THE UNIQUE STORY OF THE EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA

CONSERVATION IN ACTION TOUR
OCTOBER 14 - 15, 2014
CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTER
Florida’s Ev
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2014 Conservation in Action Tour
Florida’s Everglades Agricultural Area

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Florida agriculture

Due to the state’s mild winter climate, the growing season is counter-cyclical to most other fresh-market agricultural states. Florida’s harvesting season starts in October and ends in June or July.

The state leads the nation in the value of oranges, sugarcane, grapefruit, sweet corn, snap beans, watermelon, squash and cucumbers.

In 2011, Florida was second only to California in the value of the nation’s vegetable cash receipts. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s 2012 Ag Census Report showed increases from 2007 to 2012 in both the amount of land in farms (9,548,362 acres) and the number of farms (47,740).

Florida exports 80 percent of its crops, with total ag exports worth $4.1 billion in 2013. Purebred breeding horses were the fastest-growing export from 2012-2013, followed by strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes and snap beans.

Just as the sunset is painted by many different colors, the diverse palate of agriculture makes one beautiful picture that is Florida agriculture.

Turn to Page 6 to learn about the colorful picture of agriculture in the Everglades Agricultural Area.
**GREETINGS FROM THE CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTER**

“On behalf of the CTTIC Board, I’m pleased to welcome you to the 7th Annual Conservation in Action Tour, The Unique Story of the Everglades Agricultural Area! We’re delighted you’ve joined us today. Together with local and state partners, we’ve planned this tour to highlight successful agricultural practices that complement the surrounding ecosystem in the Everglades Agricultural Area. All of us at CTTIC look forward to meeting you, and we invite you to join us in our efforts to promote and provide information on conservation technologies and sustainable agricultural systems.”

– Pauley Bradley
Chair of the CTTIC Board of Directors and John Deere Ag and Turf Tactical Marketing – Region 4

“Welcome to this year’s Conservation in Action Tour in the Everglades Agricultural Area. Here, growers and researchers work together with state agencies to develop and implement a suite of agricultural conservation practices that protect the Florida Everglades and maintain high productivity in the field. As one of the leading agricultural areas of the country, the EAA has a unique conservation story that is not to be missed. We hope you enjoy the tour!”

– Karen Scanlon
CTIC Executive Director

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

Greetings from the Conservation Technology Information Center 3
Thank You to Our Partners 3
Social Itinerary 4
Tour Itinerary 5
The Everglades Agricultural Area 6
Breakfast | Growers on the Bus 8
Stormwater Treatment Area: Improving Water Quality for the Everglades 10
Lunch at the Everglades Research and Education Center 18
Everglades Research and Education Center: Research and Application 19
Prewitt Farm: Precision Agriculture in the Everglades Agricultural Area 22
Dinner at City of Pahokee Campground & Marina 26
About CTIC 27
CTIC’s Current Projects
  - Let’s Do the Math: Economic, Agronomic and Ecological Benefits of Cover Crops 32
  - Indian Creek Watershed Project 33
  - Monitoring Nitrates in Tile Outlet Flows from Indian Creek Farms 34
  - Watershed Implementation and Innovation Network (WIIN) 35
  - Cover Crop Survey 36
  - Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative 37
Reporting on Success – Past Projects
  - Great Lakes Cover Crop Initiative 38
  - 6th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (WCCA) 39
Join CTIC 40
Notes 44
Thank You to Our Sponsors 48
Welcome from John Hoblick, president of Florida Farm Bureau Federation

John Hoblick, a third-generation farmer, serves as president of Florida Farm Bureau Federation, a position he has held since October 2006. He is a Volusia County cut foliage producer who has been a member of the Florida Farm Bureau state board of directors since 1994.

John earned his bachelor’s degree in ornamental horticulture from the University of Florida in 1990. He then took over the ownership of Hoblick Greens, Inc., an operation established by his grandparents 22 years earlier. In 1998, he was named the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Florida Farmer of the Year.

John is excited about the future of Florida agriculture. “Though agriculture faces many challenges, we farmers are a resilient group,” John said. “However, the world is changing today at a faster pace than agriculture would like and we must be prepared to make the changes and face the challenges that lie ahead.”

*Complimentary shuttles provided for transport to and from the social location. The first shuttle leaves the hotel at 5:45 p.m., and the last shuttle will return at 8:15 p.m.
The Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) surrounds Lake Okeechobee on the south, east and west shores. Over 1.5 million people call the four-county area home (Palm Beach, Hendry, Martin and Glades). The EAA represented almost 23% of Florida’s total agricultural sales in 2012. Agricultural commodities grown in the area (2012) were:

- **Sugarcane**
  - 99% of Florida acreage and 47% of the U.S. 2012 production
- **Trees, Nuts, Berries**
  - $378 million or 20.46% of Florida’s total
- **Vegetables, Melons, Potatoes**
  - $415 million, which represents 30.75% of Florida’s total
- **Citrus**
  - 25.2 million boxes, which represents 16.12% of Florida’s crop
- **Nursery, Greenhouse, Floriculture**
  - $194.7 million representing 11.3% of Florida’s total
- **Cattle**
  - 176,638 head of cattle or about 10.5% of Florida’s herd

**Economic Impact:**

- Employment supported: 13,166 jobs
- Total economic impact: $2.49 billion
- $1.771 billion agricultural value sold (2012)
- 1,591,737 acres of land in farms

**State Rankings:**

**Palm Beach County:**
- #1 in value of sales, sugarcane and vegetable production
- #3 in farm acreage, population and nursery/greenhouse/floriculture

**Hendry County:**
- #5 in value of sales
- #2 in sugarcane and citrus production
- #6 in cattle herd size

**Martin County:**
- #9 in nursery/greenhouse/floriculture

**Glades County:**
- #3 in sugarcane acreage
- #6 in total farm acreage
- #7 in cattle herd size

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The Everglades Agricultural Area overlays part of the four-county area denoted in this analysis. Data displayed in this summary represents information for each county’s entire agricultural output.

**SOURCES:** USDA 2012 Ag Census Report
PREPARED: Tom Perny, Marketing Specialist, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, July 28, 2014
SUPERVISOR: Dan Sleep, Senior Analyst, Supervisor, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
History of the EAA
A brief historical overview of the origin, implementation philosophy and results achieved to date by the on-farm phosphorus reduction program in the Everglades Agricultural Area.

TOM MACVICAR
Tom MacVicar is a registered professional engineer specializing in water resource issues of South Florida. He spent 16 years on the staff of the South Florida Water Management District and was instrumental in the science-based mediation process that led to the Everglades Water Quality Program. For the last 20 years, he has been a private consultant serving clients engaged in agriculture, rock mining and project development in South Florida.

Local Insights on the EAA
Several growers will be joining us on the buses to provide their perspectives on local agriculture.

LESLIE BAUCUM
Leslie Baucum is the multi-county agronomic/pasture forage Extension educator and Highlands County Extension Director for the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) in South Florida. He received a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree from Mississippi State University before moving to Florida in 1989. He worked in the private industry before joining UF/IFAS Extension and combines these experiences with his Extension experiences to provide timely, relevant programming. He has received recognition for his programming at the state and national levels.

PAUL GROSE
Paul Grose currently serves as vice president for King Ranch Florida Operations, managing the 20,000-acre Palm Beach County farm, as well as 6,500 acres of row crops in Martin County. Paul is responsible for 75 employees and all aspects of sugarcane, sweet corn, corn silage, field corn, rice and turfgrass on muck and sandy soils. He studied range management at Texas A&M University and worked for one semester on a cattle ranch in Colombia, South America, prior to receiving his bachelor’s degree. Paul returned to work on the family farm in Georgia, but an uncertain future there prompted Paul to return to Texas A&M for his master’s degree. He then worked for King Ranch in Venezuela for 2.5 years, then spent a year in Brazil before returning to the U.S.

