



Soil Health Showcase

Date & Time

December 10, 2021
8:00 am — 12:00 pm

Location

Clinton County Fairgrounds—Edwards Jones Bldg.
1701 S. Jackson St., Frankfort, IN, 46041

Agenda

- ◆ 7:45—8:15 Sign-in and Welcome (Breakfast provided)
- ◆ 8:15—9:30 Cover Crop Equipment Showcase— “The Tools To Get You There”
- ◆ 9:30—9:45 Break
- ◆ 9:45—10:45 Cover Crop Raised Bed Demonstration and Soil Health Discussion
Joe Rorick, Conservation Agronomist for Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)
- ◆ 10:45—11:00 SWCD, NRCS, and FSA Program Updates
- ◆ 11:00—11:30 Carbon Market Topic—Nathan Thompson, Ag Economist with Purdue Extension
- ◆ 11:30—12:00 PARP Topic (Cover Crops and Weed Seeds)
Adam Shanks, Ag & Natural Resources Educator—Clinton County

PARP, CCH, CEU Credits available: A \$10 fee for PARP recertification applies (cash or check only). Call your local Purdue Extension office for more information.

Registration: Please call the Clinton County SWCD (765-659-1223 x3), email clinton-swcd@iaswcd.org or visit the Eventbrite link below to register!

Eventbrite Link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/soil-health-showcase-tickets-191814802237>



Soil & Water Conservation Districts
Clinton
Howard
Tipton
Tippecanoe



United States Department of Agriculture



Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative



Extension

South Fork Wildcat Creek Stewardship Initiative



Clinton County Farm Bureau
Equal Opportunity, Equal Access Organizations



This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement 24998 to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The contents of this document do not reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

Save the Date! SWCD Annual Meeting

You are invited to attend the Clinton County Soil & Water Conservation Districts' Annual Dinner Meeting on **Tuesday, March 1, 2022 beginning at 6 PM.** The meeting will be held at Arborwood and will include a

complimentary catered dinner. The meeting will include a brief business meeting, an election of supervisors and presentation of conservation awards.

The program for the evening will be - Mussels: A Shell of Indiana's

Rivers presented by Cassie Hauswald, Freshwater Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy. The history of people and mussels has left a mark on the health of our rivers; learn about positive choices for water that can keep the story of mussels in Indiana alive and well.

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Special points of interest:

- *Save the Date: SWCD Annual Meeting and Election*
- *USDA, NRCS Program Application Deadlines Announced*
- *CCSWCD grants provide financial assistance. S. Fork Wildcat Phase III funding received*
- *Sugar Creek Adventures*

Indiana NRCS Announces New Funding Initiative

Jerry Raynor, NRCS State Conservationist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Indiana, announced that December 17 will be the first-round funding cutoff date for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry, a new option available through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program available for agricultural producers. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to install conservation practices that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, improve soil health, improve water, and air quality and create wildlife habitat.

In fiscal year 2022, EQIP is offering a

new funding category titled Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry. In Indiana, this funding will target soil health improvements to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon, and ultimately mitigate the impacts of climate change.

"The benefits of climate smart ag and forestry are two-fold," said Raynor. "Producers improve the health, productivity, resiliency and profitability of their operations while mitigating the impacts of climate change for our entire nation."

Producers interested in EQIP funding should submit a signed application to the local NRCS field office. While applications are accepted on a continu-

ous basis, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by December 17 to be considered for this funding period.

Participants in EQIP must meet eligibility requirements. NRCS staff will work with producers to determine eligibility and complete necessary worksheets and rankings in order for the applicant to compete for funding.

For more information about EQIP and other technical and financial assistance available through Indiana NRCS conservation programs, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/programs/financial/eqip/> or contact your county's District Conservationist <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/contact/local/>.

Pollinators and Agriculture: A Partnership on the Land



Pollinator Partnership (P2) is excited to announce Project Wingspan Agricultural Lands (PWAL), a new program in **IL, IN, MI,**

and **OH** helping the agricultural community create high-quality pollinator habitat. The program combines volunteer native seed

collection and collaboration with farmers, ranchers, and others wanting support for habitat creation.

