

WORLD SOIL DAY 2013 – A DAY DEDICATED TO HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE SOILS

In 2002, the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS), made a resolution proposing December 5 as World Soil Day. This day is designated to celebrate the importance of soil and its vital contributions to human health and safety.

Under the framework of the Global Soil Partnership, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is celebrating World Soil Day 2013 in Rome on December 5. The goal is to raise awareness of the importance of healthy soils for food security, ecosystem functions, and sustainable development. The celebration will be followed by a 3 day International Workshop “Soil Spectroscopy: the present and future of Soil Monitoring.”

World Soil Day is a great opportunity for USDA-NRCS to reinforce our soil health messages, while helping to promote World Soil Day.

Enclosed are sample tweets, Facebook messages (for partners and personal use), sample op-ed, draft news release, talking points, web resources, and soil quotes.

SAMPLE TWEETS: (don't forget to shorten urls)

World Soil Day is here! What is (INSERT YOUR STATE NAME)'s state soil? #worldsoilday

Answer: (INSERT STATE SOIL NAME and attach a pic or link for more information). #worldsoilday

You've got to watch this 5 min video! "Let's Talk About Soil" <http://vimeo.com/53618201>
@GlobalSoilWeek #worldsoilday #soilhealth

There are more organisms in a teaspoon of healthy #soil than there are people on earth! <http://ow.ly/fGewe>
#worldsoilday #soilhealth

No matter where your water comes from, it's been filtered by the #soil! <http://ow.ly/fGeZT> #worldsoilday,
#soilhealth

We owe our existence to those few inches of living and life-giving top soil. Happy #WorldSoilDay. #soilhealth
#nrsc

Thank you #soilscientists for helping us better understand #soil: an amazing living resource. #worldsoilday
#nrsc #soilhealth

Take a minute on #WorldSoilDay to learn more about #soilhealth. <http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0> #nrsc

What in the world do you know about soils? Go to #WorldSoilDay to learn more about #soilhealth.
<http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0> #nrsc

Your food gets its start in the soil. Celebrate #WorldSoilDay and #soilhealth. <http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0> #nrsc

Soils: a hidden resource! Soils are a limited natural resource. Find out how their role in food security is crucial.
<http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/information-resources/videos-and-animations/soils-a-hidden-ressource/english/en/> (Also available in *Spanish*)

Farmers in (state) are taking their #soilhealth seriously. Celebrate #WorldSoilDay by learning more at (state's soil health webpage)

Learn more about World Soil Day and the importance and benefits of soils and the hazards currently facing them. www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqGKwWo60yE

(Also available in Spanish)

Let's talk about #soil – today is #WorldSoilDay. Learn more about reality of soil resources around the world <http://vimeo.com/53618201> *(Also available in Spanish)*

Unlock the Secrets of the Soil. Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish! <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>

Long live the soil: Saluting the resource that sustains us (url with your state's news release/op ed)

Long live the soil! Celebrate World Soil Day-Join Buz Kloot on his #SoilTrek journey to find the science behind #soilhealth. www.dirtdiaries.com/vlog/

Hashtags:

#NRCS, #soilhealth, #worldsoilday, #soil

SAMPLE FACEBOOK MESSAGES

Cover photos – to celebrate the day and spread a consistent message about soil health, why not feature the “Unlock the Secrets of the Soil” logo as your cover photo or any number of great soil health photos located at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/soils/health/?cid=stelprdb1048861>. There are also several great info graphics located at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/soils/health/?cid=stelprdb1143204>.

	<p>You've got to watch this 5 min video on #Soil! "Let's Talk About Soil" http://vimeo.com/53618201</p>
	<p>Let's talk about soil – today is World Soil Day. The reality of soil resources around the world is overwhelming! http://vimeo.com/53618201</p>
	<p>Unlock the Secrets of the Soil. Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish! http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/</p>
	<p>We owe our existence to those few inches of living and life-giving top soil. Happy World Soil Day!</p>
	<p>Long live the soil! Celebrate World Soil Day - Join Buz Kloot on his “Soil Trek” journey to find the science behind soil health. www.dirtdiaries.com/vlog/</p>
	<p>Your food gets its start in the soil. Celebrate World Soil Day and Soil Health. http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0</p>



