



NEWS RELEASE

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Farmers: Take World Soil Day to nurture your corner of the world

Soil Health Partnership encourages Top 10 practices for soil health

(ST. LOUIS) – The [Soil Health Partnership](#) is commemorating World Soil Day by encouraging farmers to consider new ways to make their land healthier. [World Soil Day](#), Dec. 5, celebrates the importance of soil as one of our most crucial natural resources.

“Soil health is critical to the future sustainability of our agricultural industry,” said Nick Goeser, SHP director. “We want to acknowledge this worldwide day by encouraging farmers at a local level to consider what steps they can take right now to improve their land. Small steps can go a long way toward big change.”

The Soil Health Partnership, an initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, has a list of 10 things you can do to improve your soil health:

1. Learn more about soil health and practical options to improve it in your area– like tillage, cover crops and efficient nutrient management.
2. Get your soil tested annually and watch for trends. Check with your agronomist and soil testing laboratories for recommendations.
3. Try expanding soil testing to include a soil health assessment to measure chemical, physical and biological aspects of your soil. These all impact your crop yields.
4. Consider cover crops for 2016. Identify issues in your field and think of cover crops as a tool to fix the issues. Start small and talk to neighbors who use them.
5. Know and understand what you can do to improve nutrient use efficiency in your system. Consider on-farm testing of fertilizer rate, timing, source and location to make sure nutrients end up in your crop.
6. Consider testing conservation tillage practices like no-till or strip-till. Starting small is key.
7. Create a crop yield and soil health plan to try one or two new practices to optimize your yields and improve your soils. Measuring is key to success! Start there.
8. Manure can be a great source of nutrients if used correctly. If manure is available, follow proper application guidelines to help improve organic matter and nutrient availability.
9. Think about controlled traffic in your fields to reduce compaction. Set up travel lanes in fields to reduce field crossings by harvesting equipment, grain trucks, fertilizer trucks, etc.
10. Consider becoming a Soil Health Partnership farmer! Find out more [here](#).

(more)

The World Soil Day campaign aims to connect people with soils and raise awareness on their critical importance in our lives. This year, it will be celebrated on the 4th of December at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations headquarters in Rome, with additional local events planned worldwide.

About the Soil Health Partnership

The Soil Health Partnership brings together diverse partner organizations including commodity groups, federal agencies, universities and environmental groups to work toward the common goal of improving soil health. Over a five-year period, the SHP will identify, test and measure farm management practices that improve soil health and benefit farmers. We believe the results of this farmer-led project will provide a platform for sharing peer-to-peer information, and lend resources to benefit agricultural sustainability and profitability. An initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, we provide the spark for greater understanding and implementation of agricultural best practices to protect resources for future generations. For more, visit soilhealthpartnership.org.