pwd=UGFBaHVQM2oyWjNxVXU4YkRlZW5tUT09>

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Still Looking into the Future

2/22 -2/27 Growing Stronger – Collaborative Conference on Organic & Sustainable Farming

Growing Stronger gives you: More than 60 workshops spanning 10 categories. Participate in live workshops with Q&As and watch all the rest at your leisure—recorded content will be available for 90 days. Facilitated “roundtable” discussions to share ideas and move the needle on important issues. Farmer Speed Presentations to highlight new practices, innovative tips, or simply explore each other’s farms. Exhibit space with “Show Specials” so you can get the supplies you need at the best prices. Browse resources and chat with suppliers, buyers, certifiers, consultants, and more. Keynote conversations from the Real Organic Symposium featuring prominent voices in the organic movement. <https://web.cvent.com/event/b1fcc89f-d903-4e65-9a18-c63297078800/summary>

2/23-2/24 2021 Farming and Ranching for the Bottom Line

Please join us for the 6th annual 'Farming and Ranching for the Bottom Line' event on February 23 & 24, 2021. This year, like most other events, will look a little different. We have an excellent line-up of speakers for this virtual conference delivered via Zoom. Registration is free, and those who preregister will have the Zoom link emailed to them the week of the conference. Check out the full agenda below to see the line-up of speakers and topics. This event is made possible by our partners: Area 4 Research Farm, Bismarck State College, Morton and Burleigh County Soil Conservation Districts, Menoken Farm, ND Grazing Lands Coalition, NDSU Extension, NDSU Research Extension Centers, USDA Agricultural Research Service, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/farming-and-ranching-for-the-bottom-line-tickets-131619881609>

2/24 10-12 Winter Soil Health Virtual Series

Interseeding Covers: Herbicides, species, mixes, timing, method, management, equipment Farmer Panel (Dean Schrader, Scott Haase, Matt Alford, Ed McNamara, & Jerry Ackerman)

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3/5-3/6 Organic Farm Team Summit

The Organic Farm TEAM Summit & Equipment Showcase will feature a diverse program focused on industry updates and innovative practices. Our program features area experts and is relevant to organic growers, as well as those just getting started. The organic industry has maintained rapid growth and change; and we invite you to engage with us and our presenters as we navigate these developments. To keep up with markets, policies, and trends in organic agriculture, growers are invited to join us and learn about the latest farm practices to produce valuable organic crops. The summit will assist growers to connect and stay ahead of changing federal policies, management protocols, market demands, and insurance coverage for organic and Non-GMO crops. <https://www.organicfarmteam.com/teamsummit>

3/8-3/9 Soil Health Innovations Conference

Soil health has emerged as a central theme in conversations about the future of American agriculture. Soils have become a focal topic due to new scientific understanding, the application of emerging technologies, and a growing interest among producers and policymakers in improving climate resilience and mitigating emissions. The Soil Health Innovations Conference will bring together producers, industry professionals, educators, and students who are at the cutting edge of soil health across the country, including on-farm practices, soil biology, carbon markets, and public policy. Join us for a far-reaching exploration of agriculture’s sustainable future. <https://soilinnovations.ncat.org/>

3/9-3/11 Midwest Soil Health Summit

SFA’s two day conference will have a great line up of speakers including Gabe Brown, Sara Keough, Jared Luhman, Sarah Lindblom, Kent Solberg, Doug Voss! <https://www.sfa-mn.org/midwest-soil-health-summit/>

3/17 1-2 Beneficial Invertebrates in Our Soil

This webinar is presented by USDA NRCS Science and Technology. Contact Jennifer Ryan, Science & Technology Training Library content manager, for more information about this webinar. Audio is Computer Broadcast only | Live captions. NOTE: A "view" button will be available within one week of the live presentation date to access the on-demand recording of this webinar.

<http://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/beneficial-invertebrates-in-our-soil?sr=wp~mkt-whenPub>

OUT IN THE FIELD

Throughout my career as a Water Quality Specialist I have been focused on ways to help mitigate cropland erosion through the use of engineered structural Best Management Practices (BMP's). I have assisted in the construction of many structural BMP's and they are very popular with producers in my area because of their effectiveness at eliminating erosion issues. By far the most popular in Redwood County would be the farmable water & sediment control basin due to our land topography and the fact that they are farmable, meaning no land has to be taken out of production making it an easy sell to producers. Over the years I have noticed that structural BMP's are more plentiful in farm fields that are conventionally farmed verses Ag lands that employ soil health practices because they actually do a great job reducing the movement of water across the landscape.

