Session Descriptions 2026

Title: Cultivating Mental Health in Agriculture

Professional Development CEU Area: Interpersonal skills and conflict resolution

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Farmers and ranchers face unique stressors -- unpredictable weather, financial pressures, isolation, and long hours. This session explores practical tools to support mental health and well-being in agricultural communities. Learn how to recognize signs of mental health strain, start supportive conversations, and when to connect to available resources. Together, we'll discuss how to reduce stigma, strengthen resilience, and support the culture of care across the ag industry.

Speaker(s): Janell Stang and Chad Childs

Speaker Background(s): Chad Childs is a parent and stepparent of five incredible children and the partner of an incredible leader. He is the Prevention Initiatives Manager for the Community Engagement Institute. Chad is a Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist with over 20 years of management and leadership experience in the mental and behavioral healthcare field and the fields of higher education, child welfare, and prevention. He is a current board member of the Kansas Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Kansas Mental Health Coalition, and the Kansas Balance of State Continuum of Care (Steering Committee). Chad is a member of the Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Coalition, Sedgwick County CCBHC Advisory Board, and Chair of the Kansas Zero Suicide Advisory Council, Chairperson of the Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council Kansas Citizen's Committee and Secretary of the Tobacco Subcommittee. Chad's career focus has been on providing direct services and facilitating larger systems changes with the goal of helping people to both overcome barriers to their well-being and using their strengths and resources to improve their quality of life. Janell Stang, LMSW Janell Stang is a Community Program Specialist on the Prevention team at the Community Engagement Institute (CEI) at Wichita State University. In this role, she supports statewide efforts to prevent substance misuse and suicide through the Kansas Prevention Collaborative (KPC). Janell leads the planning of several KPC initiatives, including the annual Kansas Prevention Conference. Janell currently serves as Chair of the Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) State Subcommittee under the Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council and is a member of the Kansas Governor's Challenge to prevent suicide among the SMVF population. She is also actively involved in local suicide prevention efforts as a member of the Sedgwick County Suicide

Prevention Coalition and serves as Secretary on the Kansas Suicide Prevention Coalition. Janell holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and a Master of Social Work, both from Newman University in Wichita, Kansas. She is a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) with a strong passion for prevention, equity, and community well-being.

Session 2

Title: Biology and Nutrient cycling in an arid environment

Nutrient CEU Area: Nutrient management in cropping systems

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Over the past 10 years, they have used manure, ag lime, and compost. Going through the last drought, they decided there had to be a better way. This is the 4th year of almost fully eliminating synthetic fertilizer on all acres. They are focusing on using compost extracts, fulvic and humic acids, sugars, and other biological soil amendments while doing test plots to see if we are missing something. So far, by testing and visual observations, they haven't seen the need for nitrogen. They have maintained yield and improved plant health and resilience, and are proving to be more nutrient-dense grain.

Speaker(s): Colby and Jared Stegman

Speaker Background(s): Colby is a 5th-generation farmer on my dad's side and a 6th on my mom's. His wife and 3 sons farm with his parents. Their operation consists of roughly 4,000 dryland acres. The rotation consists of wheat and milo, as well as cover crops. The operation is just east of Dodge City, Kansas. They have been no-till for 25 years, but figured out that alone is not enough. Over the past 10 years, they have used manure, ag lime, and compost. Going through the last drought, they decided there had to be a better way. This is the 4th year of almost fully eliminating synthetic fertilizer on all acres. They are focusing on using compost extracts, fulvic and humic acids, sugars, and other biological soil amendments while doing test plots to see if we are missing something. So far, by testing and visually, we haven't seen the need for nitrogen yet while maintaining yield and improving plant health and resilience, and proving to be more nutrient-dense grain. Jared Stegman is currently an agronomy consultant for Teva Ag. He was previously an independent crop consultant at Crop Quest for almost 15 years, where he consulted on corn, soybean, wheat, milo, alfalfa, canola, and edible bean fields. While helping growers transition to regenerative practices, he is also helping Colby Stegman transition his farm. He currently resides in Clearwater, Kansas, with his wife and 2 sons.