DEREK ORSENIGO
Derek Orsenigo is the production manager for Orsenigo Farms and Grower’s Management. Born and raised in Belle Glade, Derek grew up on the farm and spent all summers, weekends and holidays working for his father, Paul. After majoring in agricultural operations management at University of Florida and graduating in 2009, he returned to the farm as production manager. Derek currently serves on the Western Palm Beach County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and Black Gold Jubilee Committee.

PAUL ORSENIGO
Paul Orsenigo’s agriculture career began when he followed up on a Neuesweser article about wheat harvesting. On a whim, the Florida native called the harvest operation managers featured in the article, and the next thing he knew, he was headed to Texas. He spent the next six months on a wheat harvesting combine crew that traveled from Texas to Montana. Paul returned to Belle Glade on Christmas Eve 1979 and began working with local vegetable and sugarcane growers. In 1985, he formed his own company.

Orsenigo Farms grows sugarcane and rice. Paul also is involved in other farming ventures that grow lettuce and other leaf crops, fresh market green beans, baby spinach and wild arugula. He currently sits on the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association Board and Executive Committee and the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative Board, among others. His son, Derek, joined him in the family farming business after graduating from the University of Florida in 2009.

RICK ROTH
Rick Roth is a third-generation farmer. He joined his father in the family business in 1976 after graduating from Emory University with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics. He became the president and principal owner of Roth Farms, Inc., in 1986. The closely held family farm is located in the EAA near Belle Glade where they employ 20 people full time, plus 150 seasonal employees, and grow radishes, leafy vegetables, rice, sugarcane, sweet corn, green beans and celery.

In 2006, Rick became principal owner of Ray’s Heritage, LLC. On April 9, 2007, Ray’s Heritage opened its state-of-the-art packing house in the Belle Glade Industrial Park, where they grade, cool, pack and ship radishes, green beans and sweet corn. They also cool and ship a wide variety of leafy vegetables and celery.

DENNIS WEDGWORTH
Dennis Wedgworth serves as president of Wedgworth Farms, Inc., and president of Wedgworth’s Inc., the state’s largest custom fertilizer dealer. He currently serves as secretary/treasurer for the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida, a board member for the Florida Sugar and Molasses Exchange and past president of the Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association. In 1974, he received his Bachelor of Science in engineering from Duke University and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Florida in 1977.

KEITH WEDGWORTH
Keith Wedgworth is a fourth-generation sugarcane farmer in the EAA. Wedgworth Farms also produces rice on some of its rotational land and leases land to area farmers for rotational vegetable production. Keith’s great-grandfather was one of the first professional scientists stationed at the Everglades Research and Education Center in the early 1930s. Today, Wedgworth’s Inc., is the state’s largest agrichemical company supplying commercial fertilizer needs throughout South Florida.

Keith earned his Bachelor of Science in food and resource economics and his Master of Agricultural Business from the University of Florida. He has been active in a number of community activities, including the Belle Glade Rotary Club and Leadership Glades. In addition to their land interests in the EAA, the family owns and cares for ranch land in central Florida.

Also on the Buses:
John S. Hundley, Eric Hopkins, Paul Allen, Denise Hatton
This is where Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) come in. The STAs are constructed wetlands that remove excess nutrients from water headed for the Everglades. At present, 57,000 acres of land south of Lake Okeechobee have been converted to STAs, which are managed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

The key purpose of STAs is to remove phosphorus from urban and agricultural runoff. The wetlands remove phosphorus from runoff water by channeling it through shallow marshes filled with aquatic plants such as cattail, southern naiad, hydrilla and algae. These plants take up or absorb phosphorus from water traveling through, reducing to very low levels the amount of the nutrients reaching the Everglades.

The STAs provide another bonus – prime home and visiting territory to wildlife including wading birds, ducks and American alligators. Through partnerships with the SFWMD, local Audubon chapters offer bird-watching tours at three STAs. Bicycling, hiking, nature viewing and photography are also offered. Waterfowl and alligator hunting are permitted in some STAs during weekends designated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The state has invested more than $1.8 billion in water-quality improvements aimed at lowering phosphorus levels. Two decades ago, water headed for the Everglades averaged phosphorus concentrations of more than 170 parts per billion (ppb). Today, the long-term target concentration of 10 ppb is already being met in most locations throughout the Everglades.

Over nearly two decades, best management and improved farming practices combined with water quality treatment by the STAs have prevented more than 4,580 metric tons of phosphorus from entering the Everglades.

Improving Water Quality for the Everglades

Phosphorus is a mineral essential for all life. It forms genetic material, builds bones and teeth and aids metabolism. However, when natural wetlands such as the Everglades receive too much phosphorus from developed areas such as lawns, farms and roadways, the nutrient does more harm than good.

Phosphorus excess stimulates plant growth, which produces an overabundance of unwanted vegetation. Cattail and other species crowd out natural wetland plants and prevent sunlight from reaching plants in the water. Aquatic insects, crustaceans and other invertebrates then do not have enough food or oxygen. Moving further up in the food chain, this means that fish and birds do not have enough to eat, either.
Overview of Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs)

Stormwater treatment areas (STAs) and agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) and their roles in Everglades Restoration.

TERRIE BATES

Terrie Bates manages the South Florida Water Management District’s (SFWMD) environmental research, ecosystem monitoring, water quality monitoring and analysis, water supply planning and groundwater resource evaluations. She joined the district in 1985 and has gained wide-ranging experience in environmental regulation, water quality, wetland mitigation, ecosystem restoration and other issues.

Terrie also has held executive management responsibilities for overseeing the district’s emergency water shortage and drought response in 2006–2007 and again in 2011. Born and raised in Palm Beach County, she received her bachelor’s degree in forest resources and conservation from the University of Florida and a Master in Public Administration from Florida Atlantic University.

How do STAs function?
The complex operation of STAs and how they function in reducing phosphorus from runoff water.

DELIA IVANOFF

Delia Ivanoff is a senior supervising environmental scientist for the water resources division of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) currently supervising a team of scientists working to understand and optimize the performance of the STAs. Prior to this, she was the district’s quality administrator for water quality monitoring programs and laboratory manager.

Delia also is a professor teaching environmental sustainability and environmental monitoring classes. Previously, she worked as a researcher with the University of Florida on projects to understand the fate and transport of nutrients in wetlands and lake systems. Delia received her bachelor’s degree in agriculture (soil science) from the University of the Philippines and a Master of Science in soil and water science from the University of Florida.

What do you see at the STA?
An overview of the created wetlands and the challenges of operating dynamic, biological treatment systems subject to varying hydrology, vegetation and wildlife constraints.

LAWRENCE GERRY

Lawrence Gerry is the STA coordinator at the South Florida Water Management District. He works with multiple departments on activities related to vegetation management, water treatment operations, hydraulic enhancements and expansion of the STAs.

From 2002 to 2009, Lawrence was the director of the Everglades Restoration Planning Department and worked closely with the Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District on a $10.5 billion ecosystem restoration planning effort. He has over 40 years of experience in private sector consulting and state government.

Lawrence holds a Bachelor of Arts in environmental science from the University of Virginia and a master’s degree in marine science from North Carolina State University.

Best Management Practices Program in the EAA

A brief history of how the Best Management Practices (BMP) program in the EAA was established and the subsequent evolution of the program.

