



2026 West River Soil Health School Agenda Wednesday, June 24

9:30-10:00 a.m. Registration

10:00-10:20 a.m. Introductions and Welcome, *Cindy Zenk and Brian Johnson, SDSHC*

10:20-10:50 a.m. Identifying Vision and Setting Goals, *Doug Sieck, SDSHC*

10:50-11:30 a.m. Five Principles of Soil Health, *Kent Vlieger, NRCS*

11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Basic Soils: Soil Types and Functions, *Nathan Jones, NRCS*

12:00-12:30 p.m. Lunch

12:30-1:15 p.m. Understanding Soil Tests: Soil Health Assessment, *Ray Ward, Ward Laboratories*

1:15-1:30 p.m. Travel to Soil Pit (**Small scale/urban ag field exercise options available for those interested.*)

1:30-2:00 p.m. Soil Pit, *Nathan Jones, NRCS*

2:00-2:30 p.m. Forage Utilization Discussion, *Tanse Herrmann, NRCS; Shawn Freeland, Dave Ollila, and Ryan Beer, SDSHC*

2:15-2:55 p.m. Introduction to Livestock Grazing and Poly-Fencing, *Tanse Herrmann, NRCS; Shawn Freeland, Dave Ollila, and Ryan Beer, SDSHC*

2:55-3:10 p.m. Travel Back to Classroom

3:10-3:25 p.m. Break

3:25-4:05 p.m. Economics of Soil Health Discussion, *Doug Sieck, Van Mansheim, and Ryan Beer, SDSHC*

4:05-4:50 p.m. No-Till and Cover Crop Diversity, *Anthony Bly, SDSU Extension*

4:50-5:30 p.m. Rainfall Simulator and Wind Erosion Demonstration, *Tanse Hermann, NRCS, and Candy Thomas, NRCS (ret.)*

5:30-6:30 p.m. Dinner and What is Happening on Our Operation? *Shawn and Kristy Freeland, host producers*

6:30-7:50 p.m. Healthy Soil, Plants, People and Communities,
Ray Ward, Ryan Beer, Anthony Bly, Dave Ollila, and SDSHC Board Members



2026 West River Soil Health School Agenda Thursday, June 25

- 7:30-8:10 a.m.** Virtual Fencing Technology, *Logan Vandermark, SDSU Extension*
- 8:10-8:50 a.m.** Soil Carbon Basics: Crop and Perennial Systems, *Ray Ward, Ward Laboratories*
- 8:50-9:30 a.m.** Setting up Equipment for Success, *Anthony Bly, SDSU Extension; Austin Carlson, SDSHC*
- 9:30-9:40 a.m.** Break
- 9:40-10:20 a.m.** Flexible Cover Crop Options, *Shawn Freeland, Doug Sieck, Dave Ollila, and Ryan Beer, SDSHC*
- 10:20-11:00 a.m.** The Good Bugs: Predators, Pollinators, and Decomposers, *Patrick Wagner, SDSU Extension*
- 11:00-11:40 a.m.** Cover Crop Nutrition and Grazing Concerns, *Dave Ollila, SDSHC*
- 11:40 a.m.-12:10 p.m.** Lunch
- 12:10-12:25 p.m.** Travel to Livestock (*Small scale/urban ag field exercise options available for those interested.)
- 12:25-12:55 p.m.** Check Livestock and Adjust Fence, *Tanse Herrmann, NRCS, and Shawn Freeland, SDSHC*
- 12:55-1:25 p.m.** Virtual Fencing and Sheep Discussion, *Dave Ollila, SDSHC*
- 1:25-1:55 p.m.** The Good Bugs: Predators, Pollinators, and Decomposers, *Patrick Wagner, SDSU Extension*
- 1:55-2:10 p.m.** Travel Back to Classroom
- 2:10-2:20 p.m.** Break
- 2:20-3:00 p.m.** Converting Cropland Back to Perennials, *Ray Ward, Ward Laboratories; Dave Ollila, Shawn Freeland, and Ryan Beer, SDSHC*
- 3:00-3:40 p.m.** Soil Microbiology, *Candy Thomas, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts*
- 3:40-4:00 p.m.** Certificates, Reviewing Goals, Upcoming Events, and Closing Remarks, *Brian Johnson and Don Nickelson, SDSHC*