

## Highlights

### Fundamentals of Soil Health

- 04/04, 18, 25 (virtual) 04/11 (in-person) CCSI-SARE Fundamentals of Soil Health Series; 46, 40, 36, and 22 participants respectively

### Event Support Guidelines Updated (attached)

- Now include key questions for partners.
- Outreach efforts must have a component for reaching new audiences.

## 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.*

- Carter Morgan phone (NWPM)
- 04/18 Loran Steinlage (D)
- 04/19 Mark Kingma, Jasper County (NA)
- 04/25 David Brandt (D)
- 04/27 Tom Rudolph, Pike County Farmer (SWPM)
- 04/27 Jamie Scott (NA)
- 04/28 Rick Clark (D)

### 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)*

- 04/11 Montgomery County Farmer – first year of no-till (NA)

### 1. Farmer Influencers

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

- 03/03 ADM (D)
- 03/27 Yichao Rui (D)

### 2. Presentations

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

- 4/13 – Indiana Extension Educators Association (IEEA) Spring Conference, Nashville, “CCSI Update”; 15 attendees (SA, NA)
- 4/13 – IEEA Spring Conference, Nashville, “Weather and Climate Services for Educators; 7 attendees (SA)

- 04/18 – IvyTech Field Day “Cover Crop Species and Their Uses”; 50 attendees (NA)
- 04/26 UAVs training, Warsaw (NA)
- 4/29 – Floyd County Pollinator Day, New Albany, “Climate Change and Pollinators”; 15 attendees (SA)

## **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

- 04/01 “Mud is Fun” Soils Training, Fulton County; 13 attendees
- 4/5 National Extension Climate Initiative Professional Development Webinar w/ Derek Kanauckis @ I See Change, Virtual, 12 participants
- 4/24 North Central Climate Collaborative Webinar w/ Brenda Hoppe @ UMN, Virtual, 140 participants
- 4/27 Illinois/Indiana Climate Webinar w/ Matt Huber @ Purdue, Virtual, 7 participants

#### Workshops in Progress:

- 05/19 Hoosier Chapter SWCS Summer Meeting (tentative)
- 05/31 Cargill Farmer Meeting, Valparaiso
- 06/15 Cargill Employee Training
- 06/15 Gibson SWCD/Purdue Extension – Event with field buffer/filter strip
- 06/21 Diagnostic Training at Pinney PAC
- 07/18 Tippecanoe County
- Late summer/early fall Lawrence County Soil Health Field Day
- 08/25 Lawrence County Soil Health Field Day
- August Roger Wenning Field Day – Date TBD
- August – Manure Spill Demonstrations, WLEB and Kankakee, Date TBD
- DeKalb County SWCD Workshop – Date TBD
- 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

- 04/04, 18, 25 (virtual) 04/11 (in-person) CCSI-SARE Fundamentals of Soil Health Series; 46, 40, 36, and 22 participants respectively

#### Trainings in Progress:

- 06/27-29 Soil Health and Sustainability for Midwestern Field Staff (3-Day Soil Health)
- Soil Health Signature Program Curriculum Development
- Soil Health PARP Regulatory Topic Development

### **Professional Development Opportunities**

*Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.*

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

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Trainings in Progress

- 05/18 CCSI Training Team – Fisher Farm, Putnam Co
- 09/5, 7, 19, 21 Grow More – Engaging New Audiences

**4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships**

*Monthly Targets: 2-3 LLP visits. 1 Teleconference / Region (Each - NWPM, NEPM, SWPM, SEPM)*

- 04/03 Friends of Patoka Board meeting (SWPM)
- 04/04 Informal Jasper SWCD and Newton SWCD at carbon info session
- 04/06 Fulton Co NRCS Planning Meeting for soil health tailgate with farmers (NEPM)
- 04/06 Paducah National Weather Service, Paducah, KY (SA)
- 04/10 Clark County ANR Extension (SEPM)
- 04/11 Pulaski Co SWCD Board Meeting (NEPM)
- 04/11 IASWCD Annual Conference Planning (NWPM)
- 04/12 Daviess SWCD (SWPM)
- 04/13 Whitley Co SWCD (NEPM)
- 04/13 Kosciusko Co SWCD (NEPM)
- 04/13 NRCS NE Area Meeting (NEPM)
- 04/14 Jasper County SWCD and NRCS (NA)
- 04/15 Indiana Black Loam Conference, Gary (NWPM, NA)
- 04/20 SE Regional SWCD staff meeting (SEPM)
- 04/24 SW Regional SWCD staff meeting (SWPM)
- 04/24 Agronomy Extension Meeting (SA, NA)
- 04/27 Lawrence Co SWCD, NRCS, and Extension (SEPM)
- 04/25 Fulton Co SWCD Board Meeting (NEPM)
- 04/25 Byron Seeds Field Day (NA, D)
- 04/28 Pike Co SWCD (SWPM)
- 04/28 Indiana CCA Conference Planning – Soil and Water Track (SA)
- 04/28 Soil Health Nexus (NA)

