



LSP Soil Builders Network Newsletter



February 2026

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.

Workshop Season is in Full Swing!



Martin Larsen speaks to audience members about the loss of crop diversity over the past 70 years during the "Beyond Exports: Rebuilding Local Markets" LSP Winter Workshop on January 27.

In late January, the Land Stewardship Project hosted "[Beyond Exports: Rebuilding Local Markets](#)." This workshop focused on the opportunities that come with crop diversification, the power of farmers working cooperatively, and the economics of adding small grains into your crop rotation. Despite the frigid temps, we had a great turn-out and are feeling optimistic about the future of small grains in the Upper Midwest. It is ever inspiring to see farmers come together to make changes across the food and farming landscape. You'll find more information about our Beyond Exports winter workshop and a full list of upcoming LSP events below.

Amidst the busyness of conferences, meetings, and workshops, we hope that you are finding time to recharge, look back, and celebrate your wins, as well as look ahead to what will best serve you and your farm in the 2026 season.

Warmly,

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

Network News



Priorities for 2026 Legislature

This year LSP is prioritizing soil, water, land access, consolidation, and Farm to School programs at the Minnesota Legislature. The legislative session begins Feb 17.

[Learn More](#)

Diversity's Diet

Ear to the Ground 392: Farmer and small grains marketer Matt Kruger sees a rotation based on raising food grade crops as a way for farmers to get rewarded for building soil health. It's also a way to fight the only thing he truly hates.

[Listen to the Podcast](#)



Barn Swallows Reduce Fly Activity on Farms

WFA video highlights farmer experience and University of Milan research. This work reflects a broader philosophy about farming. "Instead of trying to work against nature," said Wisconsin farmer Rufus Hauke, "we're trying to work with it."

[Read The Article](#)



Canceling Commodities

Ear to the Ground 394: As a farmer and entrepreneur, John Strohfus sees the production of food-grade crops as a key opportunity for regenerative farmers to forge links in a value chain based on building healthy soil.

[Listen to the Podcast](#)



Beyond Exports Workshop is a Success

On January 27, farmers gathered in Rochester to discuss crop diversification, the power of farmers working cooperatively, and the economics of adding small grains into a crop rotation. Watch the recording of our keynote speakers.

[Watch the Recording](#)

The Lobe Rangers

Ear to the Ground 395 & 396: Water quality in the Corn Belt is worse than ever, and these poster boys for conservation farming say it's time for the ag industry, commodity groups, and government to step up and take responsibility.

[Listen to the Podcast](#)



Soil Health Resources



Minnesota Farmers Union Ag Events Tracker

Use the Minnesota Farmers Union's convenient spreadsheet to learn about conservation agriculture events around the Upper Midwest. Event topics include commodities, livestock, and specialty crop systems, and the events emphasize the five soil health principles: minimizing soil disturbance, maintaining a living root, continuously covering soil, maximizing diversity, and integrating livestock. This is a great resource to bookmark for future reference.

[See Full Event List](#)



MDA's Nitrogen Fertilizer Best Management Practices

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture actively promotes fertilizer best management practices (BMPs). The purpose of these BMPs is to protect water quality while at the same time maintaining farm profitability. The BMPs should also be practical to implement. They refer to practices relating to the timing, rate, placement and source of fertilizer application and other practices that increase fertilizer use efficiency and decrease potential loss to the environment.

[Read Nitrogen BMPs for Ag Lands](#)



LSP's Soil Health Hubs

Are you a farmer near Austin, Houston, or Plainview in Minnesota, or near Decorah, Iowa? Are you interested in expanding soil health practices on your farm? You might make a great fit for our Soil Health Hubs!

LSP Soil Health Hubs are farmer-led, peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing and skill-building opportunities. Access current, localized feedback from like-minded farmers in your area. We meet regularly throughout the warm months. Interested in joining a hub? Reach out to LSP's Sarah Wescott at swescott@landstewardshipproject.org.

[Connect with a Soil Hub](#)

Soil Builder Spotlight

Alan Jostock uses the kind of diversity that builds soil health as a kind of insurance policy for his farm. That means meshing his crop and livestock enterprises in a way that they prop each other up through thick and thin.

[Hear Al's Story](#)



Upcoming Events

LSP Events

Feb. 17, March 3 & 10: [LSP Farm Transition Planning Course](#), Virtual

Feb. 21: [LSP Holistic Financial Planning Workshop](#), Virtual

Feb. 26: [LSP 1st Annual Soil Health All-Hub Meeting](#) — hub members only, Chatfield, Minn. See above for more information on LSP's Soil Health Hubs.

March 11: [LSP Family Farm Breakfast & Lobby Day](#), Saint Paul, Minn.

Partner Events

Feb. 18: [UMN & Olmsted Extension Grain Gathering](#), Rochester, Minn.

Feb. 26-28: [Marblesseed Organic Farming Conference](#), La Crosse, Wis.

March 3 & 4: [Beyond the Fence: Grazing, Virtual Fence & Fertilizer Reduction](#), Calmar & Peosta, Iowa

March 17: [Roots, Residue, Results: Managing Nutrients, Residue, & Cover Crops](#), Cresco, Iowa

March 17: [Bird-Friendly Livestock Operations: From Grassland Conservation to Barn Swallow Fly Control](#), Virtual

Other events: Check out [LSP's web calendar](#)

[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: 612-767-8881

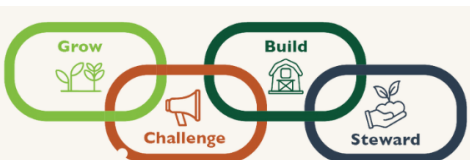


LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT

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 (Un)subscribing is not supported in previews)

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