



August 2025

LSP Soil Builders' is a farmer-to-farmer network using practices such as no-till, cover cropping, diversified rotations, and well-managed grazing to improve water infiltration, reduce reliance on inputs, and regenerate soil health.

Happy Harvest Season!



Brad Hodgson moving pastured cattle during a Soil Health Hub meeting that he and his wife, Leslea Hodgson, hosted near Fountain, Minn., in late June. Upcoming LSP and partner events can be found at the end of this e-mail.

It's hard to believe that summer is already nearing its end. For the Land Stewardship Project's Soil Health Team, the season has been filled to the brim with meaningful, farmer-led conversations. Soil Health Hub members from Plainview, Austin, Houston, and Decorah all hosted events over the summer, fostering deep learning across the countryside. After seeing the success of these localized groups, we are eager to continue building our Soil Health Hub communities.

As Plainview Soil Health Hub member Reed Duncan put it: "Once you go to one [hub meeting] you would probably want to go to more to keep learning. It might not be the most complicated thing; it might be something simple. Like gosh, why didn't I think of that?" You can learn more about the value of Soil Health Hubs for farmers like Reed below. If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining a Soil Health Hub, don't hesitate to reach out to the LSP Soil Health Team.

With that, I'll leave you with a timely poem by R. Combe Miller:

'Fairest of the months!

Ripe summer's queen

The hey-day of the year

With robes that gleam with sunny sheen

Sweet August doth appear.'

Warmly,
Sarah Wescott
612-767-9881
[e-mail](#)

Network News



A Healthy Hub of Activity

Dive into our Soil Health Hub blog series to learn more about how localized, farmer-led learning groups are changing the game.

[Read The Article](#)

Grazing Economics

From crunching the numbers to developing relationships with public and private landowners, Eric Heins of Hoosier Ridge Ranch isn't afraid to question the status quo when it comes to grazing livestock.

[Listen To The Podcast](#)



Bringing Small Grains Back to Minnesota

A recent LSP networking meeting focused on producing, processing and marketing wheat, oats, and other alternatives to row crops.

[Read The Article](#)

Kernza 101: A Promising Perennial

Check out the brand new Kernza 101 video series produced by Greener Pastures in collaboration with KernzaCAP, the Land Stewardship Project, the Forever Green Initiative, and Green Lands Blue Waters. Learn about planting, grazing, and harvesting Kernza from diversified farmers in the Upper Midwest.



[Explore LSP's full Kernza Resource Library](#)

Soil Health Resources



Farm Beginnings Applications Open

Beginning and prospective farmers are invited to apply to LSP's Farm Beginnings, a year-long training program that focuses on the goal-setting, marketing, and financial skills needed to establish a successful farm business. The class will run from December 2025 through March 2026, with some additional educational opportunities to take place later in 2026. The deadline for applications is **September 1**. Scholarships will be available.

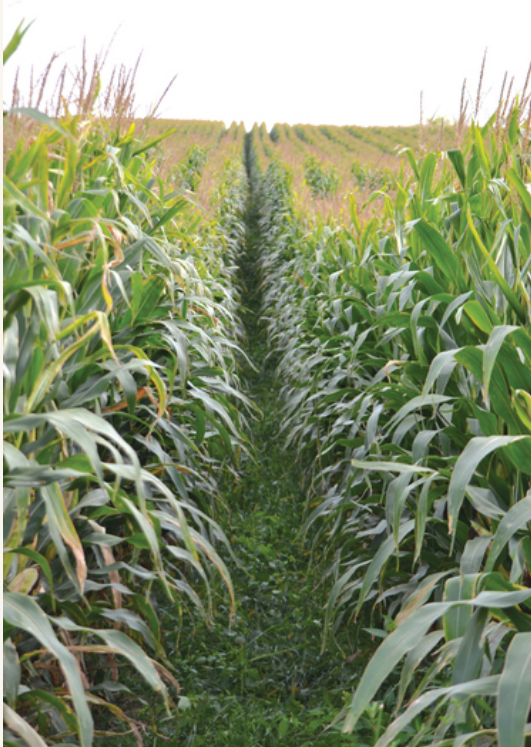
[Learn More](#)



Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Grants

The Soil Health Financial Assistance Grant provides cost-share funds for the purchase and retrofitting of soil health equipment. Adopting soil health practices often requires expensive and specific pieces of equipment, creating a need for a cost-share opportunity to offset those costs. The application for the Fiscal Year 2026 Soil Health Financial Assistance Grant is open until August 29.