MALCOLM “BUBBA” WADE

As senior vice president of Corporate Strategy and Business Development for the United States Sugar Corporation, Malcolm “Bubba” Wade analyzes and negotiates major opportunities, projects and ventures that add to the company’s growth, profitability, efficiency and diversity. In addition, he is responsible for all water compliance and related regulatory activities and has been actively involved in the environmental issues involving the Everglades, Lake Okeechobee and the South Florida ecosystem for more than two decades.

He was appointed by Governor Jeb Bush to serve on the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board in 2005. Malcolm has served on the board and currently is chairman of the board for the Everglades Agricultural Area Environmental Protection District.

Wildlife in STAs
The role of vertebrate wildlife in agriculture and the importance of the EAA as wildlife habitat; the use of flooded fields as surrogate wetland habitats for wading birds; possible impacts of wading birds on phosphorus dynamics in flooded systems (STAs, EAA).

RENA BORKHATARIA

Rena Borkhataria is a research assistant professor in wildlife ecology and conservation at the Everglades Research and Education Center and the director of the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program Collaborative. Her primary research interests are in avian community ecology and conservation (including wildlife/human interactions in agriculture), the role of waterbirds in nutrient transport and cycling and barriers to participation in conservation. Her current research focuses on the conservation of endangered wood storks and the role of vertebrate wildlife in agriculture.

She earned a Bachelor of Science in wildlife management at the University of Arizona, a Master of Science in zoology at North Carolina State University and a doctorate in wildlife ecology and conservation from University of Florida.
Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practical, cost-effective methods that agricultural producers can use to keep soil and inputs on their fields. These practices also often enhance production. However, not every BMP applies to every farm, so they are selected and implemented according to the type of operation in question. In Florida, BMP manuals are developed and adopted based on commodity groups (e.g., cow/calf, citrus, nursery, equine, vegetable/row crops, etc.). Some BMPs, such as structural improvements requiring engineering and expensive technologies, are included in cost-share programs to increase the number of farmers who can install these practices.

By law, Florida has established the use of BMPs as the primary means for growers to meet water quality goals. Based on Florida law specific to the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has adopted regulations requiring a Works of the District permit that includes the use of BMPs to reduce the amount of phosphorus introduced into the fragile Everglades ecosystem, while maintaining the viability of agricultural production. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has adopted BMP programs that address both phosphorus and nitrogen input. However, the current FDACS rule provides for EAA growers to follow the SFWMD rule, which allows growers to select from a list of BMPs according to specific resource issues that need to be addressed on their operations. Under the SFWMD rule, EAA growers must submit an annual BMP certification report.

The achievements of the EAA growers have far surpassed the phosphorus reduction requirements. In 2014, for example, the SFWMD reported a 63% reduction, compared to the 25% reduction target.

The Role of Flooded Rice Production in Best Management Practices Program

The use of flooded rice production as an environmentally sensible cover crop option for sugarcane producers; flooded rice production and its role in organic soil conservation; recent improvements in variety selection and adoption that are beneficial to the Florida rice industry.

Ron Rice

Ron Rice is the agriculture program leader for the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Palm Beach County Extension. He works closely with researchers from the University of Florida and USDA’s Agricultural Research Service to design timely and meaningful crop production educational events for South Florida’s farming clientele.

Ron earned his doctorate in agronomy from the University of Florida in 1993. He is a past president of the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists (Florida Division) and is currently the president-elect of the Florida Association of Agriculture County Agents.

Luigi Trotta

As director of farming for Florida Crystals, Luigi Trotta is in charge of all rice operations, as well as organic rice and sugarcane farms. He oversees approximately 20,000 acres of farmland.

Luigi was raised on a dairy and rice farm in Italy. After graduating from college with a degree in agronomy, he moved to Costa Rica to manage 12,000 acres of rice, sugar cane and cattle. Seven years later, he moved to the U.S., earned his master’s degree in agribusiness and worked for another seven years in the commodity trading business. He has served as director of farming for Florida Crystals for three years.
Nutrient Management and Crop Rotation in Vegetable Production

Nutrient management, which is very important for crop production in the Everglades Agricultural Area, both from a crop production standpoint and from an environmental stewardship standpoint; adding sufficient nutrients to the soil while using proper application methods, timing and rates to minimize losses through runoff into canals.

PAUL ORSENIGO

Paul Orsenigo’s agriculture career began when he followed up on a Newsweek article about wheat harvesting. On a whim, the Florida native called the harvest operation managers featured in the article, and the next thing he knew, he was headed to Texas. He spent the next six months on a wheat harvesting combine crew that traveled from Texas to Montana. Paul returned to Belle Glade on Christmas Eve 1979 and began working with local vegetable and sugarcane growers. In 1985, he formed his own company. Orsenigo Farms grows sugarcane and rice. Paul also is involved in other farming ventures that grow lettuce and other leaf crops, fresh market green beans, baby spinach and wild arugula. He currently sits on the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association Board and Executive Committee and the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative Board, among others. His son, Derek, joined him in the family farming business after graduating from the University of Florida in 2009.

ALAN WRIGHT

Alan Wright is associate professor in the University of Florida Soil and Water Science Department. He conducts research and leads Extension programs for agricultural and natural resources issues of importance in South Florida. His program focuses on fertilizer and nutrient management to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability in the EAA while minimizing adverse environmental effects on Everglades wetlands. Research and Extension projects include assessment of effects of anthropogenic factors on nutrient cycling, agricultural management practices to conserve subsiding soils of the EAA and soil and water biogeochemical processes in agricultural, urban and wetland ecosystems. His research also has been used by water managers for improving the functioning of Stormwater Treatment Areas for phosphorus removal.

Nutrient Export Reduction and Sediment Control Practices

Best Management Practices implemented to achieve a total phosphorus loads reduction of 25 percent in accordance with the Everglades Forever Act (1994); nutrient control practices such as application of phosphorus fertilizers according to calibrated soil tests, banding of phosphorus fertilizer using specialized application equipment, and fertilizer spill prevention; sediment control BMPs that focus on minimizing the transport of sediments off the farm and removing accumulated sediments from farm canals.

TIMOTHY LANG

Timothy Lang, research associate in water resources at the Everglades Research and Education Center, joined the University of Florida in 1997 to conduct research on Best Management Practices (BMPs) that reduce phosphorus load. The research has been instrumental in helping growers lower phosphorus loading from the EAA basin by a long-term average of approximately 54%, more than double the reduction mandated by Florida’s Everglades Forever Act.

LUI S G IRADO

Luis Girado has 12 years of experience as environmental manager for Florida Crystals. He works with agricultural Best Management Practices on a 180,000-acre farm. Luis also is heavily involved in environmental projects with the University of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District. His main areas of expertise are water use permit compliance, pumping operations and agricultural practices related to the environment.

Barn Owl Project, a Sustainable Rodent Control Program Using Barn Owls

An overview of the University of Florida’s Barn Owl Project, a sustainable rodent control program using barn owls, in which EAA growers have participated since 1994; the program’s results of decreased rodenticide use and lower levels of rodent damage to sugarcane.

