SPEAKERS
5th Annual Meeting
July 30-31, 2020
A Virtual Meeting
Dr. Wayne Honeycutt, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Wayne Honeycutt leads the Soil Health Institute’s programs to safeguard and enhance the vitality and productivity of soils. He previously served for 5 years as the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology with USDA-NRCS in Washington, DC, where he led programs in technology acquisition, development, and transfer to ensure NRCS conservation practices reflect the latest scientific advances for conserving our nation’s soil, water, air, plant, animal, and energy resources. He served as a Research Soil Scientist for 14 years and a Research Leader for 10 years with the USDA-ARS New England Plant, Soil, and Water Laboratory, where he led and conducted interdisciplinary research on carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus cycling and sustainable cropping systems development. In those roles, he led national research teams for predicting nutrient availability, developed procedures adopted by ARS for enhancing national research coordination, and received regional and national awards for technology transfer.

He is a graduate of the “Mastering the Art of Public Leadership” executive development program at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC and USDA’s “Performance Excellence and Knowledge” executive development program. He has served on assignments to the U.S. Senate’s Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, USDA-ARS National Program Staff, and USDA-ARS Area Office Staff.

Dr. Honeycutt’s commitment to agriculture is rooted in his experiences with raising tobacco, corn, and other crops on his family’s 120-acre farm in Metcalfe County, Kentucky. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Forestry and Master’s degree in Soil Science from the University of Kentucky, and a Ph.D. in Soil Genesis from Colorado State University. He was the 2018 recipient of the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award, the highest honor bestowed on an individual by the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

Mr. Jason Weller, Land O’ Lakes

Mr. Jason Weller joined Land O’Lakes, Inc., in 2017 as senior director of sustainability where he provided environmental sustainability and agricultural production solutions for the cooperative’s members and owners. In 2020, Mr. Weller was appointed Vice President of Truterra, a farmer-led and farmer-driven sustainability initiative launched by Land O’Lakes SUSTAIN to establish clear metrics and a common language for sustainability that is meaningful for farmers and their core customers.

Mr. Weller previously served as Chief of USDA-NRCS, the nation’s largest working lands conservation organization, where he led a staff of 10,500 employees across the country that works one-on-one with farmers and ranchers to deliver assistance to protect and improve the quality of their operations’ natural resources. While at NRCS, Mr. Weller led the effort to significantly expand the agency’s new partnerships with public and private organizations—including agricultural retailers, agricultural supply chain companies, and food companies—to provide innovative and effective services for agricultural producers. Mr. Weller also provided the strategic leadership for NRCS’s expanded focus on and investment into soil health, including
providing significant financial and technical assistance for public-private partnerships to launch on-the-ground soil health demonstration and education projects, as well leading the creation of NRCS’s new Soil Health Division that is helping to advance the agricultural and conservation communities’ understanding of soil health management.

Prior to serving as Chief, Mr. Weller held various agriculture and natural resource conservation leadership positions, including on the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture where he provided oversight and crafted legislation to fund USDA programs and activities; on the U.S. House Budget Committee where he helped construct the annual congressional budget for agriculture, environment and energy programs; and in the White House Office of Management and Budget where he assisted with the development and implementation of the president’s budget for USDA conservation programs.

Mr. Weller earned a Bachelor’s degree from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, and a Master’s in public policy from the University of Michigan.

Mr. Jay Watson, General Mills

Mr. Jay Watson leads efforts to advance progress on agricultural sustainability efforts, including General Mills, Inc.’s (GMI) 2025 greenhouse gas reduction and 2030 regenerative agriculture commitments. In his role, Mr. Watson collaborates with buyers and external partners to develop and deploy engagements to both characterize & reduce social, environmental and economic impacts of key ingredients. Mr. Watson has been fortunate to travel to where many of GMI’s key ingredients are grown and appreciates the opportunity to connect with farmers and learn more about stewardship as well as family legacy. Prior to joining the sustainability team in January 2017, Mr. Watson spent 10 years in a variety of buying roles within the company’s global sourcing organization.

Dr. LaKisha Odom, Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research

Dr. LaKisha Odom joined The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) in September 2016 as a Scientific Program Director to pursue her commitment to promoting the use of innovative science and interdisciplinary thinking to tackle today’s complex challenges in food and agriculture.