If you are a farmer, rancher, and/or manage areas within the agricultural landscape and are interested in learning how to improve your lands for pollinators: Apply for program participation and tell us about your lands by filling out the PWAL habitat survey: www.pollinator.org/wingspan/habitat-surveys/pwal-survey.

If you have a passion for nature and want to help imperiled pollinators: Become a trained seed collector. To learn more: <https://tinyurl.com/Wingspan-volunteer>.

To learn more visit www.pollinator.org.

"Pollinators are essential for pollinating 90% of wildflowers and 75% of our major crop plants"

New Climate Information Source Launched

The Indiana State Climate Office (IN-SCO) hosted a climate services summit in early June 2021. During that 2-day summit, multiple state and regional climate services partners showcased free online climate tools and resources for the public that can improve decision making, planning, and awareness of climate and its impacts. Due to the amount of information available a request was made to find a way to

deliver this type of content in smaller doses, across a longer period of time, and to an increasingly growing audience. Therefore, the IN-SCO has launched the quarterly climate newsletter, [Climate INformer](#), to highlight key climate services partners, share relevant climate tools, provide climate outlooks for the next few months, pass along interesting climate facts and explanations, and

promote upcoming climate-relevant events. There is a link within the newsletter to subscribe.



Indiana NRCS Announces First Sign-up Period for CSP

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Jerry Raynor announced today that Indiana is now accepting applications for enrollment in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the nation's largest conservation program. While applications are accepted year-round, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by January 28 to be considered for this funding period.

CSP is a financial assistance program for producers who are already established conservation stewards and who want to add more conservation benefits on their land, such as improved water and soil quality and enhanced wildlife habitat.

"CSP continues to be a very effective tool for private landowners working to achieve their conservation and management goals," said Raynor. "It is the largest conservation program in the United States with more than 70 million acres of productive agricultural and forest land enrolled."

Through CSP, agricultural producers and forest landowners earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities like cover crops, ecologically-based pest management, buffer strips, and pollinator and beneficial insect habitat – all while maintaining active agriculture production on their land. CSP also encourages the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and management techniques, such as precision agriculture applications and on-site carbon

storage and planting for high carbon sequestration rate, and soil amendments to improve water quality.

CSP is for private working lands including cropland, pastureland, non-industrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of a tribe. Agricultural producers wanting to enhance current conservation efforts on their land are encouraged to apply.

Information about CSP, including national and state ranking questions and enhancement descriptions, is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/csp. This one-stop shop, which provides information to help individuals determine whether CSP is right for them, will be continually updated as more information becomes available.

Local Family Receives Statewide River Friendly Farmer Award

Indiana's lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands are valuable natural resources. Protecting these water resources is imperative and forty-seven farmers received accolades on August 18 at the Indianapolis State Fairgrounds for their 'river-friendly' efforts.

Jay and Sue Hawley were recognized as Clinton County's River Friendly Farmer(s). The Hawley Farm is a corn and soybean operation located in the Sugar Creek Watershed. The farm is no-tilled providing cover year-round reducing erosion, soil compaction and fertilizer inputs making the soil healthier. Fall cover crops are planted on the land to replace nutrients and to protect the soil. Integrated Pest and Nutrient Management Plans allow Hawley to apply the right nutrients, at the right time and place. These best management practices reduces the amount of sediments, nutrient and pesticide runoff into the

watershed.

When asked about his long commitment to conservation Jay's reply was "because we care. This is God's land and ours to take care of." Incidentally, Jay's father, Charles Robert Hawley, was one of the first elected supervisors to serve on the Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board when it was first formed by public referendum in 1967.

The annual River Friendly Farmer Award ceremony recognizes farmers for their implementation of conservation practices, like no-till and cover crops, which ultimately protect waterways and improve water quality in Indiana. These farmers were nominated by their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts'.

Sponsored by Indiana Farm Bureau, the River Friendly Farmer Award program began in 2000 and has honored over 1,000 Indiana farms.