[Learn More](#)



Cover Crop Financial Benchmarking Cohort

The Minnesota Farm Business Management (FBM) program is partnering with Environmental Defense Fund, General Mills, and the U of M's Office for Soil Health and Center for Farm Financial Management to provide financial benchmarking of Minnesota farms growing cover crops. The program aims to provide farmers growing cover crops with a three-year FBM scholarship to establish a first-of-its-kind cover crop financial benchmarking dataset that can be expanded over time. Through this program, farmers growing cover crops in Minnesota can receive a \$100 to \$150 per-acre scholarship (50%-75% cost share) for participating in FBM.

[Learn More](#)

Soil Builder Spotlight

Reed Duncan – Zumbro Falls, MN

In the rolling hills outside of Zumbro Falls in southeastern Minnesota, Reed Duncan and his wife, Denise, exemplify the social and community value that LSP's Soil Health Hubs provide to farmers such as themselves. This summer, Reed went from being a brand-new Hub member to joining three soil health-related events in under three weeks.

He kicked off his participation by hosting a Soil Health Hub meeting on his farm where he grows Kernza, oats, corn, a four-way blend of cover crops, and hay.



[Read Reed's Full Story](#)

Upcoming Events

LSP Events

August 19: Decorah Soil Health Hub Meeting; Hub members only, Clermont, Iowa.

August 21: **Soil Health Steering Committee Meeting;** committee members only, Stewartville, Minn.

August 24: **Livestock Consolidation Town Hall With MN Attorney General Keith Ellison** in central Minn.; 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

September 1: Final Deadline for LSP's **Farm Beginnings Course.**



September 10: LSP Lewiston Office Potluck

LSP's Lewiston Summer Potluck will be held on **Wednesday, Sept. 10, from noon to 2 p.m.**, at our office in downtown Lewiston, Minn. This will be an opportunity to build community, hear from other farmers, and enjoy a great meal together. For more information, contact LSP's Alex Romano [via e-mail](#).



Partner Events

August 16: **Soil Health Master Class – HANEY Soil Testing**, Morris, Minn.; offered by Minnesota Soil Health Coalition

August 18: **Soil Health Master Class – HANEY Soil Testing**, Worthington, Minn.; offered by Minnesota Soil Health Coalition

August 21 & 22: **Adaptive Grazing and Fencing Workshop**, Dover and Stewartville, Minn.; offered by Olmsted County SWCD, U of M Extension-Olmsted County, and the Minnesota Grazing Lands Conservation Association

September 9: **Growing Resilience Field Day**, Cannon Falls, Minn.; offered by Clean River Partners

[View LSP's Complete Events Calendar](#)

LSP's Soil Health Team

Alex Romano
Soil Health Team Manager
aromano@landstewardshipproject.org
Phone: 641-220-6000

Shea-Lynn Ramthun
Soil Health Organizer
sramthun@landstewardshipproject.org
Phone: 651-301-1897

Sarah Wescott
Soil Health Organizer
swescott@landstewardshipproject.org
Phone: 612-767-9881

Alex Kiminski
Soil Health/Land Access Organizer
akiminski@landstewardshipproject.org
Phone: 320-269-2105



LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT

Montevideo
111 North First Street
Montevideo, MN 56265

Lewiston
180 E. Main Street
Lewiston, MN 55952

Minneapolis
821 E. 35th Street #200
Minneapolis, MN 55407



LSP LONG RANGE PLAN 2025-2030

ROOTS OF RESILIENCE

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive e-mails from us, please (Unsubscribing is not supported in previews)

Land Stewardship Project
821 E. 35th Street #200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
United States