Session 3

Title: **Land Sovereignty**

Professional Development CEU Area: Leadership skills, meeting facilitation

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Land sovereignty and thoughts for the future of land management and how it relates to society and the changes. Freya is a lawyer and will share insight into things that are changing in agricultural world. In 2024 Freya travelled to the UK, China, India and US as a Churchill Fellow, researching best practice in soil and landscape regulation to implement into Australia's legal and policy frameworks. From this research, she realized that the biggest barrier to protecting soils is the lack of understanding and awareness of the critical role they play in the functioning of our planet.

Speaker(s): **Freya Mulvey**

Speaker Background(s): Freya Mulvey is an author, environmental lawyer and soil advocate. Freya is a 2023 Winston Churchill Trust Fellow and a 2017 recipient of the Australian Lawyers Alliance Civil Justice Award for her work on the Montara Oil Spill Class Action. Freya advocates for soil and landscape regulation and agricultural reform; essential and complementary climate mitigation tools. Freya is a co-author of Ground Breaking: Soil Security and Climate Change, and host of the SOIL podcast. Freya's strength is in being able to explain complex issues in plain and pragmatic terms.

Session 4

Title: **Mulvey-Keynote Small Water Cycle**

Soil CEU Area: Soil biological considerations

CEUs requested: 1.5

Summary: Philip will share data that shows the main cause of climate fluctuations is the small water cycle. Land has become hydrophobic and repels water, thus moving rain and evaporation out of the local water cycles. This is turn is contributing to regional climate problems such at heat waves, droughts, floods, and increased erratic weather. At the turn of the 20th century, a 3,000km fence was built across the Australian continent to prevent the spread of invasive rabbits into cropland in Western Australia. Decades later, scientists and farmers began to notice an unusual phenomenon: the weather was completely

different on either side of the fence. They will highlight points in their book; Ground Breaking Soil Security and Climate Change. It is this story that begins the book Freya Mulvey co-wrote with her soil scientist father Phil Mulvey: Ground Breaking: Soil Security and Climate Change (2021). It tells of how, by degrading soils, modern agriculture has contributed to heat waves, dust and fire across the planet. It also shares the solutions: managing land use, sequestering carbon in soil, reducing bare ground and championing policy and law reform.

Speaker(s): Philip and Freya Mulvey

Speaker Background(s): Philip Mulvey has 45 years experience in restoring degraded land to productive use. He is the founder of several companies operating in the US and Australia including: an agriculture software company, a regenerative agriculture company, and environmental consulting and contracting companies. Phil has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture majoring in Soil Science from the University of Sydney and a Masters of Hydrogeology from The University of New South Wales. With that background, Phil's skill is being able to assess landscape in terms of production, resilience and hydration. He's passionate about landscape repair and the role of regenerative agriculture to achieve this. His focus in recent years is teaching the techniques to keep water in, on and under the landscape. He has co-authored with his daughter Freya a book on the impact soil degradation through agriculture has on landscape and climate and is currently working on a book for farmers transitioning to regenerative agriculture.

Session 5

Title: **Agri-preneur**: **Succession-from the next generation**

Professional Development CEU Area: Interpersonal skills and conflict resolution

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Jay will share how he moved home and worked his way into having his own business on the family ranch. He shares the ups and downs of their succession planning and being part of the ranch operation with his father and 2 brothers. This session will bring excitement to bring the next generation back into a functioning operation. It will share real-life conflict resolution techniques and stacking enterprises for a family operation.

Speaker(s): Jay Doan: A Legacy of Innovation, Stewardship, & Succession at Black Leg Ranch