This year the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts hosted the event and IASWCD Board President Bobby Hettmansperger opened the ceremony and remarks were made by Randy Kron, Indiana Farm Bureau President; Jerry Raynor, Indiana State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS); and, Trevor Laureys, Director of Soil Conservation, Indiana State Department of Agriculture. Amie Simpson, Brownfield Ag News, emceed the ceremony.



Randy Kron, Indiana Farm Bureau and Trevor Laureys, Indiana State Dept. of Agriculture present Jay and Sue Hawley the Indiana River Friendly Farmer Award.

Women4theLand Learning Circle—Love Your Soil



Interested in maintaining productive land, while conserving your natural resources? Women4theLand is a partnership of conservation and natural resource agencies and organizations working together to provide education and resources to Indiana women landowners, farmers and natural resource professionals. Conservation Learning Circles provides information in a comfortable, informal setting where women learn from professional conservationists as well as from each other.

On Wednesday, February 16, 2022 join the Clinton and Carroll County Soil

and Water Conservation Districts' for a day of conversation, learning from women conservation professionals, lunch and a hands-on introduction to soil health concepts. Concepts will include information on improving the health of the soil in your farming operation regardless of the number of acres owned or operated.

The event is FREE to attend, however space will be limited to the first 15 individuals to register. Preferred registration will be given to women who own or lease ground in Clinton

or Carroll County. To register or to learn more please contact Leah Harden at 765-659-1223 extension 3 or email clinton-swcd@iaswcd.org

Women4thLand strives to empower women to positively impact Indiana's land, food and quality of life through sustainable agriculture, wise conservation actions, and strong farm enterprises.

CCSWCD PROVIDES TREES TO COMMUNITY

Proceeds from the annual tree sale allowed the CCSWCD to distribute 10 trees to parks throughout the county. Several species were offered to help create a diverse tree canopy with natural benefits to the local ecosystem. The CCSWCD hopes to have a long lasting positive impact on their community



through this donation. Cities and towns around the globe that line their streets and fill their parks with trees are building healthier, happier communities. Trees offer vast benefits for the community at large. Thriving urban forests improve human health, from

encouraging physical activity to reducing respiratory illnesses stemming from air pollution.

In the United States, park trees alone remove about 75,000 tons of air pollution each year. And urban trees reduce runoff of sediment, pollutants, and organic matter into streams, improving our water quality. Trees have also been shown to reduce crime, lower stress levels, and develop community pride.

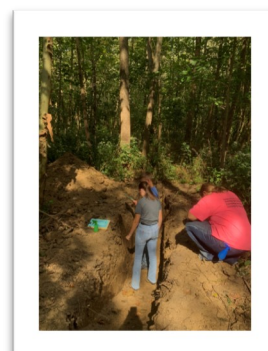
Bi-County Soils Judging Contest Results

The Clinton and Carroll County Soil and Water Conservation Districts' in partnership with Purdue Extension and the USDA, NRCS hosted the 2021 bi-county soils contest. Adapting to the ongoing health concerns due to COVID, teams were scheduled over the course of several days. Teams from Carroll and Clinton County applied their soils

knowledge and expertise to earn recognition as the Top Team or Top Individual.

Rossville FFA Team members Emmeline Seest, Gabe Freeman, Garrett Miller and Hailey Uerkwitz took top team honors. Phil Carter is the advisor. Top Sr. Individual was Emmeline Seest.

Congratulations to all who competed!



Technical and Financial Assistance to Address Your Resource Concerns—funds available through CCSWCD grant initiatives.

The purpose of a Soil and Water Conservation District, or SWCD, is to provide information about soil, water, and related natural resources conservation; identify and prioritize **LOCAL** soil and water resource concerns; and connect landusers to sources of education, technical and financial assistance from local, state and federal sources to assist them in implementing conservation practice and technologies.

Funding Assistance updates:

Clean Water Indiana: limited funding available. Grant expires 12/2022. The cost-share program focuses on practices consistent with conservation cropping systems. In addition, cost-share funds are

available for soil testing/basic fertility to agricultural producers who have no previous history of soil testing. The fertility information will help the producer to develop a plan for nutrient management using the 4R principles—right source, rate, time and place. This program was recently expanded to include specialty crop producers, small farm acreage, pasture and community gardens.

