

Clean Water Indiana Breakfast at the Statehouse

- CCSI and NRCS staff manned a soils health demonstration area that also included a selection of cover crop root banners.
- CCSI Agronomists coordinated with NRCS, ISDA, SWCD and Purdue staff to collect soils from most of Indiana's legislative districts to use during soil health demonstrations for elected officials.

National No-till Conference

- CCSI, NRCS, ISDA, Purdue, and SWCD staffed an Indiana Conservation Partnership soil health demonstration booth organized by CCSI.
- Video of slake demos by Don Donovan, NRCS, were recorded by a Ying Li, a TNC staff member based out of Asia. Within hours of sharing with her China-based farmer groups, the video had been viewed hundreds of times
- Video of Amanda Kautz, Darlene Florence, and Sarah Vaughn, all NRCS, was recorded by a visiting Ukrainian Farmer with over 45.5K YouTube subscribers. The video featured all of the available soil health demonstrations as well as the CCSI cover crop root banners.
- Ukrainian Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bvh9tQRs0hg>
- No-Tiller's website - <https://no-tiller.com/>
- Based on success of the booth, the group was invited to the 2024 Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference in Ada, OH – where it was met with similar successes.

No-Till and Cover Crop Handbook

- Approval was given to purchase enough No-Till and Cover Crop Handbooks for each Indiana USDA Service Center, non co-located SWCDs, and all county-level Extension offices to have one.

Ag 101: Commodity Crop Production and 2025-26 SARE Professional Development Plan

Approval was given to pilot an Ag 101: Commodity Crop Production Training in July at the Becks Ag Center outside of West Lafayette. Registration opened on the afternoon of June 3rd and by early afternoon of June 4th all seats were taken and a waitlist started. Registrants were a very good mix of NRCS, FSA, Extension, SWCD, and ISDA staff

For over 10 years, CCSI has worked with Indiana SARE to support soil health education through their Indiana SARE Professional Development Plan (SARE PDP). SARE is a partner in the various trainings CCSI leads each year, including the 2024 pilot Ag 101: Commodity Crop Production Training. The 2025-26 SARE PDP will include additional trainings targeting conservation staff and others who work one-on-one with farmers – but did not come from a farming background. The 2025-26 SARE PDP includes

- Ag 101: Commodity Crop Production
Expansion to 4 trainings – one in each quadrant of the state with similar topics:
 - Plant ID and Growth Staging
 - A Year on the Farm – What happens when in commodity crop production
 - Farm Equipment 101
 - Plot Walks and/or insect identification
- Ag 102: Crop Production Communication and Coordination
This training will focus on farm visits and scouting, including commonly used terms
- Ag 103: On-Farm Demonstrations, Trials and Research
Setting up on-farm demos, trials and research – including strip trials required by some NRCS EQIP and CSP practice codes

FarmAdvisors.Ag – *Farmers Mentoring Farmers Launc*

CCSI provided assistance over the course of 12 months to a group of regenerative farmers led by former US Undersecretary of Ag Jim Moseley. The group launched the program on 08/14 at the Glass Barn at the Indiana State Fair with approximately 50 people in attendance, including Ag Media

- Website v1.0 <https://farmadvisors.ag/>
- Indiana Soybean Alliance / Indiana Corn Marketing Council boards formalized fiscal sponsorship for FarmAdvisors. In addition, Madeline Williams, Sustainability + Value Creation Program Manager will dedicate 50% of her time to supporting the program. ICMC/ISA will be working with the FarmAdvisors Board to further refine the budget and program growth plans.
- PepsiCo has offered to fund \$100K in “gap” funding to the program.
- A National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant application was submitted and has had very good feedback. (announcements of grantees expected January 2025)
- Farmers Cameron Mills and Dan DeSutter will be leading both the Mentor Vetting and Mentee Matching Committees.
- Board Chair Rodney Rulon has reconvened the 6-person group who developed a business plan outline during planting season. Their Administration Committee will flesh out the business plan.

Step-up for Ag

An invitation only roundtable the night before the Sustainable Ag Summit was organized by PepsiCo and the Sustainable Food Lab on November 19th. Participants included Consumer Packaged Goods / Retailers, NGOs, and organizations like CCSI. Discussions revolved around financial and capacity-building needs of organizations like CCSI and the support NGOs and CPGs could provide. There was very strong support by the organizations involved to develop framework, financial and structural support to conservation organizations.

The meeting will be followed up with one-on-one meetings with CPG representatives to develop a framework, identify geographic interest, priority commodities, finding availability and timelines. Support will be designed to be farmer-first and locally rooted. A goal has been set to have a proof of concept by end of 2025.