Speaker Background(s): Jay Doan, a fifth-generation rancher and agri-preneur, carries forward a rich legacy at the historic Black Leg Ranch in McKenzie, North Dakota. Established in 1882, the ranch has transcended traditional cattle ranching to become a dynamic, value-added agricultural enterprise. Today, it encompasses a hunting outfit, an international agri-tourism operation, a wedding and events venue, a craft brewery, and the latest venture in commercial meats and upcycled grains. Welcoming guests from all 50 states and over 65 countries, Jay and his family are deeply passionate about promoting agriculture and the importance of regenerative practices. Spanning 20,000 acres in central North Dakota, the ranch partners with farmers on 3,000 acres of cropland to facilitate guided crop rotations, no-till practices, and cover crops, while providing residue for cattle forage. On approximately 17,000 acres of grazing land, meticulous attention to soil health enhances forage production and biodiversity, reduces erosion, and lowers costs. The ranch's intensive grazing program, with over 65 miles of high-tensile fence creating 90 pastures, allows cattle to graze in a manner reminiscent of historic bison herds. Over the past decade, the Doan family has received the inaugural Aldo Leopold Conservation Award and was named National winners of the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. Jay currently serves on the North Dakota Rural Development Council, appointed by Governor Doug Burgum, to develop rural communities through leadership collaboration across the state. He has also been a member of the Central Grasslands REC Advisory Board (CGREC) and is a proud graduate of Rural Leadership North Dakota, which cultivates effective leaders to strengthen rural communities. Before returning to North Dakota, Jay worked as a financial advisor and in marketing/brand development for Hensley & Company and Anheuser-Busch, Inc. His time in Arizona and Texas broadened his horizons and deepened his appreciation for his heritage. Jay's vision for the ranch extends beyond his immediate work. He aims to establish a legacy of innovative stewardship and seamless succession, ensuring that Black Leg Ranch remains a model of regenerative agriculture and community engagement for generations to come. Jay resides in Bismarck with his wife Kari and their two children, Jamisyn (10) and Jayston (8).

Session 6

Title: Jason Rowntree Keynote

Soil CEU Area: Soil erosion control

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Grazing and soil health considerations. How can technology, science, and data lead the next revolution? Dr. Rowntree will share his work throughout the country and the benefits of ecosystem function to managing land for ecosystem services and the overall health of the land. This will include both perennial and annual forages and systems.

Speaker(s): Dr. Jason Rowntree

Speaker Background(s): Jason Rowntree is a professor of Animal Science at Michigan State University where he holds the Charles Stewart Mott Distinguished Professorship for Sustainable Agriculture. Rowntree's research focuses on identifying the metrics and management that reflect ecological improvement in grazingland and other agricultural systems. Rowntree has given presentations and conducted research throughout the United States, Australian, Canada, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Africa and New Zealand. Rowntree has led or been a co-investigator on $27.75 million in funding to conduct food system research. Jason is also the co-director of the Center for Regenerative Agriculture at Michigan State University. His work in beef sustainability was featured in the movies Sacred Cow and Roots So Deep. His work has been highlighted in The Washington Post, New York Times, Forbes and many other popular media publications.

Session 7

Title: Dr. Rowntree Breakout

Soil CEU Area: Soil biological considerations

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Jason will share in-depth discussions about new technologies and date to better help producers improve grazing efficiencies like collars, adaptive multi-paddock grazing, and more.

Speaker(s): Dr. Jason Rowntree

Speaker Background(s): Jason Rowntree is a professor of Animal Science at Michigan State University where he holds the Charles Stewart Mott Distinguished Professorship for Sustainable Agriculture. Rowntree's research focuses on identifying the metrics and management that reflect ecological improvement in grazingland and other agricultural systems. Rowntree has given presentations and conducted research throughout the United

States, Australian, Canada, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Africa and New Zealand. Rowntree has led or been a co-investigator on $27.75 million in funding to conduct food system research. Jason is also the co-director of the Center for Regenerative Agriculture at Michigan State University. His work in beef sustainability was featured in the movies Sacred Cow and Roots So Deep. His work has been highlighted in The Washington Post, New York Times, Forbes and many other popular media publications.

Session 8

Title: Cropping Considerations in an Arid Environment

Nutrient CEU Area: Nutrient management in cropping systems

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Poole's soil has been worked for over a century," he says. In places, erosion had swept it to bare bedrock: "The more we tilled, the more it blew away." It was Poole's third and final attempt at farming. The ranch hadn't been big enough to fully support him along with his dad and uncle, but by 2011, Poole was ready to take over. Farming had always been in his blood. Inspired by other pioneering farmers, Poole began exploring a brave new approach to food and farming: regenerative agriculture. There's no single definition of regenerative agriculture, but broadly recognized principles include limiting soil disturbance, using diverse crops and cover cropping, maintaining growing roots for as long as possible, integrating livestock into fields, and enhancing the health of people and the food system.

Speaker(s): Douglas Poole and Michael Nestor

Speaker Background(s): Douglas Poole, with his wife and son, operates Double P Ranch in the 6"-9" rain shadow of the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. The ranch includes 15,000 acres of wheat, canola, triticale, millet, sorghum, sunflowers, and oats. In furrow industrialized fertilizers have not been used in 6 years, instead replaced with vermicast extracts. All other fertilization is strictly foliar. The ranch includes 1,000-1,500 acres of cover crops with cattle integration. The ranch also includes 20,000 acres of native range where grazing methods have been improved using virtual fence.