Dr. Odom developed her passions for the inter-sectional space of research and policy while working at the U.S. EPA in the Office of Research and Development and the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response’s Brownfield’s Redevelopment Program. In her academic career at Tuskegee University, she continued to seek out opportunities to work in interdisciplinary and collaborative science as a Create-IGERT fellow and as a researcher at Teagasc Research facility in Carlow, Ireland. She then had the opportunity to serve as an Early Career Intern for the Public Policy Board of the American Phytopathological Society. In 2013, Odom became an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy
Fellow at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Biotechnology Regulatory Service where she managed a diverse portfolio which included working with the OECD Working Group for the Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology.

Dr. Odom received her B.S. in Environmental Science from Tuskegee University, her M.A. in Environmental Resource Policy from The George Washington University, and her Ph.D. in Integrative Biosciences from Tuskegee University.

**Dr. Cristine Morgan, Soil Health Institute**

Dr. Cristine Morgan is responsible for developing and establishing the scientific direction, strategy and implementation plan for the Soil Health Institute research programs and establishing the research priorities for the Institute. Her duties include leading the scientific research and coordinating projects carried out at various institutions that advance soil health science and result in useful and reportable results.

Prior to joining the Institute, Dr. Morgan was Professor of Soil Science at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, where she was recognized for outstanding collaboration, teaching, research, and mentoring. Her emphasis was in soil hydrology, pedometrics, and global soil security. Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Morgan conducted ground-breaking research on how management practices influence soil-plant-water relations. She also developed methods that were adopted by USDA for easily measuring soil carbon. She has a history of applying her knowledge for addressing real-world problems experienced by farmers and ranchers and is passionate about educating others.

Dr. Morgan serves on the board of directors for the Soil Science Society of America, is an editor in chief at the global soil science journal, Geoderma, and participates in committees for the International Union of Soil Sciences.

Dr. Morgan earned her M.S. and Ph.D. in Soil Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Soil Science Department (2000 and, 2003 respectively). Her B.S. degree is in Plant and Environmental Soil Sciences from Texas A&M University, magna cum laude (1998).

**Dr. Michael Cope, Soil Health Institute**

Dr. Michael Cope serves as the Soil Health Institute’s statistician and database manager. Most recently, Dr. Cope served as a statistical and research analyst at Clemson University. His expertise includes analysis of large and assorted data. He is skilled in Python Programming, Soil Science, Geographic Information Systems, Ecological Modeling, and Cloud Computing.

Dr. Cope received his B.S. in Environmental Studies from Brevard College and his Ph.D. in Forest Resources from Clemson University.
Dr. Shannon Cappellazzi, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Shannon Cappellazzi serves as the Lead Scientist for the North American Project to Evaluate Soil Health Measurements for the Soil Health Institute. She also serves as the Institute’s liaison for the western United States and is the disciplinary lead for the Institute’s analysis of soil health in pastures and rangelands. Dr. Cappellazzi most recently served as Manager at the Oregon State University Central Analytical Laboratory. Earlier in her career, she was the Equestrian Manager for Wheelbarrow Creek Ranch and an agricultural commodities trader for Wilbur-Ellis Company.

Dr. Cappellazzi is a member of the Soil Science Society of America and serves as a board member of the Oregon Society of Soil Scientists. She received her B.S. in Animal Science and her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Soil Science from Oregon State University.

Dr. Daniel Liptzin, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Daniel Liptzin serves as the soil health indicators assessment project lead scientist for the High Plains. Dr. Liptzin recently served as a Senior Instructor at the University of Colorado, Denver, where he taught courses in biogeochemistry, environmental science, and climate. His research interests include exploring human effects on the nitrogen cycle, interactions among elemental cycles, redox-sensitive biogeochemistry, and ecosystem processes in seasonally snow-covered ecosystems.

Dr. Liptzin is a member of the American Geophysical Union and an investigator at the Niwot Ridge Long Term Ecological Research Site in Colorado. He received his B.S. from Yale University, MES from the University of Pennsylvania, and Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Dr. Liz Rieke, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Elizabeth (Liz) Rieke serves as the soil health indicators assessment project lead scientist for the northern Midwest and northeastern United States. She also leads the assessment of microbial population dynamics using genomic tools to identify microbial soil health indicators. Most recently, Dr. Rieke served as a postdoctoral research associate, Iowa State University Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.

