

Highlights**Staffing Change Update**

The CCSI Agronomist position was offered to and accepted by Hans Schmitz, Purdue Extension, Posey County. His first day will be March 1. In addition to his time with county-level Extension, Hans brings a background in climatology to the position, and will continue his work in this area. Finally, as co-owner of his family's farm, he brings a 'farmer's perspective' to the role as well.

CCSI-SARE Continuing Education: BMPs for Herbicide Application and Cover Crop Termination

In response to expected herbicide shortages and spiraling prices, along with requests from field-level ICP staff, a training was developed by Stephanie McClain, NRCS State Soil Health Specialist; Fred Whitford, Director of Purdue Pesticide Programs; Bill Johnson, Purdue Extension Weed Specialist; and Tony Bailey, NRCS State Conservation Agronomist. This event is scheduled over two sessions: March 2nd and 3rd, 9:00AM-noon. Both sessions will be recorded and made available through the CCSI YouTube channel.

G1. Farmer Engagement and Involvement**1. Innovative and Visionary Farmers**

Quarterly Target: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each - A, NPM, SPM)

Listening sessions with Innovative and Visionary Farmers. Use to help identify needed field day and training topics.

- 02/15 Phone – David Brandt, OH (D)
- 02/16 Phone – Loran Steinlage, IA (D)
- 02/21 Phone - Pat Bittner, Vanderburgh County (SPM)

2. Conservative and Pragmatic Farmers

Meetings and other opportunities for listening sessions to gain perspective on adoption issues/concerns of soil health practices. Use to help develop outreach topics and tactics.

Quarterly Targets: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each - A, NPM, SPM) .

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3. Farmer Influencers

Quarterly Targets: 1 LLP per region adding an influencer to their outreach planning team or board. (Each - NPM, SPM)

Continued work with W4tL, IANA, and other influencer groups.

- Elam Fisher, Byron Seed (D)
- 02/16 Phone – Liz Haney, Soil Regen (D)

4. Presentations

Quarterly Targets: Average of 3 soil health presentations or demonstrations. (A)

G2. Local Level Partnership Support

1. Facilitate and Support Local Level Partnership's Outreach and Education

Quarterly Target: CCSI as a group materially participate in / support average of 15 LLP Outreach Efforts groups (CCSI Team Goal)

Completed Workshops:

- 02/19 Indiana Black Loam Conference, Evansville; approx. 25 attendees
- 02/08 Regional Soil Health Workshop, Salem; 90 attendees in-person, 15 virtual
- 02/26 Indiana Black Loam Conference, Ft. Wayne; 40 attendees
- 02/28 Lost River Watershed "Meet-and-Greet" with Dale Strickler, Green Cover Seeds; 20 attendees

Workshops in Progress:

- POSTPONED - 02/17 WREC Workshop
- 03/01 Lost River Watershed/Orange County Cover Crop Workshop, Paoli
- 03/08 Warrick County Cover Crop Breakfast
- 03/09 Miami County PARP, Peru
- 03/12 Indiana Black Loam Conference / Legacy Taste of the Garden, Gary
- 03/15 Trust in Food / America's Conservation Ag Movement ShopTalk, Vanderburgh Co.
- 03/17 Going Green for Ag, Allen County
- 03/19 Indiana Black Loam Conference / Legacy Taste of the Garden, Bloomington
- 03/23 Howard/Tipton County SWCD Workshop
- 03/23 "Healthy Farms, Healthy Communities w/ Ashley Hammac, Crawfordsville
- March 2022 – Miami County Winter PARP
- 1st quarter 2022 Indian-Kentuck Watershed event. Most likely virtual.
- 04/14 Byron Seed Spring Event
- 08/16 Feb 5 Soil Health Event, SW Indiana
- 08/23 Indiana field day with Ward Labs at Rulons
- August 2022 Adams County
- 09/01 Clay County Event
- September 2022 – Porter County
- Lawrence County Soil Health event (before 2025)
- DeKalb County SWCD Workshop – Date TBD
- March – Miami County Winter PARP meeting
- 2021 – 23 – Kankakee Basin and WLEB series of events to support existing RCPP (WLEB) and proposed RCPP (Kankakee) (NPM)

2. Consistent Soil Health Messaging

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Foundational Soil Health Trainings / Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of Soil Health
Completed Trainings:

Trainings in Progress:

- April 5, 12 (optional), 19, 26 – Core Cover Crops and Soil Health Systems
- 04/13 Byron Seed Dealer Training Series (with Barry Fisher)
- Soil Health Nexus website development and review (TBD)
- TNC/NRCS/CCSI Soil Health Lab Manual (TBD)
- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Program Development
- Small Diversified Farm Extension Soil Health Pilot Program (TBD)