**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.*

- April 1 - Events Newsletter; 2246 delivered; 34% open rate; 2% click rate
- April 15 – Events Newsletter; 2245 delivered; 55% open rate; 5% click rate

## 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
  - Jamie Scott, N Central Indiana Farmer, and Bill Johnson, Purdue University – scouting cover crop termination issues.
  - (Recorded) Mark Kingma, NW Indiana Farmer, and Betsy Bower, Ceres Solutions – Impacts of Soil Health Systems on Irrigation Efficiency
  - (Scheduling) Ray McCormick, SW Indiana Farmer, and Phil Neeham, Needham Ag – The importance of combine adjustments and seeding cover crops with a combine
  - (Scheduling) Bryan Overstreet, Hans Schmitz CCSI / Purdue on the Farm and Dan Quinn Purdue University – Purdue on the Farm and Soil Health
- Social Media
  - Twitter (only automated postings as platform reorganizes)
  - Facebook: 3154 reach
  - LinkedIn: building presence as replacement for Twitter
- Website: 531 users, 355 visits

Completed Materials:

- HO-203, Effect of Cold Weather on Horticultural Plants in Indiana, submitted to AgComm for formatting (SA)

Materials in Progress:

- Regulatory Pesticide Considerations for Soil Health Systems, by Hans Schmitz and Matt Pearson, OISC
- Full scale Root Project banners ordered – 7 sets total: one for each Program Manager, one for each Agronomist, one spare. These will be available for partners to borrow for their events.

## 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 – Purdue University NIFA – Empowering Indiana’s Organic Farmers – Assessing Regional and Farm Scale Soil Health with a Farmer Network (Rui)

## OTHER

- Onboarding for Lois Mann, NE Program Manager
- Reviews for Julie Loehr, SW Program Manager (informal); Jessica Hoehn, SE Program Manager; and Sheila Schroeder, NW Program Manager conducted.
- Content intake at Carbon Sequestration Information Session (NWPM)
- 04/19 – First planting of corn and soybeans at Pinney PAC

Professional Development:

- Penn State FOCCE Forest Carbon Credit Training completed. (SA)
- IEAA Spring Conference (SA)

Other:

- <https://www.14news.com/2023/04/19/planting-season-underway-tri-state/> (SA)
- <https://www.tristatehomepage.com/news/farmers-to-their-fields-as-planting-season-continues/> (SA)

**Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative  
Local Level Outreach Support Guidelines**

***Mission: Improving Soil Health on Indiana Cropland***

Support Goal: To help Local Level Partnerships build capacity and sustainability while advancing adoption of soil health practices, especially by farmers not currently in a soil health system.

*Outreach efforts must have a component for reaching new audiences.*

Key questions for local partners:

- **Who is your target audience? Try to be somewhat specific.**  
For example, if the target audience is farmers, what do they 'look' like?  
No-tillers? Heavy tillage? Livestock? Commodity crops only? Cover Crop curious?
- **What do you want them to walk away thinking/doing?**  
Try to think in terms in moving them down the road of their soil health journey just 1-2 steps.  
For example, in an area of heavy tillage + confined livestock production, the answer might be something along the lines of USING their nutrient management plans and THINKING about using cover crops.
- **Why will they want to come? What is it about the content that will interest them?**  
For example, in areas of high irrigation use, topics revolving around improving irrigation efficiency might peak their interest. The event could not only have information about using cover crops, but also information on improving infiltration and water availability.
- **What non-ICP / new partners are included in part of the planning process?**  
Whether groups like local chapters of Indiana Farm Bureau, co-ops, or banks – involving groups that have trusted relationships with new audiences such as “middle adopters” in the planning process (not just sponsors) can be very helpful in reaching those newer audiences.
- **How will you advertise / make sure your target audience knows about the event?**  
Consider using personal text/phone/email invitations and reminders.
- **How will you know the event was impactful? How will you know attendees might try or stick with new practices or have attitudes changed?**

Support may be:

- Monetary support to supplement other local sources and sponsors.
- Booking and funding speakers for specific events
- Logistical assistance
- Promotional assistance

New Audience examples include (but are not limited to):

- Farmers who are not currently using soil health systems or in the beginning phases of adoption
- Underserved communities
- Landowners
- Lenders, Ag Retailers and other Influencers of crop/land management decisions

Qualifying components to reach new audiences may include (but are not limited to):

- Marketing and outreach strategies to reach target demographics
- Speakers and/or content that will resonate with target audience

Working with non-ICP or new partners is critical to reach new farmers. Examples:

- Working with local ag retailers (i.e. cover crop seed suppliers, chemical and fertilizer dealers, independent dealers, etc.) and influencers (i.e. consultants, ag lenders, etc.) in developing content, sponsoring events, and marketing strategies
- Partnering with new(er) individuals and groups, such as local ag groups (local Farm Bureau, Indiana Pork, Indiana Corn/Soy), NGO Projects (like TNC Upper White), Women4theLand, Pheasants Forever, etc.

*CCSI and its Oversight Committee advocate for, support, and uphold a policy of anti-discrimination in all our programs and policies. Programs led or supported by CCSI will not discriminate whatsoever on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.*