NRCS and Partner Campaign to Improve Soil Health

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This interpretive map shows generalized spatial trends in NRI statistical sample survey data. The NRI sample was designed to yield reliable estimates at broader, more regionalized levels than those depicted by the 8-mile radii aggregations chosen for this interpretation, which is used to examine more localized variability. Localized variations should be considered carefully in the broader geographic context.
So, what’s soil health “got to do with it?”
Everything!!!
Improving Soil Health Can:

✓ Increase water infiltration
✓ Increase available water holding capacity
✓ Improve water quality
✓ Increase nutrient availability
✓ Detoxify chemicals
✓ Save energy
✓ Improve plant health
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All while maintaining or increasing production!!!
NRCS & Partner Soil Health Campaign

United States Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Action Plan:

• Ensure Scientific Basis
• Evaluate Economics
• Model Benefits
• Align CIG Priorities
• Leverage PMCs
• National Training
• Develop Partnerships
• Communications
Partnership Opportunities

Available Resources: NRCS Soil Health Website
Soil Health

Key Points

What's critical about soil health now?

1. World population is projected to be 9.7 billion by 2050.
2. To sustain the level of growth, food production will need to rise by 70 percent.
3. Between 1950-2000, 23 million acres of prime farmland in the U.S. was lost to development.
4. The U.S. exports much of its commercial territories.

Soil health matters because:

1. Healthy soils are high-producing, no-till friendly.
2. Healthy soils reduce production costs and improve profits.
3. Healthy soils prevent natural resources on soil and off the farm.
4. Healthy ecosystems: “The nation that develops its soil deserves health” is as true today as it was 75 years ago.
5. Healthy soils save time and money. You can spend less time on a tractor and less money on fertilizer, so you make the same in higher yields.

What are the benefits of healthy soil?

1. Healthy soil holds more water (by binding to organic matter), and has less soil to runoff and erosion.
2. Organic matter builds up, and plants and soil health thrive.
3. Organic matter holds more water in soil, and receives nutrients to plants and soil.
4. One percent of organic matter in top 6 inches of soil would host approximately 27,000 gallons of water per acre.
5. Most humans can overcome a water-scarce world.

Managing for soil health is one of the easiest and most effective ways for farmers to increase crop productivity and profitability while improving the environment.

Results are often immediate, and last well into the future. Using these four basic principles is the key to improving your soil health:

1. Keep the soil covered as much as possible.
2. Mix the soil at the right depths.
3. Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil.
4. Don’t add as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops.

Unlock the secrets in the soil:

1. Basics & benefits
2. Soil health management systems include:
   - Crop rotation
   - Cover crops
   - Organic matter
   - Soil health monitoring

Unlock your farm’s potential:

dig a little and learn a lot

Cover Crops

Cover crops can be native or non-native, either annual or perennial, that are planted at the end of the growing season to improve soil health. Cover crops can be used to improve soil health, reduce pesticide use, and increase crop yields. Cover crops can also be used to improve wildlife habitat and reduce erosion. Cover crops can be used to improve soil health and reduce weed pressure, which ultimately improves yields.

Diversity is the key to success of any agricultural system.

Cover Crops

Cover crops can be an integral part of any cropping system. Cover crops can be used to improve soil health, and help to develop sustainable, healthy, and productive systems. Cover crops can be used to reduce soil erosion, increase soil water holding capacity, and reduce the need for chemical inputs. Cover crops can be used to improve soil health and reduce weed pressure, which ultimately improves yields.

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El manejar la salud del suelo es una de las maneras más fáciles y efectivas para que los productores agrícolas aumenten la productividad y rentabilidad de sus cultivos, al mismo tiempo mejorar el medio ambiente.

Descubre el potencial del suelo

No molestes el suelo

Consejos básicos

Búsqueda de la cobertura

La biodiversidad incrementa el éxito de las culturas

Descubre los secretos del suelo

El buen manejo del suelo es una de las maneras más fáciles y efectivas para que los productores agrícolas aumenten la productividad y rentabilidad de sus cultivos.
Conservation Webinars
Conventional System

Soil Improving System

09/06/2007

09/06/2007
Cover Crops and Soil Health Forum Locations

The broadcast will begin at 9:00 a.m. CST for participants in the Eastern, Central, and Mountain regions of the United States. The broadcast will be re-streamed at 10:00 a.m. PST for participants in the Pacific region or further west. Attendees are encouraged to arrive 30 to 45 minutes ahead of time for check-in and introductions.