RICHARD RAID

As a plant pathologist serving the vegetable, rice and sugarcane industries, Richard Raid has helped growers manage a number of crop diseases, including foliar blights of celery and sweet corn, lettuce downy mildew and rust diseases of sugarcane. In addition to his pathological research, he has developed a widely accepted program using barn owls for rodent control. He routinely uses the barn owl project, as well as a popular school garden program known as Students SOAR (Sharing Our Agricultural Roots), for youth education and outreach. Providing hands-on lessons, these programs have informed thousands of students on the importance of agriculture, wildlife and the value of land stewardship.
Speaker: RICHARD BUDELL

Richard Budell serves as the director of the Office of Agricultural Water Policy for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He joined the department in 1985 and has held a variety of management positions within the department. In his current position, he oversees statewide programs promoting implementation of agricultural best management practices (BMPs) addressing water quality and conservation. Richard's office also is responsible for assessing future water needs for agriculture as part of developing Regional Water Supply Plans. He recently completed work on a National Academy of Sciences Committee evaluating the nutrient reduction strategies being employed in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. He earned his Bachelor of Science from Boise State University in 1977 and Master of Science from Florida State University in 1984.
Research and Application at Everglades Research and Education Center

The Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC) is a facility for the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. This location houses agricultural and environmental research and education. Its goal is to investigate and advocate agricultural systems that are both sustainable and profitable. The scientists located at the Center form an interdisciplinary team to investigate ways to conserve and protect soil, water, and other natural resources.

Construction on what is now known as the EREC began in 1922, despite setbacks created by the forces of nature typical to southern Florida. In the 1930s, studies included soil analysis, cattle crossbreeding and insect control. By 1940, crops were being developed and bred specifically for the Everglades region. A virus research unit dedicated to plant diseases was established in 1952. The 1970s were an era focused on technology with soil test recommendation computer programs, growth regulators and even cloning sugarcane. Researchers also examined utilizing flooded soils, like rice rotated with sugarcane and vegetables. The name of the center changed to the Everglades Research and Education Center in 1984 and now reflects its expanded studies of environmental issues, especially water quality.

Current research underway at EREC includes a lettuce cultivar development and genetics program, integrated control of the Southern Chinch Bug in St. Augustine grass, nutrient application practices and wildlife use of cultivated and natural landscapes in the Everglades Agricultural Area, among many others.

Best Management Practices to Minimize Soil Subsidence and Increase Agricultural Productivity and Longevity

The problem of subsidence, soil loss due to oxidation and lowering of the surface elevation; methods used in the EAA to decrease subsidence and increase longevity for agricultural use; improving water management throughout the EAA.

JEHANGIR BHADHA
Jehangir Bhadha is a research assistant scientist at the Everglades Research and Education Center, specializing in water quality and sustainable agriculture. He is currently working on developing new Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will help reduce phosphorus loads from the EAA. His research also includes efforts focusing on soil conservation and sustainability, particularly because soil loss due to oxidation is a major concern for growers in the EAA. To develop a knowledge base that would help growers conserve soil, Jehangir is conducting research on utilizing organic byproducts and biochar as soil enhancers to grow sugarcane. At least twice a year, Jehangir helps organize phosphorus-reduction BMP workshops that are regularly attended by over 100 farmers, regulators and scientists.

PAUL GROSE
Paul Grose currently serves as vice president for King Ranch Florida Operations, managing the 20,000-acre Palm Beach County farm, as well as 8,500 acres of row crops in Martin County. Paul is responsible for 75 employees and all aspects of sugarcane, sweet corn, corn silage, field corn, rice and turfgrass on muck and sandy soils. He studied range management at Texas A&M University and worked for one semester on a cattle ranch in Colombia, South America, prior to receiving his bachelor’s degree. Paul returned to work on the family farm in Georgia, but an uncertain future there prompted Paul to return to Texas A&M for his master’s degree. He then worked for King Ranch in Venezuela for 2.5 years, then spent a year in Brazil before returning to the U.S.

Sustainable Biological Control Program and Sugarcane Cultivar Development

Parasitic wasps and generalist predators resulting in dramatic reductions in insecticide use and millions of dollars in industry savings; sugarcane genetics and cultivar development.

DAVID OWENS
David Owens is an entomology doctoral student working with Gregg Nuessly at the Everglades Research and Education Center. His current research examines the biology of corn silk flies in order to improve sweet corn pest management practices in a more sustainable manner. He is originally from Virginia, graduating from Virginia Tech in 2010 with his bachelor’s degree in biology and in 2012 with his master’s degree in entomology.

PER McCORD
Per McCord is a sugarcane breeder and geneticist at the USDA’s Agricultural Research Service Sugarcane Field Station in Canal Point. His responsibilities include overseeing the early stages of the sugarcane breeding program and performing research to understand the genetics of important sugarcane traits. The goal is to make the breeding process more effective and efficient. In this research, he uses both classical and molecular genetics approaches. Prior to working in sugarcane, Per performed genetics and breeding research in alfalfa and potato. He earned his bachelor’s degree in plant genetics and breeding from Brigham Young University and his master’s degree and doctorate (both in horticulture) from North Carolina State University.
Precision Agriculture in the Everglades Agricultural Area

With its abundant, nitrogen-rich muck soils, the Everglades Agricultural Area provides ideal growing conditions for sugarcane. The area contains 99 percent of Florida sugarcane acreage and 47 percent of U.S. production (according to 2012 statistics).

To produce sugarcane, growers first prepare the land for planting by cleaning ditches, leveling land and applying nutrients to the soil. Once fields are prepared, planting activities include seed cane harvesting, furrowing, fertilizer application, dropping seed cane and applying insecticide.

Harvest season runs from October to April and operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Sugarcane is cut using mechanical harvesters, loaded into cane wagons pulled by tractors, transported to loading stations, loaded on railcars and transported to the sugar mill. A single harvest crew typically includes five harvesters, ten cane haul tractors, thirty cane wagons and additional support equipment.

Examples of precision agriculture – the use of technology to tailor agricultural practices to the needs of a crop in the field – can be seen in the process of growing sugarcane. A nutrient management program could include soil sampling, leaf tissue analysis, laboratory analysis, fertility recommendations and amendment application. Nutrient recommendations are tailored to each soil type and other unique conditions within the Everglades Agricultural Area.

Some of these unique conditions include subsidence and the changing properties of soil that result from it, namely shallower soils and increased concentrations of calcium carbonate. Also, sugarcane acreage on mineral soils in Florida has increased by 84% in the last 25 years. Current research seeks to update previous fertilizer recommendations and analyze how soil test calibrations for sugarcane on organic and mineral soils can be updated and improved.

Using precision nutrient application is challenging without good yield and soil pH maps. Researchers are currently looking at technology that can be used to develop maps based on soil conductivity. For now, the most common use of precision agriculture in the Everglades Agricultural Area is in equipment, including Global Positioning Systems (GPS), auto steer to guide machines and spray control to accurately control nutrient application rates.

Using precision agriculture is beneficial to the crop and to the soil. Nutrients are only applied where they are needed, minimizing the risk of excess nutrients running off the field. With auto steer and GPS to guide equipment, growers can use more efficient driving patterns to increase the number of acres covered per day. Growers also can limit soil compaction, which is beneficial because compacted soil is difficult for plants to grow in. Further research and more technology in the future will mean increased opportunities for producers to use precision agriculture, with many more benefits for conservation, as well.
Land Preparation and Sugarcane Planting
The benefits of autopilot in land preparation operation; impact of Global Positioning System-based land leveling on drainage and water control; benefits of Real Time Kinematic (RTK) level accuracy in planting operation.

STEVEN STILES
Steven Stiles is the U.S. Sugar Corporation Area 3 farm manager with over 30 years of experience with the company. He manages all aspects of sugarcane operation on approximately 50,000 acres located between Lake Harbor and Pahokee.

SCOTT BERDEN
Scott Berden serves as the precision agriculture manager for U.S. Sugar Corporation. As a certified Geographic Information System (GIS) professional, Scott has over 20 years of experience with GIS and agriculture geodata management. He holds an associate’s degree in computer aided drafting technology from ITT Technical Institute.

Sugarcane Nutrient Management
Nutrient management in the EAA; soil sampling and fertilizer recommendations; precision application techniques; equipment calibration.