S. Fork Wildcat Stewardship Initiative Phase III Phase III funding has been awarded through the Section 319

program of the Clean Water Act. The staff and steering committee will develop a cost-share program and once approved by IDEM staff will begin accepting applications. Anticipated timeframe is sometime in the first quarter of 2022. We are excited to continue working with producers in the S. Fork Wildcat Creek! If you are interested in becoming involved in helping with ongoing efforts in the watershed please contact the SWCD office at 765-659-1223 extension 3 or clinton-swcd@iaswcd.org. Visit www.clintonswcd.org for program updates.

Subscribe Online to Receive Free Text & Emails Alerts From USDA

Did you know you can subscribe to receive free email and text message updates from your local USDA Service Center?

Whether you're in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables producers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Subscribers will receive text messages or emails about important program information, eligibility requirements and deadlines from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk

Management Agency (RMA).

You can sign up for email and text alerts by visiting farmers.gov/subscribe. From there you can choose from a wide number of topics including disaster assistance, conservation programs, crop insurance, farm loans, and more. Participants may unsubscribe at any time. For more information visit farmers.gov/working-with-us/stay-connected or for subscription assistance, contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).



Indiana NRCS Announces General EQIP sign-up

Indiana's agricultural producers who want to improve natural resources and address resource concerns on their land are encouraged to sign up for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Jerry Raynor, NRCS State Conservationist, announced that December 17 will be the EQIP application deadline in Indiana.

“While we take EQIP applications

throughout the year, applications received after December 17 will be considered in future announced application rounds. I encourage producers with resource concerns on their land to submit an application by the deadline, Raynor explains.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program available for agricultural producers. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to install conservation practices that reduce soil erosion

and sedimentation, improve soil health, improve water and air quality and create wildlife habitat.

Many applicants are interested in using funds to address soil erosion and water quality issues on their land; however, funds are also available for pasture and grazing land, confined livestock operations, organic producers, drainage water management, invasive plant control and wildlife habitat improvement.

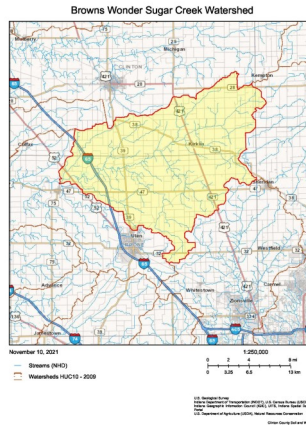
Investing in the Brown's Wonder-Sugar Creek Watershed

The Brown's Wonder-Sugar Creek Watershed Stewardship Initiative is helping landowners and operators to implement conservation practices in priority areas, as determined by the completed Watershed Management Plan, of the watershed.

What is a Watershed? It is the land that water flows across or under on its way to a stream, river or lake.

How Do Watersheds Work? The landscape is made up of many interconnected basins or watersheds. Within each watershed, all water runs to the lowest point—a stream, river, or lake. On its way, water travels over the surface and across farm fields, forest land, suburban lawns and city streets. Or it seeps into the soil and travels as groundwater. Large watersheds like the Wabash River, Ohio River or Mississippi River are made up of many smaller watersheds across several states.

Your Watershed Community—Everyone lives in a watershed and are part of the watershed community. The animals, birds and fish are also part of the watershed



community. Members of the watershed influence what happens in the watershed, good or bad, by how the watershed community treats the natural resources—the soil, water, air, plants and animals. What happens in the smaller watershed also affects the larger watershed. For example tributaries in the Brown's Wonder-Sugar Creek watershed flows to the Wabash River, then to the Ohio, then to the Mississippi and eventually to the Gulf of Mexico.

Why it Matters? Water quality monitoring completed as part of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM) statewide Integrated Water Monitoring and Assessment program indicate that 17 stream segments equating to approximately 75 miles of waterways in the BWSC watershed have been identified as not meeting one or more of its "designated uses". The primary purpose of the sampling effort is to identify which Indiana Waters meet state and federal water quality standards. These designated requirements have been established to protect recreational, human health and environmental benefits of the public. In response, stakeholders groups completed a baseline study to better understand the impairments which resulted in a Watershed Management Plan used to guide efforts for future implementation of conservation practices.

