

ACHIEVING WIDESPREAD SOIL HEALTH ADOPTION IN THE NJ HIGHLANDS



Laura Tessieri, Associate Director
North Jersey RC&D



NORTH JERSEY
RC&D
Resource Conservation & Development

3 MAIN POINTS:

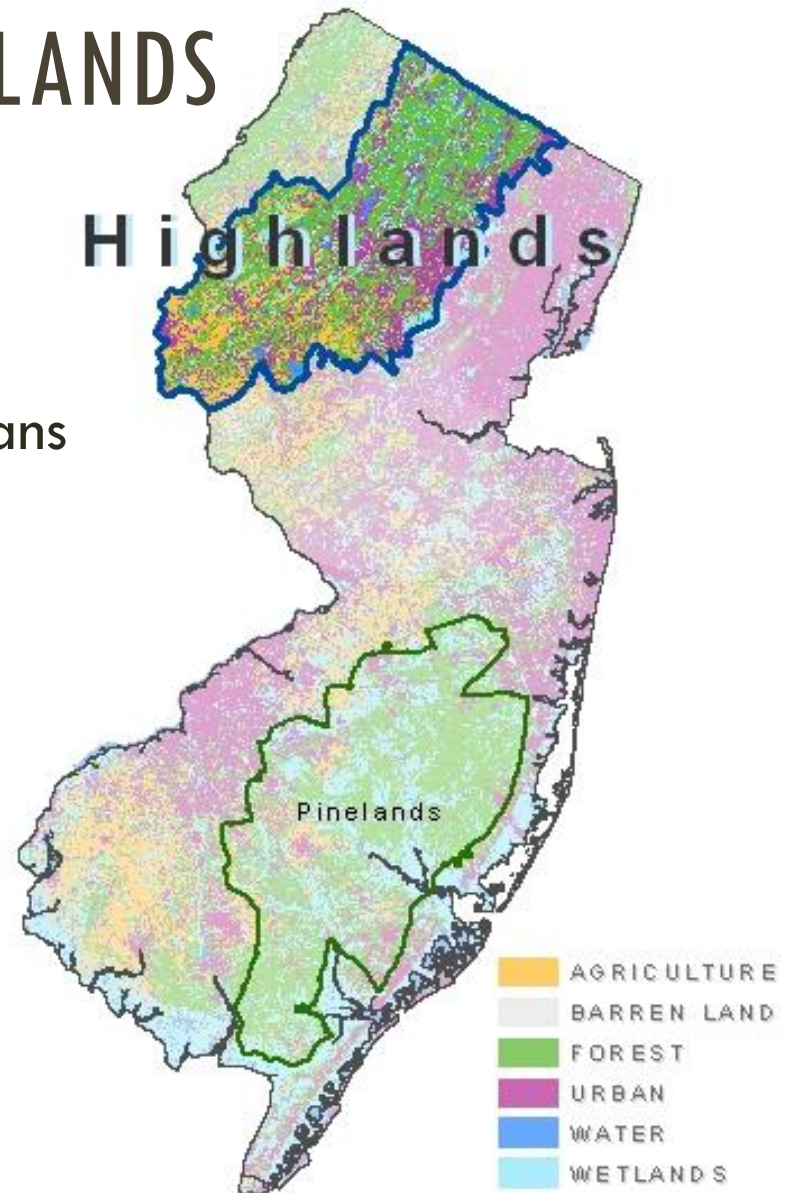
- Practices **MUST** make economic sense
- Producers need tools and information
- Partnerships are essential

ABOUT NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS

Types of Agricultural Producers:

- ✓ Conventional - typical corn/soybeans
- ✓ Livestock
- ✓ Dairy
- ✓ Vegetable
- ✓ Vineyards/Orchards
- ✓ Equine