MABRY MCCRAY
Mabry McCray is an associate scientist in the agronomy department at the University of Florida. He specializes in soil fertility and plant nutrition of sugarcane and rice. Mabry has been with the university for 10 years, previously having worked as a soil scientist for U.S. Sugar Corporation for 13 years.

Mabry conducts a research and Extension program for sugarcane and rice growers and farm managers in South Florida that promotes increased nutrient use efficiency, cost-effective use of fertilizers and amendments and best management practices that will enable growers to achieve optimum economic yields while protecting water quality. His programs provide growers with effective nutrient management information, as well as access to reliable soil and leaf analytical services.

Sugarcane Harvesting
Sugarcane harvesting operation; beneficial uses of sugarcane that produce zero waste; products from sugarcane, from raw sugar to cane fiber; technology utilized in harvest operations to manage logistics, efficiency and fuel consumption.

KEN McDUFFIE
Ken McDuffie is the senior vice president of sugarcane operations for U.S. Sugar Corporation. He manages all aspects of the company’s 195,000 acres of sugarcane, including an extensive railroad transportation network. He has over 20 years of experience with U.S. Sugar Corporation. He received his bachelor’s degree in economics from Florida State University.

JUAN CERVERA
Juan Cervera is the harvest operations manager for U.S. Sugar Corporation, managing the entire harvest operation for over 150,000 acres of sugarcane production. He has over 30 years of sugarcane harvesting experience.
Known as Palm Beach County’s “other” coast, the city of Pahokee sits along Lake Okeechobee. Pahokee means “grassy waters” in Seminole and at its height, the city was known as the “Winter Vegetable Capital of the World.”

Pahokee also is known for its Royal Palm Trees, which find a natural home in the rich muck soils. Seven miles of these trees line the road to Pahokee.

The City of Pahokee Campground & Marina offers breathtaking unobstructed lake views, which we will enjoy during dinner.

Speaker: DEREK ORSENIGO

Derek Orsenigo is the production manager for Orsenigo Farms and Grower’s Management. Born and raised in Belle Glade, Derek grew up on the farm and spent all summers, weekends and holidays working for his father, Paul.

After majoring in agricultural operations management at University of Florida and graduating in 2009, he returned to the farm as production manager. Derek currently serves on the Western Palm Beach County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and Black Gold Jubilee Committee.

Derek also served as a grower on the bus throughout the tour. As the dinner speaker, he will provide “Reflections on the Everglades Agricultural Area.”

About CTIC

The Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC), a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) membership organization, provides technical, educational and practical support to America’s agricultural and conservation communities. Formed in 1982 by representatives of agribusiness, government and associations, we thrive today with guidance and support from partners and members from public, private and academic sectors.

America’s producers face complex decisions about how to integrate and maintain conservation systems within their farming operations. Given the best information, producers will make good decisions for their land. We believe they deserve trustworthy information from a dependable source. CTIC is that dependable source.

To Address Our Mission, WE:

Lead Initiatives

CTIC and its partners lead initiatives to address conservation agriculture’s pressing needs. Our initiatives build partnerships, provide information and promote economically viable and environmentally beneficial agricultural systems.

Provide Information

We serve as an information clearinghouse, reviewing and communicating information on new research, technologies and innovative conservation agriculture approaches. We promote the good news about conservation in agriculture through our website (www.ctic.org), Conservation in Action Partners (our quarterly e-newsletter) and regular news releases. Through national information campaigns, we recognize farmers who use sound management strategies on their farms to efficiently manage inputs and protect natural resources.

Build Coalitions

We link private businesses, non-profit organizations, associations and local, state, regional and federal government agencies to address common conservation agriculture issues. With strength, wisdom and knowledge in numbers, CTIC’s coalitions work to disseminate information on new technologies, techniques, products and tools to ensure conservation agriculture works on the ground.

Connect with CTIC

CTIC Website

At www.ctic.org, visitors access CTIC resources, update membership information, register for events, learn about CTIC projects, download free publications, subscribe to the CTIC mailing list and more.

Member Mail

All CTIC members receive Member Mail, an electronic newsletter containing news briefs pertinent to our membership.

Social Media

News moves quickly in today’s information age. Join the conservation conversation and see research articles, event announcements, photos and more by following CTIC on Twitter (@ctic_tweet), liking our page on Facebook (www.facebook.com/Conservation.Technology.Information.Center) and subscribing to our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/CTICComm).
Pauley Bradley  
Chair – John Deere

Lara Moody  
Vice Chair – The Fertilizer Institute

Alan Ayers  
Treasurer – Bayer CropScience

Larry Clemens  
The Nature Conservancy

Kevin Coffman  
Monsanto

Nancy DeLong  
DuPont Pioneer

Alan Forbes  
Case IH

Leonard Gianessi  
CropLife Foundation

Nicholas Goeser  
National Corn Growers Association

Rex Martin  
Syngenta America, Inc.

Tim Palmer  
National Association of Conservation Districts

Paul Poister  
Agricem

Ben Pratt  
The Mosaic Company

Jeff Sands  
Agricultural Retailers Association

Charlie Schafer  
Agri Drain Corporation

Terry Tindall  
J. R. Simplot Company

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

John Larson  
National Association of Conservation Districts

Karen A. Scanlon  
Conservation Technology Information Center

GOLD CORPORATE MEMBERS

Agrium Inc.
Bayer CropScience
Case IH
Dow AgroSciences
Monsanto
Syngenta
The Mosaic Company

SILVER CORPORATE MEMBERS

Agri Drain Corporation
DuPont Pioneer
John Deere

BRONZE CORPORATE MEMBERS

Grassland Oregon
Nufarm

BASIC CORPORATE MEMBERS

Agricen
GYPSOIL
Jenner Sales
J. R. Simplot Company
Teter Tech, Inc.
The Andersons, Inc.
Truax Company, Inc.

INSTITUTIONAL GOLD MEMBERS

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Seed Trade Association
CropLife America
The Fertilizer Institute

INSTITUTIONAL BRONZE MEMBERS

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

INSTITUTIONAL BASIC MEMBERS

Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc.
American Society of Agronomy
American Soybean Association
Cotton Incorporated
Department of Environmental System Sciences
Environmental Defense Fund
Illinois Soybean Association
Indiana Corn Marketing Council
Indiana Soybean Alliance
International Plant Nutrition Institute
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation

MISSION

CTIC champions, promotes and provides information on technologies and sustainable, productive and profitable agricultural systems that conserve and enhance soil, water, air and wildlife.

CTIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CTIC MEMBERS

Mid America CropLife Association
Missouri Agribusiness Association
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Corn Growers Association
No-Till Farmer
No-Till on the Plains
Ohio No-till Council
Oregon Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission
Penton Media
Soil and Water Conservation Society
The Nature Conservancy
The Sand County Foundation

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Raymond Bryant
Dr. E.J. Dunphy
Larry Heatherly
Bruce Knight
Jim Lake
Tim Palmer
Richard Robinson
Maurice Russell
Ralph Schnorr
John Vendeland
David Williams

*as of October 9, 2014
Sara Hagmann
Project coordinator
hagmann@ctic.org
Sara Hagmann, who started out as communications intern for CTIC, organizes efforts for CTIC’s newest Conservation Innovation Grant, which focuses on cover crops. She also coordinates the Watershed Implementation and Innovation Network. She graduated from Brigham Young University-Idaho in English and worked as a designer and blogger before coming to CTIC.

Elise Brown
Communications Director
brown@ctic.org
Elise directs media relations and outreach efforts, helps maintain the CTIC website, writes news releases, takes pictures and maintains CTIC’s presence on social networking sites. She holds a bachelor’s degree in agricultural communication from Purdue University and a master’s degree in agricultural and Extension education from Pennsylvania State University.

