



February 2025

The Soil Builders' Network is a farmer-to-farmer network using soil-building 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.

## Small Grain, Big Deal



Wow. Who knew small grains were such a big deal?

I guess the over 300 folks — either in person or online — who attended LSP's "Bringing Small Grains Back to Minnesota" event knew.

We filled the Edgewater Bay Pavilion (and then some) with folks who were excited to hear from our three speakers, and these speakers were definitely full of contagious energy. I hope you all learned from Bob, Roy, and Landon as they each told their stories, provided their perspectives, and shared their wisdom. It was great to invite two regional voices, Martin Larsen and Ty Larson, up to join the speakers during our Q & A panel. Hopefully, this gave you opportunities to get your questions answered.

We appreciate those who joined through our livestream feed. This was the first time we've offered such an online option, so I would like to send a special thanks to LSP staffers Alex Kiminski and Heather Benson for making it happen! If you missed the workshop, the videos, podcasts, and resources related to the event are all available [here](#). I would love to hear what you all are thinking about following this event. Please reach out to me with your thoughts and questions. And don't be surprised if in the next month or so I reach out to you to touch base about small grains.

Thanks,  
**Shea-Lynn, 651-301-1897**  
LSP Soil Health Organizer



### LSP SHSC Members at the Winter Workshop

**Pictured:** LSP Soil Health Steering Committee members Stacie Madson, John Snyder, and Scott Holthaus, along with Ben Snyder and LSP's Alex Romano, at the Small Grains Workshop. Thanks to our committee members Scott, Josh Nelson, and John for introducing our speakers at this event! [See the full photo gallery here.](#)

## Network News

### KAAL-TV

KAAL-TV sent reporter Chandler Jackson to the Small Grains Workshop to do a feature on the excitement around oats and small grains represented at the meeting. Watch the full video to see interviews with Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen, LSP Soil Health Organizer Shea-Lynn Ramthun, and an outstanding group of local farmer attendees.



### Morning Ag Clips

*Morning Ag Clips* featured LSP's wrap-of the event as one of their top stories on Monday, Feb. 3. *Morning Ag Clips* reaches tens of thousands of farmers, ag professionals, and ag industry advocates daily. This same story appeared in the January 30 edition of the *Albert Lea Tribune*.



### Food Freedom Radio

The *AM 950 Radio* program "Food Freedom Radio" did a full hour feature on the workshop, featuring audio clips from all three speakers as well as an extensive interview with LSP Soil Health Organizer and oat producer, Shea-Lynn Ramthun. [Click on the February 1 episode](#) to hear the full show.



## Soil Health Steering Committee

We are looking for regional farmers to help lead LSP's Soil Health Program in making positive, community-based change. We have open positions to fill on our Steering Committee, which sets goals and strategies — *within LSP's mission* — to build out an energetic and engaged network of crop and livestock farmers practicing land stewardship and public leadership.

The on-the-ground soil health work we do is geographically focused on a Soil Builders' Network that stretches across southeastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa. This committee occasionally interacts with LSP's soil health-related policy work.

*Are you interested in guiding LSP's Soil Health program vision? We will be recruiting new members for our Soil Health Steering Committee this spring. **Contact LSP's Alex Romano** if you are interested or would like more information.*

## Soil Health Resources

### Small Grain Workshop Video

We have made videos featuring all three speakers from our January 28 Small Grain Markets workshop available on our website and YouTube. Click on the links below to watch!

#### Bob Quinn, Kamut International

Bob Quinn's vision extends beyond agriculture, embodying a holistic approach where local minimal processing, community, health, and education intertwine to redefine success in farming. By championing the idea that every grain and every harvest should enhance health, Bob has positioned the Quinn Institute as a leader in transforming agriculture into a health-giving enterprise.



#### Roy Pfaltzgraff, Pfz Farms

Roy Pfaltzgraff is the current head of PFZ Farms in Colorado. PFZ Farms' mission is to help educate fellow producers and consumers about how food is grown and to provide high-quality products for their community. This third-generation family farm produces quality agricultural products with sustainable methods for a healthier world. While they produce a number of dry-land crops, they also have a number of smaller production focuses that support their overall vision of a regenerative farm.



#### Landon Plagge, Green Acres Milling

Landon holds nearly 30 years of hands-on farming experience growing corn, soybeans, livestock, and oats, as well as managing a grain handling facility, stewarding one million bushels of grain annually. Landon studied Investment Banking at Bentley College and holds a degree in Business Administration from the University of Northern Iowa. Landon brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in sustainable farming practices and crop rotation, and frequently shares his experiences to help others improve their own practices. He is also one of the founders of Green Acres Milling, a farmer owned oat processing facility under construction in Albert Lea, Minn.



## Soil Builders' Spotlight



### Landon Plagge

Landon Plagge's experience growing oats has proven that this humble grain can play a big role in revitalizing soil health on corn-soybean farms. **Can the milling facility he's proposing do the same for rural communities?**

Check out LSP's recent [Ear to the Ground](#) podcast with **Landon Plagge: "Small Grain - Big Opportunity"**

Check out our other two podcasts in the *Small Grains Workshop Series*: [Ear to the Ground](#) podcast with **Bob Quinn: "Additive Vs. Extractive"** and [Ear to the Ground](#) podcast with **Roy Pfaltzgraff: "Regenerative Return"**

## Upcoming Events

### Western Minnesota Small Grains Workshop

Bringing Small Grains Back to Minnesota

Saturday, March 15, 2025  
9am-1pm  
Benson, MN

Building on the momentum of LSP's Small Grains Workshop in Albert Lea last month, we are offering a second workshop in western Minnesota on March 15 in Benson, Minn.

This FREE event will offer attendees the opportunity to learn from local leaders and innovators about the benefits of small grains in farming operations. There will also be conversations on small grain markets and the infrastructure needed to support them.

The event takes place from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 15**, at McKinney's on Southside in Benson, Minn. To register and to secure a spot, [click here](#).

For more information, contact LSP's Alex Kiminski at 925-207-3721 or [via e-mail](#).



### Family Farm Breakfast and Lobby Day. March 13

**Christ Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill**

**105 University Ave. W., Saint Paul, MN 55103**

Breakfast & Programming: 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Choose to stay for town halls, lobby day programming and legislative meetings throughout the day. All meetings will wrap up by 3 p.m.

[Click here to register for the event](#)

### 2025 Family Farm Breakfast & Lobby Day

Join us for the Best Breakfast in Town! Gather with hundreds of members and supporters, partners, and public officials over a delicious meal featuring locally sourced products from LSP members' farms.

*We do not want logistics or cost to limit participation. Please reach out to request support not offered in this [registration form](#) by e-mailing LSP's Taya Schulte at [tschulte@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:tschulte@landstewardshipproject.org).*

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