



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Soil Health Partnership expands to 65 farm test sites for 2016**

*Data from farms to play key role in widespread changes for improving soil health*

(ST. LOUIS) – Twenty-five more farms have joined a groundbreaking research effort that could change the way farmers take care of their land. The [Soil Health Partnership](#) announced the addition of the new test sites at the 2016 Commodity Classic, March 3 – 5 in New Orleans.

This spring, the organization begins in its third year identifying, testing and measuring farm management practices that improve soil health. These include growing cover crops, practicing conservation tillage like no-till or strip-till, and using sophisticated nutrient management techniques.

The program's goal is to quantify the benefits of these practices from an economic standpoint, showing farmers how healthy soil benefits their bottom line. They also have positive environmental benefits, like protecting water from nutrient runoff.

The new farm sites are located in eight Midwestern states.

"It's exciting that so many farmers want to test and share the impact soil health can have on the environment and farm economics with their peers," said Nick Goeser, SHP director. "As a data-driven program, the success of our research depends upon these test sites, and we are indebted to them for their participation and enthusiasm."

A farmer-led initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, the partnership receives funding from Monsanto and the Walton Family Foundation, as well as technical support from The Nature Conservancy and Environmental Defense Fund. Once enrolled, field managers from the partnership work with farmers to determine what practices might work best on their farms. They help the farmer gather soil, planting and tillage data from test plots.

Starting in the 2014 growing season with 20 farms, the partnership plans to gradually increase the number of demonstration farms in the program to 100. Once a grower enrolls, the test site is included in research for five years.

[See videos of Soil Health Partnership farmers](#)

*(more)*

**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).