Water & sediment control basins are often placed in areas where large amounts of water are forced through a small area and has caused a gully to form. This occurs often on lands with rolling topography and sharper elevation changes like river basins. Which is why they are popular in my area, as Redwood County is comprised of the Redwood, Cottonwood, and Minnesota River drainage basins. Control basins function by backing water up behind an earthen berm and flooding the area where gully erosion is a concern during rain events. This backed up ponded water then acts as a settling pond because ponded water cannot pick up soil and move it. The ponded water is then slowly removed through a metered tile system within 35 hours after the rain event so growing crops are not damaged. Without the berm, water would rush right through and take all the topsoil with it creating a gully that can't be farmed or crossed with farm equipment.

While structural BMP's are very effective, they only serve a single purpose of stopping concentrated gully erosion and could potentially be quite expensive to construct. Which brings me back to soil health practices and its effects on erosion. Practicing things like reduced tillage systems (No-till, Strip-till), and cover crops can greatly reduce the need for high dollar structures. These practices keep soils covered all season long, increasing soil organic matter, and increasing water infiltration. For every 1 percent increase in soil organic matter the soil profile can hold an extra 16,000 gallons of water. Living roots all season long also increase the infiltration of water making soil more porous due to root systems that have died back and decomposed. Getting the water into the soils and the ability for it to hold much more water greatly reduces the effects of water driven erosion. Cover crops also help with taking power out of the rain drop because there is less bare soil for rain drops to hit and detach soil particles that once detached are prone to movement. In areas where water can become concentrated and move swiftly, residue left from cover crops and cash crops slows down the velocity of water movement stopping it from picking up soils particles and allows those particles that are moving to drop out and remain on the field where they're needed.

Soil health practices offer new options for producers that can reduce soil erosion but that also have many other affects not directly related to erosion that are beneficial to both the landowner and the environment. I understand that in field structural BMP's will stop gully erosion from happening but sometimes practicing simple soil health practices are enough to stop erosion and eliminate the need from more expensive structures in the field. I do want to caution, just because you are utilizing soil health practices sometimes Mother Nature has its own idea. I have had to put basins on fields that have had continuous no-till and cover crops for 20 plus years. It is important to consult with a conservation professional before making decisions about how to best deal with erosion because they have vast knowledge of structural and soil health BMP's and can be an excellent resource as to what would best fit the scenario. In my years in conservation sometimes a structure is the answer or sometimes soil health will be the way to go and at times both are needed. My main goal is to determine what is right for you and your farm. By Kurt Mathiowetz

Want to show others that you're a soil health advocate? Signs, shirts, and other merchandise are now available to purchase on our website! <https://mnsoilhealth.org/shop/>





BACKYARD BIOLOGY

Planning for Planting

Seed catalogues are being shipped, the sunlight is getting longer, and the urge to grow is increasing! Proper planning will yield success later in the year and this goes beyond choosing the right seeds. Some items to consider are taking soil samples to determine nutrient availability and what source of fertilizer will be used. Compost offers nutrients, organic matter, and soil organisms to feed your soil and plants. Leaving residue in the garden will provide soil protection from the sun, wind, and rain as well as provide food for soil organisms which turn the residues into plant available nutrients. Cover crops can also be used in gardens to protect the soil and ramp up soil biology but grow plants that get along well with each other to reduce potential pest, disease, and yield issues. A great resource for information is How To Choose the Right Garden Cover Crop For You BY JAN WIESE-FALES | PHOTOS BY UGA EXTENSION - UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA <https://myfarmlife.com/home-garden/how-to-choose-the-right-garden-cover-crop-for-you/>

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE MNSHC?

The Coalition is putting on their Soil Health Winter Virtual Series! Every Wednesday in February we focus on a specific topic in soil health and have a farmer and specialist provide practical information. The last event on February 24th will include a farmer panel discussing interseeding cover crops. The sessions are recorded to allow you to view them at your convenience. Attending the events will allow you to ask your questions and be in the running to win a Talk Dirty to Me t-shirt!