Dr. Rieke is a member of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers. She received her B.S. in Biological Systems Engineering at Virginia Tech, her M.S. in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering and her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering from Iowa State University.
Dr. Charlotte Norris, Natural Resources Canada

Dr. Charlotte Norris is a Forest Soils Research Scientist with Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service. She previously served as a Soil Health Institute Project Scientist and now collaborates with the Institute as the soil health indicators assessment project lead for Canada. Dr. Norris has previously conducted research on determining best management practices for intensive vegetable production, assessing the effects of agricultural crops on soil health, and evaluating the effect of forest harvesting practices on soil health. She also has investigated indicators of soil health in reclaimed forest ecosystems. Dr. Norris holds a B.Sc. in Chemistry from the University of Victoria and received her M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Soil Science from the University of Alberta. She is a registered Professional Agrologist.

Dr. Kelsey Greub, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Kelsey Greub serves as the soil health indicators assessment project lead scientist for the southern United States. Most recently, Dr. Greub was a graduate research assistant at the University of Arkansas conducting research on recycling nutrients using cover crops in row crop systems. She also has served as a graduate research assistant at Auburn University conducting research on the long- and short-term effects of cover cropping on physical and chemical soil properties in a peanut-cotton rotation. As a Lloyd Noble Scholar in Agriculture (Noble Foundation), she conducted research on blackberry management in rangelands. Dr. Greub has certification as an Associate Professional Soil Scientist.

Dr. Greub is a member of the American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America, the Soil Science Society of America, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society. She received her B.S. in Agronomy from Texas A&M University, her M.S. in Plant Science from Auburn University, and her Ph.D. in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences (Soil Fertility emphasis) from the University of Arkansas.

Dr. Gregory “Mac” Bean, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Gregory “Mac” Bean serves as the soil health indicators assessment project lead scientist for Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, and West Virginia. He also leads the Soil Health Institute team for soil health in soil pedology and genesis. Most recently, Dr. Bean focused on improving nitrogen fertilizer management as a graduate student at the University of Missouri.

Dr. Bean is a member of the American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America, the Soil Science Society of America, and the International Society of Precision Agriculture. He received his B.S. in Agricultural Science, Systems, and Technology from Brigham Young University-Idaho, his M.S. in Plant Science and his Ph.D. in Soil Science from the University of Missouri.
Dr. Paul Tracy, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Paul Tracy serves as the Project Agronomist for the Soil Health Institute’s North American Project to Evaluate Soil Health Measurements, leading the Institute’s assessment of the impacts of soil health management systems on greenhouse gas emissions.

Dr. Tracy’s 32-year career has spanned both public and private sectors with roles as the Director of Agronomy, Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies; Professional Agronomist, Pacific Northwest WinField Solutions; Director of Agronomy Services, MFA Incorporated; and Assistant/Associate Professor, University of Missouri. Dr. Tracy was elected Chairman to both the Missouri and International Certified Crop Advisor Boards and received the 2015 American Society of Agronomy, Agronomic Achievement/Agronomic Industrial Award. He has a B.S. in Agriculture (Soils Option) from Montana State University, an M.S. in Soil Chemistry from the University of Idaho, and a Ph.D. in Agronomy/Soil Science from Colorado State University.

Ms. Pipa Elias, The Nature Conservancy

Ms. Pipa Elias is Director of Agriculture in North America for The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Skilled at applying scientific research to advance policy and conservation solutions, Ms. Elias leads an interdisciplinary team of experts in a collaborative approach to help producers meet the growing demand for food while protecting critical lands and waters. She works closely with colleagues from across the organization and stakeholders throughout the food and agriculture supply chain to achieve a sustainable food system.

Ms. Elias joined TNC in 2015 as a senior policy advisor, leading land use policy advocacy at the United Nations climate negotiations and other multilateral venues. In her eight years working on the UN climate negotiations, including six years before joining TNC, she led a coalition of nearly a dozen NGOs that helped influence the system of incentives and measurements for the land-use sector in global climate agreements. Ms. Elias also served as policy lead on the team that helped to establish TNC's Natural Climate Solutions work. In January 2017, she joined the North America Agriculture team as Soil Health Strategy Manager.

