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Keynote Speakers Announced For 2019 Soil Health Conference

SOUTH DAKOTA SOIL HEALTH COALITION (SDSHC), Pierre, S.D. December 7, 2018- The SDSHC is extremely pleased to announce the three speakers who will be showcased at the 2019 Soil Health Conference and Annual Meeting, January 22-23, on the campus of South Dakota State University (SDSU). Keith Berns of Green Cover Seed will speak both the evening of the 22nd as well during the main event the following day. Additional keynote speakers include Allen Williams, Livestock Management and Agricultural Consultant, and Dwayne Beck, Research Manager at Dakota Lakes Research Farm. All three of these speakers are well known for their many contributions to the soil health movement and because of this were asked about future research and upcoming projects in a recent interview.

Keith Berns hails from Bladen, NE and co-founded Green Cover Seed in 2009 “to share the benefits of cover crops and no till farming with the community.” Over the years his company has grown to supply producers with a wide variety of cover crop seed options, educational resources, as well as to develop a “SmartMix Calculator”. When asked about current and future projects Keith highlighted a recent investment in composting equipment which will allow more of the materials from seed cleaning such as packaging, and “waste” plant material to be composted and then applied to fields on site. Future goals as they relate to Green Cover Seed include continued research and testing of new and interesting cover crop varieties.

Allen Williams is a sixth-generation farmer who holds both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Animal Science with a minor in Poultry Science from Clemson University, earned a PHD in Animal Genetics and Physiology from Louisiana State University, and spent 15 years teaching and performing research. As a partner in “Soil Health Consultants, LLC” along with other prominent experts such as Ray Archuleta, David Brandt and Gabe Brown, many of Allen’s current and future projects are related to the expansion of educational events and services provided by the group.

Dwayne Beck, Research Manager at Dakota Lakes Research Farm in Pierre, SD and Professor in the Agronomy, Horticulture, and Plant Science Department at SDSU is well known for the extensive list of research he has performed there from 1990 through present day. When asked about current and future projects he expressed that it is his intent not only to research what works in both irrigated and dryland situations but to learn how managing these no-till systems as an all-encompassing ecosystem can be implemented at the field scale and the impacts it could have.

To register or for more information about the 2019 Soil Health Conference and Annual Meeting please visit <https://www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org/annual-meeting/>.

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