

NEWS RELEASE



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Get #SoilSmart: Soil Health Partnership Launches Soil Health Awareness Campaign

Visit Brian Corkill's Twitter page, and you'll learn that he's a farmer, husband, father, Illini and coach, with a passion for "Ag, technology, learning and preserving what we have for future generations."

The 48-year-old Corkill, who owns and runs BA Farms in Galva, Illinois, is among the growing number of farmers engaging in social media to enhance farm business, learn, and connect with his industry. The Soil Health Partnership has launched a new campaign to reach more farmers like Corkill on social media and help them get "soil smart."

"It's pretty clear to me that social media isn't just a fad, and if we want to help other farmers learn the value soil health can bring to their operation, we can reach them through social channels," Corkill said.

Corkill, an enrolled farmer in the Soil Health Partnership, serves on a committee that helped shape the new #SoilSmart campaign, which launched Aug. 1 and will run through the fall. Funded by a grant from the Walton Family Foundation, #SoilSmart is a high-volume, maximum-impact social media campaign designed to reach new farmer audiences and provide helpful content to spread awareness of soil health on a deeper level.

The campaign uses SHP's existing [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts, and has also established an Instagram presence (@SoilPartners), in part to showcase the organization's robust library of photographs.

Content will focus on creatively sharing information on the benefits of practices that promote soil health, including reduced tillage, growing cover crops and engaging in advanced nutrient management.

Charleston Orwig, an agency based in Wisconsin, won the bid for the campaign. Missouri-based Rose Media, which has led SHP's communications efforts since 2015, is overseeing the effort along with the #SoilSmart committee. In addition to Corkill, committee members include SHP's Elyssa McFarland, herself a farmer and former field manager for the program; and Becky Frankenbach, director of communications for Missouri Corn.

As for Corkill, he has garnered almost 4,000 followers on Twitter since setting up his account in 2010. He says social media is not just for millennials by any stretch.

"I know a lot of guys my age and older on Twitter, and we all see the value for tapping into the expertise of others," he said. "It's one of the best ways to get ideas, find out new information and learn how to do things differently, like cover crops."

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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 14 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, Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, The General Mills Foundation, Midwest Row Crop Collaborative, Monsanto, National Wheat Foundation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pisces and the Walton Family Foundation, with technical support from The Nature Conservancy and the Environmental Defense Fund. For more, visit soilhealthpartnership.org.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jenna Rose

Jenna@rosemedia.biz

(573) 808-0815