



NEWS RELEASE

Oct 18, 2017

Wisconsin Farms Join Soil Health Partnership, Accelerating Change in Ag

National data project to link sustainable practices to bottom line

(ST. LOUIS) – Six Wisconsin farms have joined the Soil Health Partnership, a move that expands an innovative long-term research project to the upper Midwest. The results could convince more farmers to engage in agriculture practices that do everything from making farms more resilient to extreme weather to improving state water quality.

Reduced tillage, the use of cover crops in winter, and advanced nutrient management are key practices used to improve soil health. The implementation of these practices has been called the next frontier of agriculture. Early research suggests that the benefits of nurturing soil health include improved crop yield, enhanced water quality, increased drought resilience, better flood resistance, and decreased greenhouse gas emissions.

“Will these practices improve the soil and diminish erosion, and will they be economically beneficial? That’s what our farmers want to know,” said Nicole Wagner, executive director of the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association. “Farm fields vary county by county, state by state, and the climate is different in Wisconsin than further south in the Corn belt. That’s why we’re particularly excited SHP is now doing research here—so our farmers can see how these practices work in Wisconsin.”

The Wisconsin farms join more than 100 others enrolled in the program in 12 states. They are:

- Casey Kelleher/Whitewater, WI
- North Central Technical College/Wausau, WI
- Dan Roehrborn/Plymouth, WI
- Ken Rosenow/Oconomowoc, WI
- Jim Zimmerman/Rosendale, WI
- Zeb Zuehls/Montello, WI

The Wisconsin farmers are investigating different nutrient management strategies, tillage practices, and the usage of cover crops. With the help of a trained field manager, SHP will measure improvements in soil health and farm outcomes over a period of years.

Ken Rosenow owns Cedar Home Farms Partnership with his wife, Sue, and his son, Mike. He’s interested to see the results of SHP’s data collection over the next few years, both on the soil biology and the economic benefits.

“We’ve been doing things that we think are good for the soil. It’s important to get the hard data to show the changes,” he said. “My son is the fifth generation to farm here, and he has a son, too. I hope we can learn things to keep farming for years to come.”

An initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, the [Soil Health Partnership](#) is a data-driven program working to quantify the benefits of practices that support soil health from an economic as well as environmental standpoint.

[Rosenow photos available for download](#)

[Additional photos](#) and interviews available upon request

About the Soil Health Partnership

The Soil Health Partnership is a farmer-led initiative that fosters transformation in agriculture through improved soil health, benefiting both farmer profitability and the environment. With more than 100 working farms enrolled in more than 10 states the SHP tests, measures and advances progressive farm management practices that will enhance sustainability and farm economics for generations to come. SHP brings together diverse partners to work towards common goals. At least a ten-year scientific program administered by the National Corn Growers Association, the SHP's vision is driven by initial and continuing funding and guidance from NCGA, Monsanto, the Walton Family Foundation, the Midwest Row Crop Collaborative, General Mills and USDA, with technical support from The Nature Conservancy and the Environmental Defense Fund. For more, visit soilhealthpartnership.org.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jenna Rose/SHP

Jenna@rosemedia.biz

(573) 808-0815