



NRCS Soil Health Update June, 2018

*Sharing soil health marketing
communications information and resources
from USDA's Natural Resources
Conservation Service, other partners and the
media.*



No-Till Farmer – [Podcast] Regenerating no-till soils after a season of saturated soil
In this episode of the *No-Till Farmer* podcast, Barry Fisher - a veteran soil health expert and regional team leader with NRCS - discusses strategies no-tillers can implement to regenerate soil health after experiencing saturated spring soil conditions. [Listen here.](#)



United States Department of Agriculture – Soil health: 4 findings all cotton producers need to know
Through collaboration with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy and the Soil Health Institute, Wrangler has created "Seeding Soil's Potential," a new report that focuses on strategies for cotton production that maximize both environmental and economic value. [Here are four findings from the report that cotton producers – and really all farmers – need to know.](#)



High Plains/Midwest Ag Journal – Producer Gail Fuller offers 8 lessons from his career in cover crops

Emporia, Kansas, farmer Gail Fuller started his Fuller Field School seven years ago to educate others about regenerative ag. [Fuller offers these tips](#) for managing with soil health in mind.



Farm and Dairy – No-till planter in-field checklist

Keep your no-till planter rolling in the field until the last seed drops. Here are some tips and parts to check in an effort to prevent breaking down this year. [Read more.](#)



Soil Health Institute – North American project to evaluate soil health measurements

The Soil Health Institute announces methods for evaluating soil health indicators at a continental scale. [Read more.](#)

Nebraska Farmer.

Nebraska Farmer – [Audio] Strategies for successful cover cropping

Dan Gillespie, a no-till specialist and soil conservation technician with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, has planted cover crops like cereal rye on his own farm near Battle Creek, Nebraska, since the early 2000s. This includes planting annual waterways and, more recently, planting green — or planting soybeans into a standing cereal rye cover crop. In the latest Down in the Weeds podcast, Gillespie discusses some of the opportunities and challenges with these cover crop practices. [Listen here.](#)

Michigan Farmer

Michigan Farmer – MSU to use grant to help U.P. growers with soil health

USDA recently awarded a \$74,277 matching grant to Michigan State University's Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center to research and demonstrate soil health conservation practices.

The funding was made available through the Conservation Innovation Grant program. Over a two-year period, the U.P. Extension Center will establish demonstration plots on row crop-dairy and row crop-beef operations. Soil health practices implemented on the test plots will include conservation tillage, cover crops and a conservation crop rotation. [Learn more.](#)



nwi.com – Cover crops now third to only corn and soybeans in Indiana

In 2017, farmers across the Hoosier state grew a total 970,000 acres of cover crops, preventing an estimated 2.9 million pounds of nitrogen, 1.4 million pounds of phosphorus and 1.2 million tons of sediment from seeping into local streams and waterways, according to the Indiana Department of Agriculture. That amount of sediment, which would otherwise have run off the farm, taking nutrients from the soil, could fill 12,000 train cars. [Read more.](#)



Chicago Tribune – Farmers reap benefits of cover crops with better soil

As farmers Keith Gustafson and Dan Sutton plant their corn and soybean fields this spring, they know work they did last fall will help increase this year's yield, control erosion and improve water quality, among other benefits. [Read more.](#)

INDIANA PrairieFarmer.

Indiana Prairie Farmer – Cover crops can repair damage from tough spring

If your farm was affected by early-spring ponding and flooding, consider using cover crops to rebuild lost production capacity and improve soil health. [Read more.](#)



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

United States Department of Agriculture – California sheep ranch corners conservation market by improving soil health

For nearly a decade, ranch owner Lani Estill has worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve soil health on the pastures grazed by her sheep. By adding key conservation practices, the ranch's pastures now store more carbon in the soil than it emits through its operations. [Learn more.](#)

OhioFarmer.

Ohio Farmer – What soil loss does to crop yields, greenhouse gases

In a recent study at Ohio State University, a team found that topsoil erosion, in addition to reducing crop productivity, causes the release of greenhouse gases. The study also suggests that topsoil can be rebuilt, and the harmful effects of its loss reversed, faster than had been previously thought. [Read more.](#)

WallacesFarmer.

Wallaces Farmer – Tips for managing cover crops for spring 2018

With a tight window for planting corn and soybeans, how do you handle cover crops?

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship is offering some spring management tips. [Learn more.](#)



High Plains/Midwest Ag Journal – Twenty-six years later: How one Kansas farmer became a convert and saved his soil
Joe Swanson's turning point to no-till came in 1991. Adoption of soil health practices on his Kansas farm have led to reduced inputs and increased soil organic matter.
[Learn more.](#)

Dakota Farmer.



Dakota Farmer – Improve irrigation efficiency, soil health at same time
Indiana NRCS district conservationist Don Donovan answers questions on how cover crops can help corn growers cut irrigation and energy costs, increase organic matter in soils, and boost profit margins. Donovan also suggests installing soil moisture probes in irrigated fields. [Read more.](#)

No-Till Farmer – [VIDEO] Planting Green for Improved Soil Health 1
In part one of a two-part series about planting green, North Dakota State University Extension soil health specialist Abbey Wick discusses the results of planting soybeans into a cereal rye cover crop. [Watch here.](#)

Additional soil health marketing communications materials from the soil health communications team are in development, so stay tuned for further updates. As always, please feel free to contact me at any time if you need additional information or would like to offer contributions to the Update.

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