Karen Scanlon
Executive Director
scanlon@ctic.org
Karen directs staff and consultants; develops policies, procedures and budgets; oversees programs and operations; supports the board of directors; builds and maintains member relations and evaluates programs and services. She earned a master’s degree in natural resources management from The Ohio State University and a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Florida.

Sue Tull
Project Coordinator
tull@ctic.org
Sue assists CTIC staff with projects and communications, focusing on the Indian Creek Watershed Project. She spent most of her career in plant breeding research, primarily in soybeans. She also has worked with two Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Indiana as a district technician and urban conservationist and with the local food bank.

Chad Watts
Project Director
watts@ctic.org
Chad directs on-the-ground CTIC projects in the Midwest and coordinates the crop residue management survey and the annual cover crop survey. Chad works with several partners to implement watershed projects in the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes Basins. He earned his bachelor’s degree in natural resources and environmental sciences from Purdue University.

Sara Hagmann, who started out as communications intern for CTIC, organizes efforts for CTIC’s newest Conservation Innovation Grant, which focuses on cover crops. She also coordinates the Watershed Implementation and Innovation Network. She graduated from Brigham Young University-Idaho in English and worked as a designer and blogger before coming to CTIC.
CTIC CURRENT PROJECTS

LET’S DO THE MATH: ECONOMIC, AGRONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF COVER CROPS

Partners
This project is part of a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) and is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service and CTIC members and partners: National Corn Growers Association, Corn and Soybean Digest, Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer CropScience, The Nature Conservancy, Purdue University, DuPont Pioneer and CropLife Foundation.

Description
The “Economic, Agronomic and Environmental Benefits of Cover Crops” project examines the benefits of cover crop practices to pollinator habitat, nutrient cycling, improvements in soil health and other aspects.

This project covers seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, South Dakota, Minnesota and Michigan. In these states, three farmers have been selected to plant, cumulatively, 1,000 new acres of cover crops. An economic analysis of this acreage will be studied to determine the cost and benefit of cover crops.

The selected farmers vary in their experience with cover crops, ranging from using cover crops for the first time to using them for five or more years. Those who are brand new to cover crops are partnered with an advisor who will help them with seed selection, planting and termination.

Four of the more experienced farmers will conduct a nitrogen rate strip trial, which will allow researchers to estimate the amount of nitrogen secured by cover crops for the following crop. Five of the more experienced farmers will partner with beekeepers. Together with the beekeepers, they will select pollinator-friendly seed mixes and management practices that will benefit beehives placed on their farms. The health of the colonies placed on the farm will be measured and studied throughout the project, in an effort to better understand how cover crops can provide added nutrition for pollinators.

These studies of cover crop cost, nitrogen levels and forage opportunities will in turn be documented and shared with the public via Corn and Soybean Digest and CTIC. Information on the pollinator aspect also will be shared with top beekeeping publications, such as American Bee Journal.

For More Information
Visit www.ctic.org/CoverCropMath or contact Sara Hagmann, CTIC project coordinator, at 765-494-9555 or hagmann@ctic.org.

INDIAN CREEK WATERSHED PROJECT

Partners
Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service and the United States Geological Survey.

Description
CTIC facilitates the Indian Creek Watershed Project, a multi-year effort led by local farmers who demonstrate and test best conservation practices on their land.

This project aims to encourage 50 percent or more of the farmers in the watershed to adopt best practices and conservation systems that encourage nutrient use efficiency on 50 percent or more of the farmed acreage in the watershed. By the end of the project, CTIC and partners will use water quality monitoring and other information to measure changes in water quality that may result from the application of these best practices and conservation systems.

This unique project combines:
• Real farmers implementing conservation systems while still making a living from their operations;
• On-farm research that demonstrates and measures success of new techniques and technology in a local setting, where area farmers can see how their neighbors make it work;
• A support network for area farmers, agribusinesses and technical service providers to learn about conservation technology together;
• Public and private financial and technical assistance resources to aid the farmer in implementation;
• Water quality data gathering to measure water quality changes;
• An outreach strategy to inform the public about the good things farmers do.

For More Information
Visit www.ctic.org/IndianCreek or contact Chad Watts, CTIC project director, at 574-242-0407 or watts@ctic.org.

Thank You
Sponsors provide cash and in-kind donations to ensure the project’s success and demonstrate their conservation products, technologies and equipment. Illinois Environmental Protection Agency assists in monitoring water quality.

TIER ONE
Agrium
Koch Agronomic Services
GROWMARK
Illinois Soybean Association
The Mosaic Company
The Fertilizer Institute

TIER TWO
Case IH
Dow AgroSciences
Illinois Corn Marketing Board
John Deere

TIER THREE
Cropsmith
Partial funding for this project provided by Illinois Environmental Protection Agency through Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.
MONITORING NITRATE IN TILE OUTLET FLOWS FROM INDIAN CREEK FARMS

Partners

Description
In 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service in Illinois granted CTIC funding through a Conservation Innovation Grant to implement a water monitoring project that would measure nitrogen in tile water outflows from a variety of nitrogen cropland treatments. This project isolated drainage tile lines and defined their drainage areas so that cropland treatments could be applied within each area. The cropland treatments are designed to evaluate the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship: using the right fertilizer source at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place. Because the amount of nitrogen lost through the tiles can be measured, the efficiency of nitrogen use by the crop for each different cropland treatment can be analyzed. A list of best practices for nutrient use efficiency can then be developed and promoted to farmers within the area by highlighting results of this project. If the best practices determined by this project are applied at an appropriate scale across the landscape, then there will be less nitrogen in the tile water, which will lead to improved water quality in the receiving streams.

Activities
CTIC planned each treatment and worked with the farmers and consulting agronomists to apply cropland treatments to the various tile drainage areas of the selected farm. Each cropland treatment was isolated to a tile drainage area to facilitate monitoring. A variety of cropland treatments was applied. CTIC installed automated sampling equipment on individual drainage tile lines to collect samples during the times when water flowed. These samples quantified nitrogen amounts flowing through the tile lines after rain events from each treatment area. Also, additional locations for random grab samples were established, representing additional cropland treatment areas. All of the samples were collected by local sampling contractors and sent to the National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, which is operated by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. Samples were processed and evaluated by the lab and results were used by experts to develop the nitrogen use efficiency for each cropland treatment.

This project concluded in August 2014. At this time, CTIC and partners are evaluating the water quality data and comparing those results to the outcomes of the cropland treatments to produce a final report characterizing the nutrient use efficiency for each cropland treatment.

For More Information
Visit www.ctic.org/IndianCreek or contact Chad Watts, CTIC project director, at 574-242-0347 or watts@ctic.org.

WATERSHED IMPLEMENTATION AND INNOVATION NETWORK

Partners
The Nature Conservancy Great Rivers Partnership, The Mosaic Company, The McKnight Foundation and Monsanto

Description
CTIC and The Nature Conservancy’s Great Rivers Partnership established the Great Rivers & Upstream Heroes Watershed Implementation and Innovation Network (WIIN) to strengthen watershed projects throughout the Mississippi River Basin.

The WIIN website is the hub of a new, online community – a network that provides a forum for information sharing, easy access to experts and resources from across the basin and capacity-building webinars. It’s an online place for learning, brainstorming and inspiration.

The project’s goals are:
• Establish regular communication among water projects in the upper and lower Mississippi River Basin;
• Use a communication network to build understanding of agriculture and conservation concerns;
• Share conservation information and ideas with producers, their advisors, conservation partners and policymakers;
• Increase the capacity of watershed project coordinators and advisors to sustain effective projects that address nutrient concerns.