What in the world do you know about soils? Today is World Soil Day. Learn more about soil health. <http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0>



Today is World Soil Day. Take a minute to learn more about soil health. <http://1.usa.gov/UkNWF0>



Coollest video! No matter where your water comes from, it's been filtered by the soil! Happy World Soil Day! <http://ow.ly/fGeZT>



There are more organisms in a teaspoon of healthy soil than there are people on earth! <http://ow.ly/fGewe>



How can I stand on the ground every day and not feel its power? How can I live my life stepping on this stuff and not wonder about it? William Bryant Logan



Soil sustains life! Learn more at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>



Soils: a hidden resource! Soils are a limited natural resource. Find out how their role in food security is crucial. In light of climate change, soil degradation and erosion, farmers everywhere struggle to protect soil health.

<http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/information-resources/videos-and-animations/soils-a-hidden-ressource/english/en/>



We love working with farmers who are taking their soil health seriously. Celebrate World Soil Day by learning more at (state's soil health webpage) or link to national page.



Learn more about World Soil Day and the importance and benefits of soils and the hazards currently facing them. www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqGKwWo60yE



When the rains come, where does the water go? Is your soil healthy? Celebrate World Soil Day - Unlock the Secrets Of The Soil!



Have you drunk the Kool-Aid? Celebrate World Soil Day with a “buzz” that is, with Buz Kloot – join his journey to find the science behind soil health! www.dirtidiaries.com/vlog/

Sample Op Ed

Long Live The Soil: Saluting The Resource That Sustains Us

By: [NAME], State Conservationist

Too often, it's treated like dirt.

But this week our living and life-giving soil is finally getting some of the respect it deserves as the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization celebrates World Soil Day on December 5 in Rome, Italy. Under the framework of the Global Soil Partnership, the event is held each year with the goal of raising awareness of the importance of healthy soils for food security, ecosystem functions, and sustainable development.

Understandably, it's easy to take soil for granted because it's mostly hidden from view—and few who live off the farm have reason to give it a second thought. Yet this amazing resource is responsible for nearly all life on the planet. Fortunately, scientists, conservationists and farmers are increasingly recognizing that keeping our soil healthy and functioning is the key to our survival.

Here in [state], the Natural Resources Conservation Service and our conservation partners are working directly with private landowners to improve the health of the soil on our working lands. And by improving the health of the soil, we are also improving the health and vitality of our farms, families and communities.

This renewed focus on the health of our soil has created an exciting new revolution in American agriculture as farmers, ranchers and other landowners are increasingly making their land more productive and sustainable through soil health management systems. Although all farming operations are different, most all can benefit from keeping the soil covered as much as possible; disturbing the soil as little as possible; keeping plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil; and diversifying plants as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops.

By improving soil health [state's] agricultural producers can harvest benefits on and off the farm including increasing farmland sustainability and resilience; improving water and air quality; providing wildlife habitat; and reducing flooding.

World Soil Day serves as a reminder to all of us that we owe our existence to the soil. As we face mounting global production, climate and sustainability challenges, I believe there is no better time to work hand-in-hand with [state's] farmers and ranchers to improve the health of this critical living resource.

The promise of our future depends on it.

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Editor's note: To learn more about basics and benefits of soil health, visit “Unlock the Secrets of the Soil” at www.nrcs.usda.gov.

World Soil Day was established in 2002 by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) to celebrate the importance of soil and its vital contributions to human health and safety. For more information about this year's World Soil Day go to <http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/en>.)

Salute to Soil Underscores Need to Focus on its Health

CITY, State (Dec. 3, 2013)—It's responsible for nearly all life on the planet, but rarely gets the respect it deserves. On December 5, this living and life-giving resource is finally getting its day—across the state and across the globe.

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization will celebrate World Soil Day in Rome, Italy, under the framework of the Global Soil Partnership. The goal of the celebration is to raise awareness of the importance of healthy soils for food security, ecosystem functions and resilient farms.

The global focus on soil is being amplified across **STATE** through a new awareness and education campaign titled "Unlock the Secrets in the Soil." The campaign is designed to help more farmers and ranchers discover the basics and benefits of soil health—and to encourage the adoption of soil health-improving practices like cover cropping, no-till and diverse crop rotations.