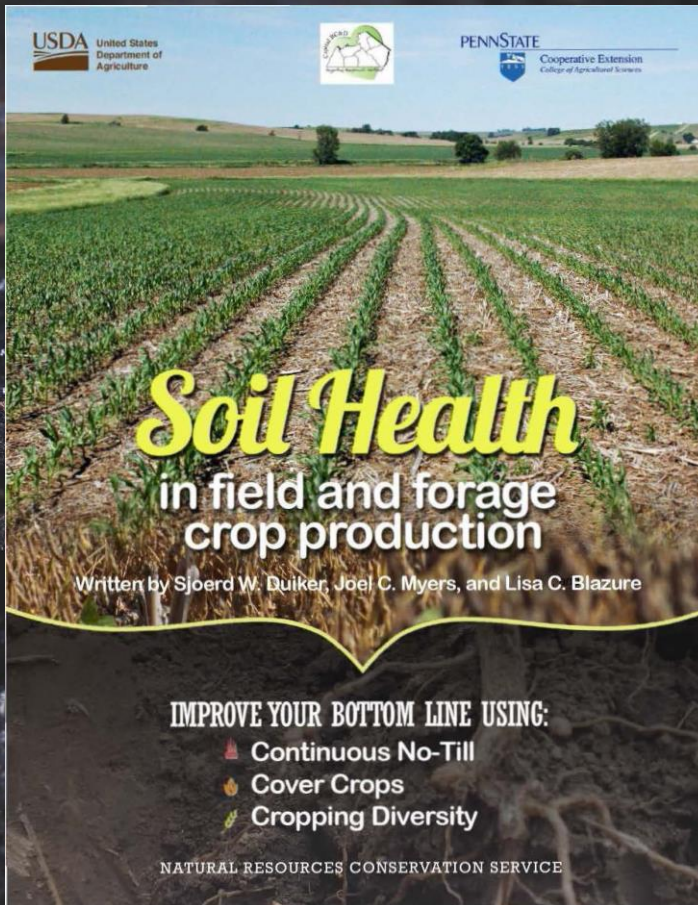
= a diversified landscape.



**FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES
TO BE TRULY SUSTAINABLE,
THEY HAVE TO ALSO BE ECONOMICAL.**



LINK BETWEEN SOIL HEALTH AND PROFITS



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

SOIL HEALTH

PENNSTATE Cooperative Extension College of Agricultural Sciences

Soil Health in field and forage crop production

Written by Sjoerd W. Duiker, Joel C. Myers, and Lisa C. Blazure

IMPROVE YOUR BOTTOM LINE USING:

- 🌱 Continuous No-Till
- 🌱 Cover Crops
- 🌱 Cropping Diversity

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



SOIL HEALTH IMPACTS FARM PROFITS

↑ Organic Matter



- Stores and provide Nitrogen
- Promotes aeration and infiltration
- Greater ability to hold nutrients
- Increased water holding capacity



Increased Yield

SOIL HEALTH IMPACTS FARM PROFITS

↓
Compaction



- Improves soil tilth
- Promotes aeration and infiltration
- Increased water holding capacity
- Deeper root penetration



Increased Yield

**NONETHELESS...
CONSERVATION PRACTICE ADOPTION
CAN BE SLOW**



WHY:

- Producers don't know how
- Producers aren't motivated to start
- Producers don't have appropriate technical assistance
- Practices require a large initial financial investment



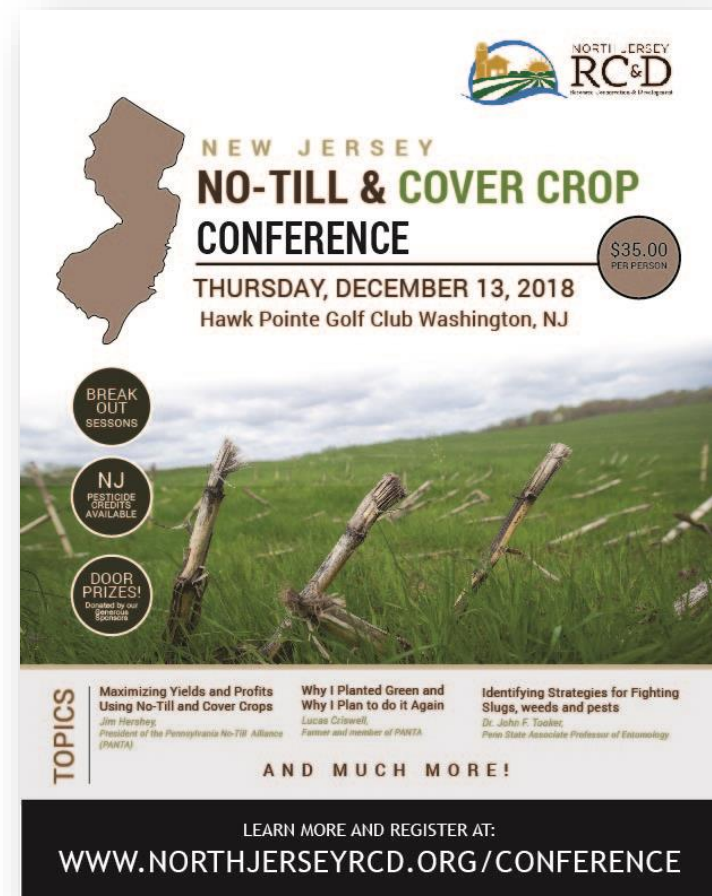
MECHANISMS TO IMPROVE CONSERVATION ADOPTION

- Education to Encourage
- Making Starting Easy
- Gateway Practices
- Make Conservation Profitable

