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Soil Health Movement Receiving Strong Support In South Dakota

SOUTH DAKOTA SOIL HEALTH COALITION (SDSHC), Pierre, S.D. July 5, 2018- Momentum for the soil health movement in the state of South Dakota has been increasing at an extremely encouraging rate this year. Over sixteen different events have already been held throughout the state with the sole purpose of providing farmers and ranchers continued education and resources in the area of soil health. Numerous other events centered around topics such as grazing, wildlife conservation as well as crop and weed management have also included soil health speakers.

Soil health can be described as when the physical, chemical, and biological properties within the soil are in good balance and able to support sustainable agricultural production. According to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, farmers and ranchers operate the state's number one industry and it has a \$25.6 billion impact on the economy each year. Increasing the soil health of the more than 19 million acres of cropland and 23 million acres of pastureland, that create this impact, is an important part of protecting the state's economy. The eight different events held in June alone were extremely well attended showing a large amount of support for the protection and enhancement of this resource. A two-day soil health roadshow held June 12-13 with stops in Flandreau, Redfield, Dakota Lakes Research Farm and Winner was attended by over 340 participants. The 14th Annual Soil Days and 35th Annual Rangeland Days held in Redfield hosted over 150 participants and volunteers.

Upcoming events scheduled throughout the state can be found at <https://www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org/events/> including the 2018 Soil Health School which will be held in Hartford September 5-7. The Soil Health School is designed for anyone interested in learning how to manage soils for resiliency and profit and includes both classroom style presentations as well as hands-on experiences in the field. Space is limited, early registration is encouraged. For additional information on this and any other soil health events please call (605) 280-4190 or email sdsoilhealth@gmail.com.

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