



Diverse Coalition Releases Vision Statement for Cover Crops and Soil Health

WASHINGTON, D.C.—October 17, 2014—A diverse coalition of more than 40 national organizations, including commodity groups, agriculture associations, conservation and environmental NGOs, and major agriculture corporations, have joined together in “A Common Vision Statement on Cover Crops and Soil Health.” The statement, submitted earlier today to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), American Soybean Association (ASA) and National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), provides encouragement for further work on cover crops and soil health through relevant USDA agencies and major program areas.

“Cover crops and soil health have been capturing the attention and involvement of farmers and organizations all across the U.S.,” stated the groups. “These practices represent a systems-based approach to enhancing crop production and profitability, protection of soil and water resources, and land stewardship.”

In the vision statement, the coalition recognized the importance of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service national soil health campaign, and many other soil-health partnerships across the nation. It also highlighted a number of ways in which the use of cover crops and other soil-health conservation practices is paying off across the nation, including: increased crop yields, better resilience to weather extremes, less soil erosion, improved nutrient management, greater carbon sequestration, and enhanced cropping system diversity.

“Ultimately, support and innovation from decision makers in both the public and private sector is needed to ensure that this great opportunity to transform American farming reaches its full potential, benefiting as many farmers, communities, and families as possible,” stated the groups. “We recommend that USDA seek to broadly support cover crops and soil health, including through a comprehensive strategic plan with clear, outcome-based goals for research, education, extension, data collection, financial and technical assistance, credit, risk management, and other relevant policies and programs. “

To view the full statement and the list of signing organizations, [click here](#).

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