

NEWS RELEASE

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District
801 Anson Street
Salem, Indiana 47167
(812) 883-3006 ext. 3

Ninth Annual Southern Region Soil Health Workshop Planned for February 4th

SALEM, IN –The Southern Region Soil Health Workshop on February 4th, 2020 in Salem, IN will take a well-rounded look at the topic of soil health focusing on fragipan soils and the benefits of incorporating livestock to build a total soil health system. The workshop will run from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with registration beginning at 8:00 a.m., and includes a variety of presentations from experts across the Midwest.

Speakers and topics include Gary Struben, Retired Indiana NRCS Soil Scientist who will speak on the “Formation of Fragipans and other Southern Indiana Soils”. John Pike, with Pike Ag, LLC from Marion, Illinois, to speak on “Improving Fragipan Soils with Cover Crops” and “Innovative Cover Crop Strategies to Optimize Production”. Attendees will learn how cover crops can improve soil structure and drainage on all soil types. Dave Fischer, an Indiana farmer from Jasper, IN, will share his approach on “The Benefits of Annual Rye Grass as Livestock Forage in Fragipan Soils” and “Wide Row Planting with Nitrogen Fixing Cover Crops”. With the tough economic times we are in, presentations by John and Dave will relay information that will allow for better utilization of fertilizers with cover crops. Cliff Schuette, with Stine Seed Company from St. Rose Illinois, will speak on the benefits of “Integrating Livestock into Your Row Crop Operation”.

David Fischer, who will also sit on our farmer panel, has utilized techniques that create a positive environment impact and improve soil health with the livestock they raise. He is known to be a speaker who has implemented what he preaches. Cliff Schuette is a well-known livestock and environment source who has served as the President of the Illinois Beef Association and has been awarded the Environmental Stewardship Award. Attendees will learn from our speakers’ experiences and knowledge during their livestock and cropping system utilization focused presentations. To have this caliber of speakers so close to home is a rare opportunity for producers in South Central Indiana.

Todd Armstrong, a local landowner and operator who has attended past soil health workshops, encourages all producers to take advantage of this workshop. “Every farmer wants to build organic matter, keep soil and nutrients in place, increase soil biological activity in their crop fields which all contribute to increasing crop yield. This workshop helps those farmers learn how to make soil health a top priority in their operation.”

This will be the ninth year for this educational event, which reflects a continued public interest in soil health management practices. Former Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor and Event MC, event planner, Jim Brown explained, “We are on the edge of a great revolution in terms of thinking about soil health as a complete system for agricultural production.”

Advance registration for the event is required by January 31st and can be completed by contacting the Washington County SWCD at (812) 883-3006, extension 3 or Washington County Purdue Extension Office at (812) 883-4601. The workshop will take place in Cornerstone Hall (1700 N. Jim Day Road, Salem, IN 47167). The \$10.00 workshop fee includes a light breakfast, lunch, and informational handouts. Certified Crop Advisor Credits will be available. Questions about advisor credits may be directed to Danielle Walker at (812) 883-4601.

The workshop is organized by the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), Purdue Extension-Washington County, Indiana State Department of Agriculture and the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI), the South Fork-Blue River Watershed Project, and the Mill Creek-Blue River Watershed Project. The SWCD and partners are equal opportunity providers and accommodations for those who need them will be provided; simply contact the SWCD at (812) 883-3704 ext. 3 at least 10 days prior to the event.

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