



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Healthy Soil, Thriving Farmers: Soil Health Field Days Promote Agricultural Evolution**

Soil Health Partnership plans events to share environmental, economic benefits of best practices

(ST. LOUIS) – Brent Bible practiced no-till farming and the use of cover crops on his farm in Lafayette, Indiana, but until recently, it was a scattershot approach. By joining the Soil Health Partnership in 2014, he now takes a more disciplined approach, gaining a quantifiable understanding of the health of his soil and improvements in his operation's efficiencies.

The Soil Health Partnership and its demonstration network farmers, like Bible, hope to share ideas fueling the evolution of farming with other producers throughout the Midwest. The partnership will host soil health field days from August through the end of the year.

The field days will demonstrate how changing certain practices can create lasting environmental benefits while potentially increasing farm productivity and income. Examples of educational topics include:

- Cover crop benefits and integration into local cropping systems;
- Nutrient management and other strategies to improve soil health;
- Hands-on soil demonstrations; and
- Farmer panels to discuss local experiences with cover crops.

Cover crops have gained attention for improving soil health because they capture excess nitrogen left in the soil and put good plant residue back into the ground.

An initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, the SHP works closely with diverse organizations including commodity groups, industry, foundations, federal agencies, universities and well-known environmental groups toward the common goal of improving soil health.

"We encourage sound soil practices combined with scientific quantification of results from farmers taking positive actions," said Nick Goeser, SHP director. "Improved crop productivity, environmental gains and economic growth are all benefits of progressive soil management strategies."

The partnership has scheduled about a dozen events in Iowa, Illinois and Indiana, and anticipates dozens more in these and other Midwestern states throughout the summer and fall.

Bible plans on hosting one of the field days, where in part, he will share his success with cereal rye and oats on his farm. He also has experience with tillage cover such as turnips, radishes and snow peas.

“We have tried several different blends of cover crops, looking for the right combination,” he said. “It has had its challenges sometimes, but it has been a good experience overall. Our costs are lower, plus we have less erosion and runoff.”

For a complete list of Soil Health Field Days, visit [SoilHealthPartnership.org](http://SoilHealthPartnership.org). Events will be added throughout the summer.

### **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](http://soilhealthpartnership.org).