Michael Nestor, CCA is a Regenerative Ag Agronomist, husband, father, grandparent, systems innovator, and small business owner. He is a certified crop advisor and a soil food web graduate. His company, Sterling Valley Agronomy LLC operates across multiple states and is growing. He enjoys learning about operations and helping create systems that help to adopt a regenerative process for your farm.

He has had the privilege to work with farms at all stages of their journey and financial goals. One of the goals at Sterling Valley Agronomy LLC is to help integrate natural processes back into operations on farms. By doing this process, Mike has helped growers set yield production records in winter canola and irrigated winter wheat. Regenerative systems done correctly can provide a better financial return on investment. Mike believes everything starts with the seed! That's why the company's slogan is "Where Fungi's and Seeds Get Together!!!" Mike says, "Oh yeah, we have fun here too!"

Session 9

Title: Rodney Rulon Economic considerations in Row Crop

Professional Development CEU Area: Business planning, budgeting, and financial analysis

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Rodney will share a row-crop farmer's perspective of diversity in the rotation and how the economics look in that operation. With tough times facing farmers of low commodity prices, high inputs, and market volatility, Rodney will share practical steps to survive and eventually thrive once markets rebound.

Speaker(s): Rodney Rulon

Speaker Background(s): As a member or Rulon Enterprises LLC in Arcadia, IN, Rodney Rulon has been farming full time since graduation from Purdue University with a B.S. in 1994 and M.S. in 1996 in Agricultural Systems Management. Rulon Enterprises is a fourth-generation family farming operation which includes Ken, Roy, Rodney, Nick and Neal Rulon as members. The farming business includes more than 6,000 acres of no-till corn and soybeans in central Indiana as well as a farrow-to-finish hog operation (Bryant Premium Pork LLC), a Beck’s Hybrids seed dealership, The Peer Network, a subscription based ag discussion group, custom drainage design and installation business and several other custom services. Since 1989, the Rulons have been pursuing their no-till system as a business model and a responsibility, with a family history of conservation and a belief in its inherent value environmentally, societally and agronomically. In the late 1990s after achieving what they found to be a good economic production system using no-till combined with intensive input management using GIS and 1 acre grids, the Rulons began to pursue next level soil health by incorporating cover crops and soil amendments such as gypsum into their system. After many years of experimenting with this system the Rulons are now seeing the benefits to a highly sustainable production system which produces excellent yields, minimal environmental impact and improved resilience in their soils.

Rodney currently serves as chairman of the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District board. He also is active in several other groups including his church, Boy Scouts, and helps with their youth sporting clays team and as a 4-H project leader. Rulon Enterprises received the No-Till Farmer Magazine/Syngenta's National No-Till Innovator Award in 2011 based on Rodney's efforts focused on improving soil health and the economics of conservation production practices and the ASA Regional and National Conservation Legacy Award in 2012. In addition the Rulons have won many state and local awards and continue to work hard to promote no-till and soil conservation as a sustainable and responsible cropping system.

Session 10

Title: Drexel Atkisson Grazing Considerations

Soil CEU Area: Effect of physical, chemical and biological properties of soils on management practices

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Drexel will share the historical context of land degradation in his home area. He works with producers throughout Missouri and is also a producer in his spare time. He will share tools and practical steps to regenerate and rebuild soils with a systems approach to soil health and agriculture.

Speaker(s): Drexel Atkisson

Speaker Background(s): Area Soil Health Specialist with USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service Drexel Atkisson is an Area Soil Health Specialist with USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. Drexel Atkisson spent his early years growing up on a beef farm in Southwest Missouri. Being raised in the cow/calf business provided a strong foundation in agriculture. After receiving a degree in Agronomy from what is now Missouri State University, he started a career in conservation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Continuing the tradition, he and his wife have raised five children on the farm. The cattle operation has continued to grow and has provided an excellent opportunity to put into practice many of the conservation concepts encouraged by the NRCS. A 30-year career with NRCS has been very rewarding, helping people make good conservation decisions for their own farms is dear to his heart. As a Soil Health Specialist, much of his time is spent educating others about soil health and helping them adopt sound conservation practices that address the soil health principles. Drexel has a deep passion for soil health, sustainability and the regeneration of our working lands. He is very eager to

help anyone with a conservation mind and believes soil health improvement is the path to preserving the way of life he grew up in.