"We work every day in every county to conserve and protect this vital resource," said NRCS State Conservationist **NAME**, "so to us, every day is 'soil day.'"

NAME said improving the nation's soil health has broad implications related to the vitality of our nation's farms, the health of our planet and our ability to feed more than 9 billion people who will be living on Earth by the year 2050.

"Keeping soil healthy improves water and air quality, makes farms more sustainable and resilient, provides for wildlife habitat and reduces flooding," **HE/SHE** said. "Increasingly, more and more producers in **STATE** and throughout the nation are harvesting a wide range of production, environmental, and business benefits—on and off the farm—by improving soil health."

NAME said that while improving soil health has enormous benefits, it also has its challenges. "We know that every farm is different and has its own set of unique resource issues," **HE/SHE** said. "Fortunately, **STATE**'s farmers are innovative, courageous and tenacious, and NRCS is committed to assist these soil health pioneers—to help make their farms more productive, resilient and profitable along the way."

NAME said that World Soil Day serves as a reminder to all of us that the promise of our future resides in the soil. "As we face mounting global production, climate and sustainability challenges, there is no better time to work hand-in-hand with our nation's farmers and ranchers to improve the health of our soil," **HE/SHE** said.

Those interested in learning more about the basics, benefits and promise of improving soil health, **NAME** said, can visit www.nrcs.usda.gov to "Unlock the Secrets in the Soil."

TALKING POINTS

- Healthy soils are important for food security, ecosystem functions, and sustainable development.
- We work every day in every [STATE] county to conserve and protect this vital resource—so to NRCS, every day is ‘soil health day.’
- Improving the nation’s soil health has broad implications related to the vitality of our nation’s farms, the health of our planet and our ability to feed more than 9 billion people who will be living on Earth by the year 2050.
- World Soil Day reminds us that the promise of our future resides in the soil.
- As we face mounting global production, climate and sustainability challenges, there is no better time to work hand-in-hand with our nation’s farmers and ranchers to improve the health of our soil.
- Keeping soil healthy improves water and air quality, provides for wildlife habitat and reduces flooding.
- More and more producers in [STATE] and throughout the nation are harvesting a wide range of production, environmental, sustainability and business benefits—on and off the farm—by improving soil health.
- We know that every farm is different and has its own set of unique resource issues –NRCS is committed to assist those farmers who are soil health pioneers—to help make their farms more productive, resilient and profitable along the way.”
- The global focus on soil is being amplified throughout [STATE] through a new awareness and education campaign titled “Unlock the Secrets in the Soil.” The campaign is designed to help more farmers and ranchers discover the basics and benefits of soil health—and to encourage the adoption of soil health-improving practices like cover cropping, no-till and diverse crop rotations.
- Unlock the Secrets of the Soil is an effort to fundamentally shift in the way we think about and care for our nation’s soil.
- There are an increasing number of innovative farmers who recognize that the promise of our future lies not just in new technology, but in getting back to basics: protecting our soil.

SOIL QUOTES

"The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and resurrector, by which disease passes into health, age into youth, death into life. Without proper care for it we can have no community, because without proper care for it we can have no life." Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America

"We owe our existence to our living and life-giving soil." NRCS Chief Jason Weller

“The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.” Franklin Roosevelt

“The soil is the great connector of our lives, the source and destination of all.” Wendell Berry The Unsettling of America, 1977

“To be a successful farmer one must first know the nature of the soil.” Xenophon, Oeconomicus, 400 B.C.

“We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot.” Leonardo DaVinci, circa 1500s

“Too many people have lost sight of the fact that productive soil is essential to the production of food.” Hugh Hammond Bennett

“Productive soil is life, and productive soil is vanishing with each passing year.” Hugh Hammond Bennett

“Productive land is neither limitless nor inexhaustible.” Hugh Hammond Bennett

“Land must be expertly cared for if it is to be maintained in a productive state.” Hugh Hammond Bennett

WSD RESOURCES

Global Soil Partnership: <http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/en>

Global Soil Week <http://globalsoilweek.org/>

International Union of Soil Sciences: <http://www.iuss.org/>

World Soil Day December 5 Face Book page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/World-Soil-Day-December-5/165018620273203>

Soil Science Society of America: <https://www.soils.org>