To learn more about the BWSC Stewardship Initiative and the cost-share program available to landowners for voluntary conservation efforts please visit www.clintonswcd.org.

The Sugar Creek Gang—Tracing Their Steps

Paul Hutchens is the author of the Sugar Creek Gang Books. His memories of childhood adventures around the fishing hole, the swimming hole, the island and the woods that surround Indiana's Sugar Creek near his Thorntown home inspired the beloved tales that he wrote.

Recently, Richard and Grace Moore shared that their son and daughter-in-law, Texas residents had been reading the tales of the Sugar Creek Gang to their children

and the Moore's grandchildren. They were surprised to learn that the books were based on a real place in Indiana. A place where their grandfather and grandmother lived!

This set into motion a visit to the Sugar Creek of the beloved books that they were reading.

They shared some memories of the day of exploration on the Sugar Creek with the CCSWCD staff so that what they

experienced could be shared with the community.

The Sugar Creek, its headwaters originating on the far eastside of the county is a precious resource past, present and future—and is deserving of the communities protection and restoration for future generations.

Will begin sharing their story and images in this newsletter but stay tuned to future newsletters for more.

Sugar Creek Experience by Eric Moore

It was a breezy Saturday or perhaps it was windless or even windy. It did not matter much because today we were going to learn about Sugar Creek. Myself, my wife April, and my two daughters Addie and Corrina had spent the last 6 months reading the Sugar Creek gang books by Paul Hutchens. We had read 18 of his 36 books. Now Sugar Creek was about to come off of the pages and into our real lives.

That Saturday, we met at Matt's

(Crawford) house which is close to where the Sugar Creek begins. We looked at a county map to give us an idea of where we were. Matt explained that Sugar Creek began to look like a creek around where his farm is located. A bit East of his farm, Sugar Creek was just drainage ditches. The land back in the 1940's would have been more swampy. In fact, parts of the adventures in the Sugar Creek Gang books take place in a swampy area around part of the creek.

After getting our bearings, my mom, April and the girls jumped into one car and my dad, Matt and I piled into Matt's truck. We were off to see of the legendary Sugar Creek. Cont. on pg. 7

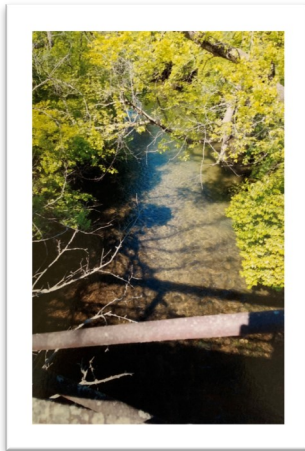


Sugar Creek Experience cont.

Our first stop was just off a county road right by a watershed sign. We carefully navigated the somewhat steep bank to get down to the water. Matt demonstrated how to fall gracefully and stopped before he fell into the water! The water was clear and a little chilly. We found several nice raccoon footprints along the water's edge.

Our second stop was further downstream. It was just past where two parts of the creek merged. Matt pointed out where he might have carved his initials into a tree several years ago while hiking the area. Sugar Creek was wider and deeper there. The bottom of the creek was rocky with well-worn pebbles of all sizes. Matt pointed out that the creek flowed under a modern-day bridge. However, that was not the type of bridge that the Sugar Creek Gang had played under in the books. Matt knew where to find a bridge like those that were in the books.

We took a short car ride. Then we walked along the edge of newly planted soybean field during which we got an agriculture education. Finally, we were at the old bridge. Matt explained it had been closed for many years. It was made of steel I-beams, rivets, and wood with



concrete on either end. It was in pretty good shape for probably being well over 100 years old.

After playing on the bridge for a while, my daughters were naturally drawn to finding a path under the bridge. Sugar Creek was wider at this point than we had seen it before. However, it was shallower with smaller pebbles lining the bottom. Under the bridge, there was a concrete edge and just enough mud along the shore to get dirty as we played there. This clearly was a place like where the Sugar Creek Gang must have played and held some of its meetings!