Ms. Katie Harrigan, Tufts University

Ms. Katie Harrigan completed a Master’s Degree in Nutrition Science and Policy in 2020 through the Agriculture, Food and Environment program at Tufts University in Boston, MA. She focuses her work on natural resource conservation in the U.S. food system. She completed an Internship with the Soil Health Institute in 2019 under the guidance of Dr. Wayne Honeycutt to research federal policies, assess their impact on soil health, and suggest ways to improve those policies. Ms. Harrigan has a B.S. in Biology from Northeastern University and she worked in the biotechnology field in Boston for five years before seeking a degree to help secure the future of our food and environment.
Mr. Sean McMahon, Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance

Mr. Sean McMahon is the Executive Director of the Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance. Mr. McMahon works with diverse urban and rural partners to champion farmer engagement and adoption of conservation practices that improve water quality and soil health. In this role, Mr. McMahon has created several successful public-private partnerships including the $50M Midwest Agriculture Water Quality Partnership and the innovative Conservation Infrastructure initiative. He formerly directed The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) North America Agriculture Program where he forged several strategic partnerships with leaders in the agricultural sector, led the organization’s national Farm Bill policy efforts and created the Soil Health Partnership. He also served as state director of the Iowa Chapter of TNC where he chaired the Iowa’s Water and Land Legacy campaign and built a coalition of more than 130 organizations in a successful effort to amend the state’s constitution to establish a trust fund for improving water quality, soil conservation and outdoor recreation. Mr. McMahon has also held senior positions at the U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Audubon Society and the National Wildlife Federation. He has an undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Chicago, a master’s degree in natural resources from Virginia Tech, a Leadership Certificate from the University of Iowa’s Tippie College of Business and is currently pursuing an Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) from Iowa State University. Mr. McMahon lives in Cumming, IA with his wife Rebecca and four young children.

Mr. Ryan Sirolli, Cargill

Mr. Ryan Sirolli is the Global Row Crop Sustainability Director for Cargill. In his role, he is responsible for leading strategy development and implementation of row crop sustainability programs and initiatives across Cargill’s enterprises. Focus areas include optimizing farmer productivity and prosperity while lessening impact on water and climate through scalable adoption of soil health best practices and supply chain alignment. Mr. Sirolli has spent his entire career working along the food and agriculture value chain. His experiences range from managing a row crop and beef operation in Maryland to creating integrated supply chain solutions between dairy producers, growers and consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies. Most recently, he has led the launch of a soil health program at a global FMCG before returning to Cargill to lead row crop sustainability within Cargill’s Sustainability Hub. Mr. Sirolli holds a B.S. in Animal Science from Virginia Tech and a M.S. in Economics from the University of Delaware.

Dr. Archie Flanders, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Archie Flanders assesses the economics of soil health-promoting practices and land management systems using data from long-term agricultural experimental sites across North America and integrating that information with local on-farm data collected in strategic coordination with soil health partners. He works with producers and agricultural researchers to develop decision support tools that farmers and ranchers can use to make informed decisions about production practices on a field-by-field basis, optimizing soil health while realizing economic efficiencies.
Previously, Dr. Flanders served as a faculty member at the University of Georgia and the University of Arkansas with research and extension responsibilities in production economics, farm management, and economic development. He developed interactive economic decision tools for crop and livestock commodities, agricultural policy programs, and whole-farm analysis, which helped producers customize enterprise budgets to represent unique production situations.

Dr. Flanders is a member of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association as well as the Southern Agricultural Economics Association. He received his B.S.A. in General Agriculture, and his M.S. and Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Georgia.