Activities
The Great Rivers & Upstream Heroes WIIN website offers a world of opportunities for information sharing, including:
• A growing searchable database of Mississippi River Basin watershed projects, groups and best management practices;
• Details on members’ accomplishments, challenges, funding avenues and adoption trends;
• Exchange forums where members can initiate conversations, ask questions or even conduct online polls of their peers;
• Resource libraries of user-submitted reports, publications and presentations;
• Online webinars and dialogues;
• Links to research, technology studies, cost/benefit analyses and technical notes on key practices.

For More Information
Visit www.ctic.org/WIIN or contact Sara Hagmann, CTIC project coordinator, at 765-494-9555 or hagmann@ctic.org.
**Cover Crop Survey**

**Partners**
U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, Corn and Soybean Digest

**Description**
In 2012, USDA’s Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program granted CTIC funding to conduct a survey to evaluate cover crop use and learn more about cover crop users’ attitudes surrounding, and practices used with, cover crops. CTIC worked with SARE, social science experts, statisticians, farmers, cover crop experts and members of the Midwest Cover Crops Council to develop a multi-question survey. More than 750 farmers responded. The survey verified the oft-held premise that cover crop use and interest was on the rise.

In 2013, SARE and CTIC once again collaborated to survey producers about cover crops. With more than 2,900 farmers responding, this survey showed again that cover crop use is on the rise. The new survey (information from which is still being evaluated at this time) builds on the 2012 survey by expanding on the knowledge of those farmers using cover crops and providing some new insights from those not using cover crops.

Some significant early findings indicate that, rather than tap into local, state and federal cost-share programs, farmers are planting cover crops on their own. Also, producers rely heavily on the advice and counsel from their local agricultural retailers. The producers strongly believe the ag retailers also have a larger role to play in promoting cover crops and helping farmers adapt their operations. This survey also shows a shift in the reasons for using cover crops, from simply stopping erosion to improving soil health and increasing soil biology. Non-users relate many questions about cover crops as their reasons for not using them on their farms. Many cited lack of time in the fall to plant cover crops, excessive cost of seed and inadequate knowledge of the right species to use as reasons why they were reluctant to use cover crops on their farms. A report is being assembled that expands on these findings and highlights many others.

**For More Information**
Visit www.ctic.org/CoverCrops or contact Chad Watts, CTIC project director, at 574-242-0147 or watts@ctic.org.

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**Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative in Indiana**

**Partners**
Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the 92 local SWCDs, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, State Soil Conservation Board, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Vincennes University Jasper Campus, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Wabash County SWCD, Dubois County SWCD

**Description**
The Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) began in 2009 to promote the use of conservation tillage and cover crops for improved soil health in Indiana. The CCSI promotes a continuous, systematic approach to production agriculture, resulting in improved profitability, soil quality and water quality on Indiana cropland by focusing on continuous no-till/strip-till, cover crops, precision farming and nutrient and pest management. To date, over 250 field days, workshops and other events have been held, reaching more than 15,000 people.

**Activities**
CCSI is organized by four regional hubs. The locations of the hubs represent different soil types, climates, and topography. In each hub, sites on volunteer farmers’ land will serve as scientific test and survey spots. One activity will involve taking measurements on farmers’ current, good cropping system and comparing them with measurements taken after putting in place a newer system. Measurements may also be taken from conventional systems. CTIC will produce and promote economic case studies from producer’s farms and a final publication with data and results from each regional hub.

**For More Information**
Visit ccsin.iaswcd.org or contact Elise Brown, CTIC communications director, at 765-494-9555 or brown@ctic.org.
**SUCCESS STORIES**

**GREAT LAKES COVER CROPS INITIATIVE**

**Partners**

Midwest Cover Crops Council, Ohio No-Till Council, The Ohio State University, Purdue University, Michigan State University, Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative, Midwest Cover Crops Council, Ohio No-Till Council and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**Project Description**

The Great Lakes Cover Crop Initiative (GLCCI), which concluded in December 2013, promoted cover crops and conservation farming systems to crop producers in the Lake Erie, Lake Huron and Lake Michigan watersheds. Along with several university partners, agricultural organizations and government agencies, CTIC launched the initiative in 2010 to broaden the knowledge and adoption of cover crops to improve soil and water quality in the Great Lakes Region.

With this purpose in mind, CTIC and partners set out to plant 15,000 acres of cover crops over the three-year span of the initiative. From 2010 to 2013, producers in the Great Lakes Basin planted over 36,970 acres of cover crops, far above the original goal. The cover crops reduced nitrogen by nearly 73,000 pounds, phosphorus by more than 24,100 pounds and sediment by more than 1,440 tons in the Great Lakes.

Through GLCCI, farmers received one-on-one technical assistance to identify objectives for their cover crop use, select the right cover crops and crop rotations for their operations and plant and terminate cover crops in a timely manner.

**Activities**

To facilitate that sharing of ideas, GLCCI partners hosted several educational opportunities. More than 80 field days reaching 5,500 people demonstrated how farmers were taking steps to improve water quality in the Great Lakes. In November 2013, CTIC hosted the Cover Crop Summit in the Fort Wayne, Indiana, area. The summit featured a tour of several farms where farmers discussed how they incorporate cover crops in their rotations, the equipment used for planting and terminating cover crops and the soil health changes they experienced when using cover crops.

Other activities included two focus group meetings that were held to better understand the views of producers and ag retailers on cover crops. CTIC and partners also provided support to GLCCI producers to attend the 2013 National No-Till Conference, CTIC’s 2013 Conservation in Action Tour and the 2013 Ag Media Summit.

**Thank you**

Bio-Till, KB Seed Solutions, N-Vest Cover Crops, Oregon Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission and Tillage Radish

For More Information

Visit www.ctic.org/GLCCI for more information on the project, as well as stories and videos, featuring producers who participated in GLCCI, the lessons learned through the project and a video about the link between water quality and cover crops. For more information on cover crops, visit www.ctic.org/Cover Crops or contact Chad Watts at 574-242-0147 or watts@ctic.org.

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**Description**

Advocates of conservation agriculture from around the world exchanged insights on using conservation ag to feed a growing world population during a global agricultural conference held June 22–25.

The 6th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (WCCA) in Winnipeg, Manitoba, focused on practical conservation applications and techniques that will help conserve soil, water and other natural resources, as well as provide economic returns. Farmers, researchers, educators, agricultural company representatives, government representatives and others from 47 countries shared ideas on the opportunities and challenges they face in conservation agriculture. Countries represented included Australia, England, France, Argentina, several African countries and more.

Hosted by the Conservation Agriculture Systems Alliance, a network of conservation agriculture organizations across North America, with the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) and Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC) taking the lead, the Congress was the first WCCA to be held on North American soil.

The event included several keynote speakers, discussion panels, networking opportunities and a chance to participate in tours of the Congress, which took attendees to see conservation agriculture in action on nearby farms in Canada and the United States.

**Sessions**

Throughout the conference, attendees were challenged by keynote speakers to implement and educate others on conservation agriculture. David Montgomery, author of Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations, opened the Congress with his “Case for Global Soil Restoration.” He demonstrated how soil could have been the culprit for the downfall of several civilizations throughout history and how rebuilding good soil is essential for society to thrive.

Howard G. Buffett, a farmer, businessman and author of eight books on conservation, wildlife and the human condition, acknowledged that differences among regions means that no one cropping system or practice works everywhere. However, he emphasized, sustainable agriculture is essential for feeding the world’s population.

In his address to close the Congress, Dwayne Beck, manager of the Dakota Lakes Research Farm, challenged participants to use science and reason, not emotion and rumors, when tackling issues related to soil degradation. Beck also encouraged the use of a systems approach with several conservation practices together in harmony to tackle soil degradation problems.