Soil Health Winter Virtual Series

Wednesdays from 10am - 12pm

- January 27** Timing and Options: Getting starting, 101, making plans A, B, and C (Matt Tiffany & Brian Pfarr)
- February 3** Cover Crop Mixes: Mixes, species, timing, equipment, herbicides (Tom Cotter & TJ Kartes)
- February 10** Livestock Integration: Timing, herbicides, infrastructure, etc (Tom Cotter & Kent Solberg)
- February 17** Small Grains: Herbicides, timing, management, equipment (Andy Linder & Jochum Wiersma)
- February 24** Interseeding Covers: Herbicides, species, mixes, timing, method, management, equipment Farmer Panel (Dean Schrader, Scott Haase, Matt Alford, Ed McNamara, & Jerry Ackerman)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355507688?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355507688?pwd=UGFBaHVQM2oyWjNkVXU4YkRlZWtUT09)
[pwd=UGFBaHVQM2oyWjNkVXU4YkRlZWtUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355507688?pwd=UGFBaHVQM2oyWjNkVXU4YkRlZWtUT09)

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Call in (312) 626 6799



Win a free Talk Dirty to Me About Soil Health t-shirt

Brought to you by the following organizations:



Lincoln SWCD
 MASWCD South West Area V
 MASWCD South Central Area VI
 MASWCD South East Area VII



Find the events at <https://mnsoilhealth.org/events/>

Find the recordings at <https://mnsoilhealth.org/videos/>



BABE'S COUNTRY

Sustainable Farming Association's Agroforestry Focus

Sustainable Farming Association has been putting a large focus on agroforestry education and outreach. They offer fact sheets, videos, a resource manual, and more! They are also working with partners to develop a Silvopasture Learning Network, to research effective silvopasture practices and innovations, and educate farmers, agricultural and natural resource professionals and conservationists throughout the state on silvopasture and oak savanna restoration principles and practices. They are also developing a farm team with silvopasture experience including: Jim Chamberlin, Tyler Carlson, Joe Gans, and Tom Barthel. Find out more at <https://www.sfa-mn.org/silvopasture-agroforestry/>

Contact: tyler@sfa-mn.org or 844.922.5573 Ext. 702



Digging Deeper Into Silvopasture

10:30 a.m.-noon
November 17, 2020

Meet a Minnesota Soil Health Coalition Mentor!

Brian Ryberg— *South Central Minnesota*



Brian farms over 5,000 acres and began using strip till in 2015 and also uses vertical till for soybeans going into cornstalks. Many of his acres are seeded with covers using predominately cereal rye and also uses them after sugarbeet harvest going into soybeans. Brian noticed improvements in his soil structure just after 2 years of cereal rye after sugarbeets and using strip till as well as carrying equipment. He has noticed yield improvement with his soybeans using these practices and provided excellent weed and erosion control.

Brian hosts field days, gives presentations, received the 4R Award from the Fertilizer Institute, the American Soybean Growers Conservation Legacy Award, and was the County Conservationist of the Year in 2019.

To connect with Brian bryberg@mnsoilhealth.org

Or any one of our other mentors, please visit <https://www.mnsoilhealth.org/mentor>

Contact

Jennifer Hahn
Coalition Coordinator
coordinator@mnsoilhealth.org
<https://mnsoilhealth.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/mnsoilhealth/>

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



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HOW TO MANAGE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Your membership to the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition is greatly appreciated! We want to ensure you're getting everything out of your membership you possibly can!

Online Membership Sign Ups

You can sign up for membership online and manage your membership.

To Sign Up: <https://mnsoilhealth.org/become-a-member/>

You can choose an annual or recurring membership with sign in information so you can always log in and manage your membership

To Log In to Your Existing Membership: <https://mnsoilhealth.org/member-login/>

To Manage Your Online Membership: Select Membership Account on the top right

You can edit your profile, change your password, view past invoices, and renew your membership

Hard Copy Memberships

You can download the membership brochure found at <https://mnsoilhealth.org/become-a-member/> and mail in with your dues

All Members

You will have a sticker on the front page of your newsletter with your membership expiration date to keep you informed and can renew your membership online or hard copy

If your contact information has changed, please update your membership information on the website or email Jennifer Hahn at coordinator@mnsoilhealth.org to ensure you're receiving emails and mailings