Dr. Michelle Perez, American Farmland Trust

Dr. Michelle Perez leads the American Farmland Trust’s (AFT) efforts to improve the nation’s water resources through a comprehensive water initiative with links to soil health, climate, outcomes quantification, and ecosystem markets. Dr. Perez currently leads the AFT-NRCS Soil Health Economic and Environmental Case Studies project with four regional staff which is quantifying the economic, water quality, and climate outcomes of “soil health successful” farmers in California, Illinois, Ohio, and New York. Dr. Perez also serves on the Metrics Committee for Field to Market and the Water Workgroup for Ecosystem Services Markets Consortium to further AFT’s engagement in supply chain sustainability issues. Previously, Dr. Perez served AFT as a senior policy specialist and published a report on Water Quality Targeting Success Stories which features six watershed projects in five states that measured improvements in water quality due to the voluntary adoption of conservation practices by farmers. Before joining AFT, Dr. Perez worked at World Resources Institute, leading projects on geographic targeting, nutrient trading, and nutrient quantification tools. She previously worked for Environmental Working Group and Alliance to Save Energy. During her career, Dr. Perez has published numerous reports and papers. She currently serves as Council Member of the Soil Water Conservation Society’s National Capital Chapter. She is an alumna of Occidental College where she studied biology. She holds a Doctorate in environmental policy from the University of Maryland School of Public Policy where her dissertation was a three-state comparison of farm nutrient management regulations in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia.

Dr. John Shanahan, Soil Health Institute

Dr. John Shanahan manages the day-to-day activities of the Soil Health Institute’s Economic Assessment of Soil Health practices, a project made possible by the generosity of Cargill.

Dr. Shanahan’s 37-year career in the Agronomy field has spanned both public and private sectors with roles as Director of Agronomy at Fortigen fertilizer company, Agronomy Research Manager at DuPont Pioneer (now Corteva Agriscience), Research Agronomist at USDA-ARS, and Professor at Colorado State University. Dr. Shanahan has served the tri-societies (American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society and Soil Science Society) as elected division chair,
ASA board rep, and chair of the ASA finance committee. He has also been named an ASA fellow and received the ASA Werner L. Nelson Award for Diagnosis of Yield-Limiting Factors. Dr. Shanahan received his B.S. in Agronomy from University of Nebraska, and his M.S. and Ph.D. in Agronomy from Colorado State University.

Ms. Lisa Lunz, Nebraska Farmer

Ms. Lisa Lunz and her husband, Jim, farm in Northeast Nebraska. They have three children and two grandchildren. Their third-generation farm consists of a dryland corn-soybean rotation, and they have grown alfalfa and raised livestock in the past. In 1994, the family started to no till. Soil health and the benefits of no till have allowed them to increase their yields by using fewer resources and saving moisture.

Mr. Matt Griggs, Griggs Farms LLC

Mr. Matt Griggs is a fifth-generation farmer and owner of Griggs Farms LLC in Humboldt, TN. Griggs Farms began operation in 1882, and they currently grow approximately 2,000 acres of cotton, corn, soybeans, and wheat. They have been cover cropping 100% of their land since 2015. Griggs Farms has received multiple local awards for conservation and been recognized nationally with the American Soybean Association Conservation Legacy Award and the Farm Press High Cotton Award. Mr. Griggs served as a speaker at the 2018 National No Till Conference. Notably, Griggs Farms was featured in a 2019 eight-part docuseries on the History Channel called “The American Farm.”

Mr. Mark Jackson, Iowa Farmer

Mr. Mark Jackson is a fifth-generation grain and livestock, family-farmer in southeastern Iowa with more than four decades of experience farming. Conservation is the cornerstone of his farm’s sustainability protocols and communication is key, as he tells agriculture’s story using his family’s farming legacy. He is past president of the Iowa Soybean Association and retired director with the American Soybean Association. Having traveled the world extensively promoting soybeans gives him firsthand experience with different consumer cultures and the value of strong partnerships. His experiences include having tea with Chinese President Xi Jinping, delivering a TED Talk in New York City, fielding many ag interviews with state, national and international news sources, hosting countless farm tours for consumers and prospective buyers and showcasing photography of his daily farm life via social media. Putting a face on U.S. agriculture is key and including family is the reality while telling his story of agriculture.
Dr. Jerry Hatfield, USDA-ARS (retired)

Dr. Jerry Hatfield received his Ph.D. from Iowa State University in 1975 in the area of agricultural climatology and is the retired Director of the USDA-ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment in Ames, Iowa. His research focuses on the interactions among the components of the soil-plant-atmosphere continuum and their linkage to air, water, and soil quality. His focus has been on the evaluation of farming systems and their response to water and nitrogen interactions across soils and remote sensing methods to quantify field variation. He utilizes the genetics x environment x management concept to show producers how they can increase their production efficiency, increase soil health, and develop resilience to weather and climate variation. He is the recipient of numerous awards including being inducted into the USDA-ARS Hall of Fame for his research impact and the Hugh Hammond Bennett award. He is the author of 498 refereed publications and 18 monographs.