Sugar Creek was now very real to everyone in my family! It was exciting to see places like those in the Sugar Creek Gang books. My daughters were super excited to have experienced a play-life as it would have been in the 1940's. Many thanks to Matt who made the Sugar Creek come to life for us.

Sugar Creek Experience by April Moore

I am seven or eight and my family huddles together in the living room reading another adventure of the Sugar Creek Gang. I loved the books as a child, the adventures of Bill, Poetry, Dragonfly, Little Jim, Circus, Big Jim and Tom always captivated my attention. As I listened to the stories, I dreamed of playing in the creek just as the children in the books do. I always assumed that Sugar Creek was a land of myth, setup as a prop for character development. Imagine my surprise that it was a real place!

"I hope that many of today's children will be able to enjoy the creek...."

We started reading the book series to my oldest daughter and she too enjoyed the adventures of the boy heroes. She wanted to know everything about Sugar Creek and if it was a real place. New to the equation, since I read the books? Enter Google Maps! Behold Sugar Creek is real and imagine our surprise when we discovered we were close to it every time we visited our grandparents. Let the planning begin!

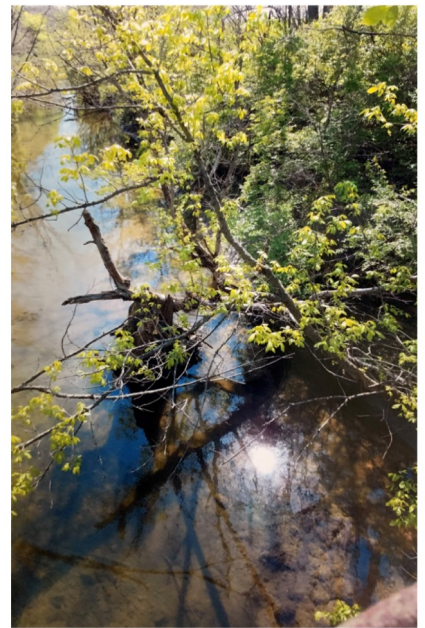
When we visited Dick and Grace for the first time in a year (Thanks COVID), we

just knew it was time to visit Sugar Creek. Matt (Crawford) volunteered to be our guide and the night before our adventure even the adult in me couldn't sleep. I was so excited to visit an almost mythical place and share the experience with my family. Matt took us to a road where the creek flowed underneath, and in between fields there was the creek of dreams.

It was small and hard to get to. Only one of us fell on our way down the bank, but we counted it all joy in our adventure. The next stop was an old hidden bridge, and it was here the stories came alive. The girls and I went down the bank, got stuck in some mud, took off our shoes, and waded into the clear, icy water. We could almost hear the children from long ago playing there under the bridge. Matt told of collecting boys in his gang as they traveled to the bridge on their bicycles to play on hot summer days.

Our trip was one of nostalgia of days long ago but also one that helped us remember

the good of today and the possibilities for the future. I hope that many of today's children will be able to enjoy the creek, and the sense of adventure and play that it brings will be treasured for years to come.





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It's "No-Till November!"



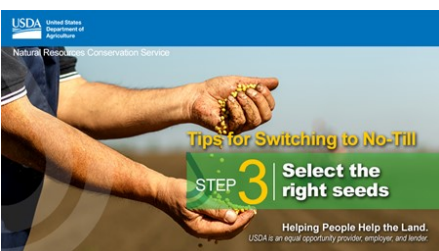
Looking to start no-till next year? First step is to start planning as soon as possible to maximize your chance for success. Link to blog: <https://www.farmers.gov/connect/blog/conservation/6-tips-switching-no-till>

First time no-tillers should keep it simple. Make sure to plant the right crop for your first year.



Switching to no-till? Select seed for good seedling and root vigor.

Preparing prior to planting will maximize your chance for a successful first year as a no-till farmer. Read more about planter setup considerations on farmers.gov



You only get one chance to no-till plant the seed. Wait for the right soil conditions. Read all six tips for switching to no-till on farmers.gov.

It's No-Till November. Prime time to connect with an experienced no-till farmer to help you transition your farm. Find out more tips on Farmers.gov.