Session 11

Title: Liz Haney Soil

Soil CEU Area: Effect of physical, chemical and biological properties of soils on management practices

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Liz will share data ton how to combine traditional and newer soil test technologies to help save producers money. This is an ongoing point of emphasis in building nutrient management plans, especially with volatile markets and low commodity prices. She will share tools to reduce, cycle nutrients, and strategically use these tests to sway the fertility needle in your favor.

Speaker(s): Liz Haney

Speaker Background(s): Liz is a soil and ecosystem scientist with experience in soil testing and analyses, carbon and conservation practice modeling, and is the co-developer of the Haney soil health test. Liz's purpose, drive and passion are helping to improve producer profitability, environmental sustainability, and human health through regenerative practices and soil health. Throughout her career she has developed an expansive network of scientists, thought leaders, consultants, farmers and ranchers within the sustainable agriculture space. Liz loves nothing more than creating community and is skilled at coordinating and conducting educational events, workshops and conferences bringing together today's leading innovators in regenerative agriculture. Liz is also a co-founder of Regen Mills and Heritage Ground with Russell. Liz is proud to also be a part of farmer owned Farmers Reserve Distillery.

Session 12

Title: Shaffer Ridgeway Chasing what you were made to do-Group

Professional Development CEU Area: Interpersonal skills and conflict resolution

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Shaffer will share his story. He is actively involved in production agriculture. By day, he may be a district conservationist making recommendations to producers about conservation practices and programs, but he felt called to have a stake in the game. Shaffer

rented land and began implementing his own soil health system and business. He has a thriving business called Southern Goods that supplies fresh produce to local residents.

Speaker(s): Shaffer Ridgeway

Speaker Background(s): Southern Goods, Waterloo, Iowa Shaffer Ridgeway is a conservationist with the USDA who has dedicated his career to helping farmers care for their land and build healthy, sustainable operations. A native of Alabama, he grew up on a small cow/calf operation owned by his father and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Agribusiness from Alabama A&M University. In 2000, Ridgeway moved to Iowa to work as a Soil Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), where he has served in several roles over the years, including his current role as District Conservationist in Black Hawk County. After many years advising farmers on conservation practices, he began applying those same principles outside of work. In 2019, Shaffer and his wife, Madelyn, founded Southern Goods LLC, a produce farm focused on bringing Southern vegetables to Midwestern tables. The Ridgeways market their products through the Waterloo Urban Farmers Market and the We Arose Co-op, and their operation also includes feeding cattle that are directly marketed to local consumers. Over the last several years, Ridgeway has become a strong advocate for regenerative agriculture and for teaching producers the importance of following the five soil health principles. He also serves on the Board of Directors for Practical Farmers of Iowa and the Iowa Farmers Union, championing opportunities for small farmers. Shaffer and Madelyn live in Waterloo, Iowa, with their three sons — Solomon, Max, and Jacoby.

Session 13

Title: The Riches are in the Niches

Crop CEU Area: Emerging technologies in alternative production systems

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Shaffer will share his techniques to planning and planting a market garden. He will share hands on planning tools and considerations of organizing planting and harvesting concerns. He will share real life experiences of how his acreage of market garden has changed over the years. He has simplified the business model and this has rejuvenated him in the operation.

Speaker(s): Shaffer Ridgeway

Speaker Background(s): Southern Goods, Waterloo, Iowa Shaffer Ridgeway is a conservationist with the USDA who has dedicated his career to helping farmers care for their land and build healthy, sustainable operations. A native of Alabama, he grew up on a

small cow/calf operation owned by his father and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Agribusiness from Alabama A&M University. In 2000, Ridgeway moved to Iowa to work as a Soil Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), where he has served in several roles over the years, including his current role as District Conservationist in Black Hawk County. After many years advising farmers on conservation practices, he began applying those same principles outside of work. In 2019, Shaffer and his wife, Madelyn, founded Southern Goods LLC, a produce farm focused on bringing Southern vegetables to Midwestern tables. The Ridgeways market their products through the Waterloo Urban Farmers Market and the We Arose Co-op, and their operation also includes feeding cattle that are directly marketed to local consumers. Over the last several years, Ridgeway has become a strong advocate for regenerative agriculture and for teaching producers the importance of following the five soil health principles. He also serves on the Board of Directors for Practical Farmers of Iowa and the Iowa Farmers Union, championing opportunities for small farmers. Shaffer and Madelyn live in Waterloo, Iowa, with their three sons — Solomon, Max, and Jacoby.