The Next Congress

The 7th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture will take place in Rosario, Argentina, in 2017.

Visit www.wcca.ca for more information on the speakers and activities of the Congress. Presentation and paper abstracts are posted on www.ctic.org/WCCA.

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For More Information

Visit www.wcca.ca for more information on the speakers and activities of the Congress. Presentation and paper abstracts are posted on www.ctic.org/WCCA.
JOIN CTIC

BE A MEMBER. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Make a difference for agriculture and conservation.
As a CTIC member, you can:
- Give valuable time and talents to a small not-for-profit that benefits greatly from the direction, experience and expertise supplied by its diverse membership.
- Provide input and resources for projects where real conservation is being done on the ground and proven strategies are being marketed to improve soil and water quality.
- Participate in committees to chart the future for CTIC and conservation agriculture.
- Collaborate with fellow agriculturists, conservation advocates and public sector leaders to address information needs and advocate for conservation technology.
- Disseminate CTIC information on successful conservation systems to farmers and farm advisors.
- Attend events in support of CTIC and conservation agriculture.
- Help move agricultural conservation forward and engage others in accomplishing the same goal.

All CTIC members benefit from:
- Access to research and information related to conservation agriculture.
- National recognition for support of agricultural conservation.
- Networking opportunities with agricultural and conservation advocates.
- Customized projects and materials promoting conservation agriculture.
- Interaction with technical professionals and policy makers at state and national levels.

Options
Join our national public/private partnership at the basic membership level that fits you best – Individual, Institutional or Corporate. For additional benefits and recognition, increase your contribution. Each level includes additional benefits through Gold, Silver and Bronze.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS AND BENEFITS

Corporate Membership

GOLD – $8,500 + BASIC CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
You receive the Basic benefits, plus:
- Recognition on web page and in social media outlets and feature stories in Conservation in Action Partners
- 10% discount on CTIC products during your annual membership term
- Special recognition at a CTIC Board of Directors meeting
- Two gift memberships at the Individual Silver level
- Recognition at two CTIC events
- Two complimentary registrations to CTIC’s Conservation in Action Tour

SILVER – $3,500 + BASIC CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
You receive the Basic benefits, plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlets
- 10% discount on CTIC products
- Special recognition at a CTIC Board of Directors meeting
- Two gift memberships at the Individual Silver level
- Recognition at two CTIC events

BRONZE – $1,000 + BASIC CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
You receive the Basic benefits, plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlets
- 10% discount on CTIC products
- Special recognition at a CTIC Board of Directors meeting
- Two gift memberships at the Individual Silver level

BASIC-1: $6,500 - Gross revenue greater than $500 million
BASIC-2: $2,000 - Gross revenue greater than $100 million and less than $500 million
BASIC-3: $1,000 - Gross revenue greater than $50 million and less than $100 million
BASIC-4: $500 - Gross revenue less than $50 million

BASIC CORPORATE BENEFITS
- One-year subscription to Conservation in Action Partners and Member Mail e-newsletter
- Access to Crop Residue Management Survey data from 1989 to 2004 through CTIC website
- Recognition on CTIC’s website
MEMBERSHIP LEVELS AND BENEFITS

Institutional

GOLD — $1,000 + BASIC INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlets
- 10% discount on CTIC products during your annual membership term
- Special recognition at a CTIC board of directors meeting

SILVER — $750 + BASIC INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlets
- 10% discount on CTIC products during your annual membership term

BRONZE — $500 + BASIC INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlets
- Access to Crop Residue Management Survey data from 1989 to 2004

Individual

GOLD INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS — $500
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlet
- Free conservation agriculture book or other product from CTIC’s online store
- Box of CTIC notecards featuring conservation in agriculture

SILVER INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS — $250
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition in Conservation in Action Partners, web page and social media outlet
- Access to Crop Residue Management Survey data from 1989 to 2004

BRONZE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS — $100
You receive the basic benefits below plus:
- Recognition on CTICs web site
- One-year subscription to Conservation in Action Partners and Member Mail e-newsletters

BASIC INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS — $50
- Recognition on CTIC’s web site
- One-year subscription to Conservation in Action Partners and Member Mail e-newsletters

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name:
Company/Organization:
Address:
Address:
City: State: Zip:

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
- Gold Corporate Member Basic* plus $8,500+
- Silver Corporate Member Basic* plus $3,500
- Bronze Corporate Member Basic* plus $1,000
- Basic-1: $6,500 - Gross revenue greater than $50 million
- Basic-2: $2,000 - Gross revenue greater than $100 million and less than $500 million
- Basic-3: $1,000 - Gross revenue greater than $50 million and less than $100 million
- Basic-4: $500 - Gross revenue less than $50 million

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP
- Gold Institutional Member Basic* plus $1,000 +
- Silver Institutional Member Basic* plus $750
- Bronze Institutional Member Basic* plus $250 - Regional, state or local organizations

METHOD OF PAYMENT
Please check one of the following:
- A check is enclosed, payable to CTIC
- Credit Card ( ) Visa ( ) MC ( ) American Express
Card #: Exp. date:
Signature:
THANK YOU

CTIC thanks all sponsors of the 2014 Conservation in Action Tour. We appreciate your support and value your contributions to make this event a valuable and enjoyable experience.

TOUR LEADER
The Mosaic Company

EVENING SOCIAL
John Deere

PAST TOUR HOST TRAVEL
Syngenta

EVENING DINNER
Bayer CropScience
Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida
Wedgworth’s Inc.

TOUR STOP: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE EA
The Mosaic Company
The Nature Conservancy

TOUR STOP: RESEARCH AND APPLICATION
Agrium

LUNCH
Soil Health Partnership
Monsanto

TOUR BUS
Case IH
DuPont Pioneer

TOUR NOTEBOOK
The Fertilizer Institute

TOUR TOTE
National Association of Conservation Districts

TOUR T-SHIRTS
Agricultural Retailers Association
Case IH
CropLife America
DuPont Pioneer
J.R. Simplot Company

WATER BOTTLES
J. R. Simplot Company

CERTIFIED CROP ADVISOR MAILING
Agricultural Retailers Association
The Andersons, Inc.

LIP BALM
Sand County Foundation

PAST TOUR HOST SPONSORSHIP

Each year, CTIC invites the farm hosts from the past two Conservation in Action Tours to join us on the tour with travel expenses paid. This year, Syngenta supported the following individuals, listed with the location and year of the tour they hosted:

Trey Cooke – Mississippi, 2012
Terry and Judy Bachtold – Illinois, 2013
Mike and Teresa Trainor – Illinois, 2013

We thank Syngenta for sponsoring these conservation-minded individuals in their travels to Florida.

PHOTO CREDITS:
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University of Florida, Everglades Research and Education Center
Carol Warren
Speaker photos provided
4R Advocate Spotlight: 
Jones Potato Farm 
Parrish, Florida

“So many times we get stuck in a rut and repeat the same programs year after year. The 4R Program spurs us into really thinking about fertility programs and to reevaluate how we are managing them. As a result, growers may just end up becoming a little more profitable and an even better steward of the land.”

- Dennis Coleman, Crop Advisor 
Past 4R Advocate Winner

“4R program ideals have been at the core of my fertility program for years. Adapting my fertilizer programs based on crop needs, weather and raw material prices has enabled Jones Potato Farm to maximize production while keeping costs in check.”

- Alan Jones, Grower 
Past 4R Advocate Winner

4R Advocate Program
Now accepting nominations. For program details and information on the 4Rs, visit www.nutrientstewardship.org.