3. Professional Development Opportunities

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Advanced Soil Health Trainings / Applied Soil Health Knowledge and Skills
Completed Trainings:

Trainings in Progress:

- 03/2-3 CCSI-SARE Continuing Soil Health Education: BMPs for Herbicide Application and Cover Crop Termination
- 2022 SARE PDP – Cover Crop in Vegetable Production – PAC Demonstrations
- Date TBD - 2022: Pilot Social Science Training
- Date(s) TBD - 2022: CCSI-SARE Livestock Integration Trainings
- Small Diversified Farm Extension Soil Health Pilot Program
- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Program

4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships

Monthly Targets: 2-3 LLP visits. 1 Teleconference / Region (Each - NPM, SPM)

- 02/02 Connect Shirley Heinze Land Trust/Starke and Marshall Co SWCD and NRCS (NPM)
- 02/03 WLEB RCPP Planning (NPM)
- 02/07 Otter Creek/Clay County SWCD (SPM)
- 02/16 Kankakee RCPP Planning (NPM)
- 02/23 NE CCSI Regional Teleconference (All)
- 02/23 NW CCSI Regional Teleconference (All)
- 02/28 SE CCSI Regional Teleconference (All)
- 02/28 SW CCSI Regional Teleconference (All)

G3. General CCSI Outreach / Communication

1. Marketing

Quarterly Targets: 3-4 “formal” CCSI Updates (CCSI Team Goal)

Annual Target: 1-2 New External Partners

Ensure LLPs understand CCSI resources available to them; Ensure external partners are aware of CCSI strengths, tools, and opportunities.

- 02/16 IASWCD Board of Directors (All)
- 02/22 NW NRCS Area Meeting (NPM)

- February 1 – Events Newsletter; 647 delivered, 366 opened, 144 follow through
- February 15 – Events Newsletter; 643 delivered, 437 opened, 99 follow through

2. Soil Health Messaging

Quarterly Targets: 3 Podcasts; 3-6 Blog Posts; 6 Newsletters;

Use social networks and other media tools to deliver soil health messaging and information.

Completed Materials:

- Podcasts
- Blog Posts
 - Jerry Raynor Op-Ed
 - Black Loam Press Release
- Social Media
 - Twitter: 55 Tweets, 15.1K impressions, 9 mentions, 1,445 profile visits, 3 new followers.
 - Facebook:
 - 02/01 Black History Month post (47 reach)
 - 02/02 Share ISDA post welcoming DSS Sandra Hoffarth (102 reach)
 - 02/03 Bi-County Soil Health Workshop post (Carroll & White) (132 reach)
 - 02/03 Winter Storm Landon post (135 reach)
 - 02/03 Regional Soil Health Workshop Flyer (54 reach)
 - 02/08 Regional Soil Health Workshop Carter Morgan (841 reach)
 - 02/10 Pandemic Cover Crop Program post (78 reach)
 - 02/15 Share CCSI newsletter to FB (68 reach)
 - 02/16 WREC event RESCHEDULED post (16 reach)
 - 02/17 Orange County Root Dig (846 people reach)
 - 02/18 Kosciusko trailer wrap/Tashina pic post (251 reach)
 - 02/19 Evansville Black Loam Conference post (176 reach)
 - 02/19 Share Urban Soil Health Evansville Black Loam post (78 reach)
 - 02/21 Share Ft. Wayne Black Loam event post (35 reach)
 - 02/21 Orange County/Lost River Watershed Workshop Flyer (287 people reach)
 - 02/26 Ft. Wayne Black Loam Conference post (561 reach)
 - 02/28 Dale Strickler Meet and Greet (548 people)
- Website
 - 689 / 987 sessions

Materials in Progress:

- TNC-NRCS-CCSI Soil Health Lab Manual (TBD)
- Soil Compaction Video with Purdue Extension
- Adaptation of The Root Project to PowerPoint slides for download
- Soil Health Nexus – Soil Health Matrix completed, submitted for review (TBD)

G4. Research

Quarterly Targets: None

CCSI no longer leads research projects; CCSI provides connectivity between researchers and cooperators; potential research needs.

- Support - Indiana University SARE - Participatory Farmer Monitoring on Nitrate Loss (Yoder)
- Support – Purdue University SARE - Precision Winter Hardy Cover Cropping for Improving Farm Profitability and Environmental Stewardship (Armstrong)

- Support – No-till Pumpkin and Sweet Corn in Cover Crops (Maynard)

Other

- Professional Development – 02/1-2 NWF Virtual Presentation Trainings (D, SPM, NPM, and Conservation Champions)
- Solutions for the Land / Indiana Climate Smart Ag – assist with organizational meetings