EDUCATION TO ENCOURAGE NO-TILL AND COVER CROP CONFERENCE

Increase awareness
of how soil health
impacts farm profits

*Focus on farmer to farmer
led conversations to help
farmers succeed*



The poster features a brown outline of New Jersey on the left. The background is a photograph of a green field with several wooden posts sticking out of the ground. In the top right corner, there is a logo for 'NORTH JERSEY RC&D' with a small graphic of a house and a field. The main title 'NEW JERSEY NO-TILL & COVER CROP CONFERENCE' is prominently displayed in the center. Below the title, the date and location are listed. A circular badge on the right indicates the cost. Three circular icons on the left list key features: 'BREAK OUT SESSIONS', 'NJ PESTICIDE CREDITS AVAILABLE', and 'DOOR PRIZES!'. A 'TOPICS' section at the bottom lists three topics with speaker names and affiliations. A black banner at the very bottom contains the registration information.

NORTH JERSEY RC&D
Soil Conservation & Development

**NEW JERSEY
NO-TILL & COVER CROP
CONFERENCE**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018
Hawk Pointe Golf Club Washington, NJ

**\$35.00
PER PERSON**

**BREAK
OUT
SESSIONS**

**NJ
PESTICIDE
CREDITS
AVAILABLE**

**DOOR
PRIZES!**
Dorcas by our
Sponsors &
Society

TOPICS

**Maximizing Yields and Profits
Using No-Till and Cover Crops**
Jim Hershey,
President of the Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance
(PANTA)

**Why I Planted Green and
Why I Plan to do it Again**
Lucas Criswell,
Farmer and member of PANTA

**Identifying Strategies for Fighting
Slugs, weeds and pests**
Dr. John F. Tooker,
Penn State Associate Professor of Entomology

AND MUCH MORE!

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT:
WWW.NORTHJERSEYRCD.ORG/CONFERENCE

EDUCATION TO ENCOURAGE EXPERIMENTATION TO ANSWER COMMON QUESTIONS

- Farmers voiced concern about cover crop application methods.
- NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) funding to determine best means of applying cover crop.



MAKE STARTING EASY

AERIAL SEEDING COVER CROP

- Little to no cost
- 3 year sign-up
- Over 3,000 acres seeded

Positive results will encourage continued adoption



GATEWAY PRACTICES

FREE SOIL AND MANURE TESTING

- Low cost service
- Report to producer
- Encourages knowledge of soil organic matter

Creates opportunity for in-depth farm conservation



GATEWAY PRACTICES CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOL

■ Questions by type of production

■ Captures farm goals and concerns

Creates opportunity for in-depth farm conservation


FARM GOALS

What are your priorities or goals?

Do you plan to expand or reduce your operation?

What changes or improvements would you like to make in the near term? Long term?

What are some challenges on your farm?



MAKE CONSERVATION PROFITABLE

RIVER FRIENDLY FARM CERTIFICATION

Certifications motivate farmers to alter their operations by providing market-based incentives.



River Friendly CERTIFIED

PROMOTING SOIL HEALTH
River Friendly Farms build soil organic matter and protect topsoil from erosion



PROTECTING WATER QUALITY
River Friendly farms implement practices that significantly limit water pollution by excess nutrients, bacteria, and pesticides.



CREATING WILDLIFE HABITAT
By creating diverse stream-side habitats and natural pest suppression techniques, River Friendly Farms ensure a healthy ecosystem for native fish, birds, and insects.



MAKE CONSERVATION PROFITABLE

RIVER FRIENDLY FARM CERTIFICATION



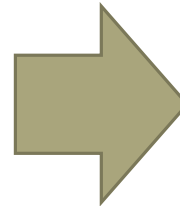
Certification Requirements:

1. Soil Health Management
2. Stream Corridor Protection
3. Nutrient Management
4. Pest Management
5. Irrigation Water Management

MAKE CONSERVATION PROFITABLE
RIVER FRIENDLY FARM CERTIFICATION



Increase
profitability
through
increased
sales



Increase BMP
implementation
as farmers
strive for
certification

3 MAIN POINTS:

- Practices **MUST** make economic sense
- Producers need tools and information
- **Partnerships are essential**

PARTNERSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL

HOW A SMALL NON-PROFIT CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT

- Partner Employees with NRCS
- Shared Staff with Affiliated Non-Profit
- Delaware River Watershed Initiative

CONCLUSION

To implement conservation practices on a larger scale, organizations must emphasize to producers how conservation practices are in their best interest.

- Education to Encourage
- Make Starting Easy
- Gateway Practices
- Make Conservation Profitable

Questions?

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