Dr. Dianna Bagnall, Soil Health Institute

Dr. Dianna Bagnall serves as Research Soil Scientist for the Soil Health Institute. From 2014 to 2016, she served as a project manager for AgriLife Research’s Corporate Relations Office, developing proposals and managing projects. She managed sponsored research projects in soil and crop science, renewable energy, and agricultural engineering. In 2016, she joined the newly established Soil Security Team at Texas A&M University composed of soil scientists, economists, and sociologists. Her Ph.D. research received departmental and international recognition and included on-farm soil health assessments, qualitative analysis of farmer interviews, and development of novel soil structure scanning methodology.

Dr. Bagnall received an M.S. in Soil Science at Texas A&M University in 2014 working on a National Science Foundation project. The research used both modeling and field experiments to investigate water movement on shrink-swell clay soils in Texas.

Dr. Bianca Moebius-Clune, USDA-NRCS

Dr. Bianca Moebius-Clune is the Director of the USDA-NRCS Soil Health Division. She has led the deployment of the division’s staff of regional and national specialists who provide training, direct assistance, science and technology integration, and leadership to soil health efforts across the country. The division was stood up to lead agency NRCS strategies and training that facilitate producers in implementing science-based, effective, economically viable soil health management systems on the nation’s diverse agricultural lands, in collaboration with partner organizations. Dr. Moebius-Clune came to NRCS in 2014 from Cornell University, where she served on the faculty as a Senior Extension Associate and Lecturer. She had research and extension responsibilities and taught a class in Sustainable Soil Management. She has authored numerous peer-reviewed and extension publications, as well as NRCS national technical material and policy, and has provided workshops and trainings nationally and internationally. Dr. Moebius-Clune has conducted research on agricultural management impacts on soil health and N dynamics in the Northeast and
Midwest, as well as in Kenya, and developed a framework for Soil Health Management Planning that is now nationally available through NRCS. She holds Ph.D. and Master of Science degrees from Cornell University and a Bachelor of Science from University of New Hampshire, all in soil science.

Mr. John Mesko, Soil Health Partnership

Mr. John Mesko leads the Soil Health Partnership, leveraging a strong internal team, a farmer-focused mission, and a growing community of collaboration. He is expanding the resource base for the important work of building soil health, creating a sustainable future for farming and food. He grew up on a diversified crop and livestock farm in Minnesota, gaining a passion for farming and tremendous respect for farmers.

Mr. Mesko holds a B.S. degree in Agronomy and M.S. degree in Agricultural Economics, both from Purdue University. His diverse career in agriculture, including successful experience in sales, marketing, research, business development, farm management, university extension, and nonprofit management, is put to use every day, bringing agriculture together toward better outcomes for farmers, consumers and the environment by focusing on soil health building practices.

Mr. Mesko lives in Champlin, Minnesota.

Mr. David Lamm, Soil Health Institute

Mr. David Lamm spearheads soil health training and education programs for the Soil Health Institute’s Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton.

For 40 years, Mr. Lamm served in various positions within USDA-NRCS, including District Conservationist for the Ft. Wayne Field Office, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs in Georgia, and Team Leader for the National Soil Health and Sustainability Team. He assisted with the USDA-NRCS Organic Agriculture and Sustainable Ag effort and worked with program policy, particularly for the Conservation Security Program.

Mr. Lamm earned his B.S. in Natural Resources from Ball State University in 1978.

About the Soil Health Institute

The Soil Health Institute (www.soilhealthinstitute.org) is a non-profit whose mission is to safeguard and enhance the vitality and productivity of soil through scientific research and advancement. The Institute works with its many stakeholders to identify gaps in research and adoption; develop strategies, networks and funding to address those gaps; and ensure beneficial impact of those investments to agriculture, the environment and society.