

Highlights

2021 Core Soil Health Trainings

As in 2020, the CCSI-SARE Core Soil Health Systems and Core Cover Crops Trainings have been combined into a series of 3 virtual sessions. Registrations were 5x those of 2019 (live sessions); Attendance varied from 54 – 77 / session.

Private Facebook Group

As part of efforts to support TNC Advanced Soil Health Trainings with John Pike, a private Facebook group has been created. The goal is to encourage ongoing interaction between participants through posts/questions from the field.

G1. Farmer Engagement and Involvement

• 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.

- Tech Tests / Planning for Virtual Visits with Carter Morgan, John Pike, and Steve Groff (All)
- March 1 – David Brandt
- March 1 – Mike Shuter
- March 2 – Mike Brocksmith

• 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)

- March 6 – Knox County Farmer (D)

• 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.

- March 1, 4 - (Virtual) Advanced Soil Health Training for Ag Retail with TNC; 20 – 25 attendees/session (all)
- March 4 – Glen Longabaugh, WinField Agronomist (D)
- March 16 – Mike Bredesen, Ecdysis (D)
- March 22 Purdue Agronomy Extension Group Meeting CCSI Update (A)

• Presentations

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

- March 5 (Virtual) Indiana Small Farms Conference “In-Field Soil Health Diagnostics)
- March 10 (Virtual) WREC “Soil Health Indicators” 12 attendees

- March 11 (Virtual) CCSI-SARE Core Cover Crops and Soil Health – “Sustainable and Regenerative Soil Health Systems”; 77 attendees

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)*

Workshops Completed

- 2021 CCSI Webinar and Virtual Shop/Field Visit Series
 - March 2 (Virtual Shop Visit) Carter Morgan, Parke-Vermillion SWCD “Plan A (B, C, and D) for Planting Green”; 42 live attendee
 - March 16 (Virtual Farm Visit) John Pike, Pike Ag “Precision Cover Cropping for Biostrip-till”; 70 live attendees
- March 4-6 (Virtual) Indiana Small Farm Conference
- March 2 – IN PERSON Warrick County Breakfast
- March 13 IN PERSON Orange Co Beginning Farmer Breakfast
- March 24 (Hybrid) Boone County Cover Crop Field Day; 5 in-person, 3 virtual

Workshops Cancelled

- February 2 – Southern Region Soil Health Workshop
- February 21 – (In-Person) Howard/Tipton County Workshop

Workshops in Progress:

- 2021 CCSI Webinar and Virtual Shop/Field Visit Series
 - April 6 (Virtual Farm Visit) – Steve Groff, Lancaster Co PA “Soil Health in Vegetable Production”
 - April 20 (Virtual Farm Visit) – David Brandt, Carroll, OH; and Steve Groff, Lancaster, PA “Soil Health, Plant Health, and Nutrition”
- March 26 – April 9 Self-guided Ag Tour – Tippecanoe Co SWCD (provided equipment)
- April 6 – (Virtual) Upper Wabash Drainage Water Management Workshop
- April 15 and 20 (Virtual) – Job Spark with Posey County SWCD – Soil Health Demonstrations
- July/August – Posey/Gibson County – Top Farmer Round Table
- July/August – SW Soil Health Event
- 2021 Clay Co Soil Health Field Day (tentative)
- November 6 – Regional Ag Forum; Posey County.
- November 2021 – Spencer/Perry Workshop with Rick Clark and Wayne Fredericks
- Daviess Co – Soil Health Field Day, TBD 2021
- Vigo Co Small Farm Program – TBD
- December 10, 2021 Howard-Tipton County SWCD with Dr. Kris Nichols

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

- February 25, March 1 and 4 – (Virtual) TNC Advanced Soil Health Training; 20 – 25 attendees/session
- March 11, 18, 25 – (Virtual) CCSI-SARE Core Soil Health Training Series; 54-77 attendees/session

Trainings in Progress:

- 2021 Soil Health Training Curriculum / Adaptation Planning
- August 31-Sept 2 – “3-Day Soil Health Training”
- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Program (A)
- Soil Health Nexus website development and review (A)
- TNC/NRCS/CCSI Soil Health Lab Manual (A)
- September 2021 Soil Health Nexus In-Service (A)
- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Program Development (D)
- 2021 SARE PDP – Cover Crop in Vegetable Production – PAC Demonstrations

3. Professional Development Opportunities

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Advanced Soil Health Trainings / Applied Soil Health Knowledge and Skills

Trainings in Progress:

- 2021 Soil Health Training Curriculum / Adaptation Planning

4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships

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

- March 2 – (Virtual) Blue River Grazing Group
- March 10 – (Virtual) SE NRCS Area Meeting (SPM)
- March 10 – (Virtual) Jennifer Thum, ISDA – ICP Meeting and ISDA trainings (NPM)
- March 16 – (Virtual) SSCB Board Meeting (D)
- March 19 – (Virtual) IASWCD Board Meeting (D)
- March 22 - (Virtual) Purdue Agronomy Extension Group (A)
- March 24 – (Virtual) WLEB Partners Meeting (D)
- March 24 –(Virtual) NE ICP Meeting (NPM)
- March 29 – SW and SE CCSI Regional Teleconferences (NPM, A, D)
- March 31 – NW and NE CCSI Regional Teleconferences (NPM, A, D)

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.

- March 4 and 9 – CCSI Communications Strategic Planning Subcommittee Meetings
- March 1 - Soil Health News and Events Newsletter; 881 delivered, 383 opened (43%), 88 click rate (10%)
- March 11 – Upcoming CCSI Virtual Farm Visit; 1141 delivered, 569 opened (50%), 118 click rate (10%)

- March 15 - Soil Health News and Events Newsletter; 877 delivered, 360 opened (41%), 91 click rate (10%)
- March 25 – Recording Available; 84 delivered, 47 opened (56%), 11 click rate (13%)
- March 26 - Soil Health News and Events Newsletter; 876 delivered, 360 opened (41%), 78 click rate (9%)

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:

- Videos:
 - Virtual Shop Visit – Carter Morgan, Vermillion/Parke SWCD “Plan A (B, C, and D) for Planting Green”; 80 views
 - TNC Advanced Soil Health Training Series (4 videos); 7 views
- Podcasts:
 - So... You want me to change how I farm? – Rodney Rulon, Rulon Enterprises and Jerry Raynor, Indiana NRCS State Conservationist
- Blogs
 - March 20 – Op-Ed: Celebrating Hoosier Farms Who Feed and Clothe the World (Jerry Raynor, IN NRCS)
 - March 24 – No-till Sweet Corn, Pumpkin, and Winter Squash after Winter Rye (Liz Maynard, Purdue Extension and NPM)
 - March 30 - The Root Project (NPM)
- Social Media
 - March Twitter:
 - 48 Tweets, 30.5K impressions, 24 mentions, 1,121 profile visits, 9 new followers.
 - Webinar Ads: 7,952 impressions; 481 engagements (6.05% rate)
 - March Facebook:
 - 16,001 reach, 1,424 viral reach, 19,323 impressions, 526 engaged users
 - Webinar Ads: 14201 reach; 127 responses
- Website
 - March 779 Users / 997 sessions

Materials in Progress:

- Cover Crops in Tomato Production Blog
- No-Till Pumpkin planting; follow up video and still footage.
- Sweet corn planter testing
- Adaptation of graphics to yard signs for download
- Adaptation of The Root Project to PowerPoint slides for download
- Urban Soil Health Program – Small Scale Nutrient Management

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)

G5. Funding

- Corporate sponsorship in Virtual Shop Visit / Webinar and Podcasts

OTHER

- March 1 (Virtual) EPLP – Plant Food Chain and Indiana State Chemist (A)
- March 5 – AgData Pilot Project Advisory Committee (D)
- March 24 – REGAIN Virtual Office Hours with Jonathan Lundgren (SPM, NPM)