

Highlights

Black Loam Conference - Indy

The 2022 Black Loam Conference capstone event will be held on May 13-14 at the Madam Walker Legacy Center in Indianapolis. Reception and Networking the evening of May 13 and Conference on May 14. Indiana NRCS State Conservationist Jerry Raynor will lead off Saturday's event and USDA-NRCS Chief Terry Cosby will give the keynote address. There event is designed for BIPOC farmers and underserved communities, especially urban ag.

CCSI-SARE Core Soil Health Systems Trainings

Dates: April 5, 19, and 26 (virtual) plus an optional in-person day on April 12. As with 2020 and 2021, virtual attendance was strong – 66 registrants and 50+/- live attendees. Ten individuals attended the optional in-person day. Forty completed all three virtual training sessions and were issued a certificate of completion.

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.

- 04/08 David Brandt Field Day (D)
- 04/21 Nick Wenning (D)
- 04/19 – Tom Smith, Farm Manager, Indian Mound Farms. Frank Bender, innovative farmer, is the farmer for the operation. (A)

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.

- 04/13-14 Byron Seeds Dealer Training (with Barry Fisher) (D, NPM)

4. Presentations

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

- 04/11 CCSI and Indiana Conservation Partners – Minnesota group (D, Stephanie McLain)
- 04/26 – CCSI Core Training, Virtual, “Interpreting Seed Tags” (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:

- 04/14 Byron Seeds Spring Field Day, Rockville; 75 attendees

Workshops in Progress:

- 07/07 Parke-Vermillion Field Day
- 08/04 Newton County Event
- 08/16 Soil Health Expo, Princeton
- 08/17 Roger Wenning Field Day, Decatur
- 08/23 Indiana field day with Ward Labs at Rulons
- August 2022 Adams County
- 09/01 Clay County Event
- 09/07 Roemke Field Day
- 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:

- April 5, 12 (optional), 19, 26 – Core Cover Crops and Soil Health Systems; 50+ attendees
- April 13-14 Byron Seeds Dealer Training Series (with Barry Fisher); 40 attendees

Trainings in Progress:

- June 21-23 Soil Health and Sustainability for Midwestern Field Staff (3 Day Soil Health Training)
- July 26-27 Byron Seeds Dealer Training (with Barry Fisher)
- TNC/NRCS/CCSI Soil Health Lab Manual
- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Program Development

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:

- 2022 SARE PDP – Cover Crop in Vegetable Production – PAC Demonstrations
- Date TBD - 2022: Pilot Social Science Training
- 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)

- 04/21 Clay County SWCD and partners (SPM)
- 4/22 – Newton County SWCD MnG, Bri Styck (NPM)
- 4/22 – Jasper County SWCD/NRCS MnG, Shelby Keys and Kevin Shide (NPM)
- 4/25 – SE/SW CCSI Regional Teleconferences (All)
- 4/26 – Kosciusko County MnG, Melinda Miller and Tashina Lahr-Manifold (NPM)
- 4/27 – NE CCSI Regional Teleconference (All)
- SWCD Leveraging Sheet updated (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.

- April 1 – Events Newsletter; 608 delivered, 340 opened, 34 follow through
- April 15 – Events Newsletter; 604 delivered, 384 opened, 136 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
 - (Upcoming) – Barry Fisher + Stephanie McLain
 - (Upcoming) Hans Schmitz + Joe Rorick
 - (Upcoming) Mike Bredeson, Ecdysis – Positive effects of soil health systems on beneficial insects and upland gamebirds
- Social Media
 - April: 73 Tweets, 18.6K impressions; 24 mentions, 1892 profile visits, 15 new followers.
 - Facebook:
 - 4/4 SIPAC Goat prescribed grazing post, 182 ppl reached.
 - 4/1 – Share CCSI newsletter to FB (88 reach)
 - 4/8 – Podcast at Dave Brandt’s photo/post (2,332 reach)
 - 4/12 – IASWCD Annual Conference planning photo/post (206 reach)
 - 4/13 – Barry Fisher demo at Byron Seeds event (424 reach)
 - 4/13 – Audience pic from Byron Seeds event (296 reach)
 - 4/13 – Root Posters pic from Byron Seeds event (630 reach)
 - 4/14 – NRCS Rainfall simulator post from Byron Seeds event (392 reach)
 - 4/14 – NRCS pulling soil cores at Byron (117 reach)
 - 4/14 – Ray McCormick at Byron (359 reach)
 - 4/22 – Earth Day post (90 reach)
 - 4/25 – Share Urban Soil Health’s Black Loam Indy post (101 reach)
 - 4/27 – Jasper Co MnG photo/post (212 reach)
 - 4/26 Core Training post, 82 ppl reached
 - 4/28 Eileen Podcast link, 37 ppl reached
 - 4/29 CWI Grants Post, 74 ppl reached

- Website
April 905 users/ 1.2K sessions

Materials in Progress:

- TNC-NRCS-CCSI Soil Health Lab Manual (TBD)
- NRCS Ag Tech Note / Entry Level Phase Management
- NRCS Ag Tech Note/ Basics of No-Till Success
- Adaptation of The Root Project to PowerPoint slides for download

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)
- Notre Dame – Indiana University – Purdue University collaboration

Other

- Led IEEA Spring Conference as association President (A)
- Certificated in Navigating Difference, a basic-level DEI training(A)
- Met USDA NIFA staff at Public Issues Leadership Development, notably Eric Norland. (A)
- Coerced into participating in marathon Farm Green (Rick Clark) + Field Work podcast before David Brandt field day