Session 14

Title: Phillip Mulvey Breakout

Soil CEU Area: Effect of physical, chemical and biological properties of soils on management practices

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Mulvey will share studies from Australia on how diversity and grazing are building resilience in cropland acres. There is also growing interest in increased resilience through multi-species intercropping. He will share real life data and case studies of coming published papers.

Speaker(s): Philip Mulvey

Speaker Background(s): Philip Mulvey has 45 years experience in restoring degraded land to productive use. He is the founder of several companies operating in the US and Australia including: an agriculture software company, a regenerative agriculture company, and environmental consulting and contracting companies. Phil has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture majoring in Soil Science from the University of Sydney and a Masters of Hydrogeology from The University of New South Wales. With that background, Phil's skill is being able to assess landscape in terms of production, resilience and hydration. He's passionate about landscape repair and the role of regenerative agriculture to achieve this. His focus in recent years is teaching the techniques to keep water in, on and under the landscape. He has co-authored with his daughter Freya a book on the impact soil

degradation through agriculture has on landscape and climate and is currently working on a book for farmers transitioning to regenerative agriculture.

Session 15

Title: Rainfall Simulator

Integrated Pest CEU Area:

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: The rainfall simulator is a hands-on demonstration that resonated with new attendees. It shows soil and how it interacts with water in real-time fashion. Aggregate stability, erosion, infiltration, slake test, and other observation-oriented tests will be seen firsthand.

Speaker(s): Candy Thomas

Speaker Background(s): Candy Thomas, Salina, Kansas, is a retired regional soil health specialist in the Kansas state office of USDA-NRCS. Serving in an advisory role on the board of directors since 2013, Candy believes NRCS goals align closely with those of No-till on the Plains in helping people help the land. NRCS has developed many tools and standards to help farmers improve soil health and soil conservation.

Session 16

Title: Grazing Considerations Panel

Soil CEU Area: Effect of physical, chemical and biological properties of soils on management practices

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: Grazing experts from throughout the country will take part of a moderated panel where they share resources, tools, and information to producers looking to incorporate grazing or to take their grazing operation to the next level.

Date #1: 2026-01-21

Speaker(s): Dr. Jason Rowntree, Drexel Atkisson, Jay Doan

Speaker Background(s): Dr. Jason Rowntree is a professor of Animal Science at Michigan State University where he holds the Charles Stewart Mott Distinguished Professorship for Sustainable Agriculture. Rowntree's research focuses on identifying the metrics and management that reflect ecological improvement in grazing land and other agricultural systems. Rowntree has given presentations and conducted research throughout the United

States, Australian, Canada, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Africa and New Zealand. Rowntree has led or been a co-investigator on $27.75 million in funding to conduct food system research. Jason is also the co-director of the Center for Regenerative Agriculture at Michigan State University. His work in beef sustainability was featured in the movies Sacred Cow and Roots So Deep. His work has been highlighted in The Washington Post, New York Times, Forbes and many other popular media publications. Drexel Atkisson is an Area Soil Health Specialist with USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. Drexel Atkisson spent his early years growing up on a beef farm in Southwest Missouri. Being raised in the cow/calf business provided a strong foundation in agriculture. After receiving a degree in Agronomy from what is now Missouri State University, he started a career in conservation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Continuing the tradition, he and his wife have raised five children on the farm. The cattle operation has continued to grow and has provided an excellent opportunity to put into practice many of the conservation concepts encouraged by the NRCS. A 30-year career with NRCS has been very rewarding, helping people make good conservation decisions for their own farms is dear to his heart. As a Soil Health Specialist, much of his time is spent educating others about soil health and helping them adopt sound conservation practices that address the soil health principles. Drexel has a deep passion for soil health, sustainability and the regeneration of our working lands. He is very eager to help anyone with a conservation mind and believes soil health improvement is the path to preserving the way of life he grew up in. Jay Doan: A Legacy of Innovation, Stewardship, & Succession at Black Leg Ranch Jay Doan, a fifth-generation rancher and agri-preneur, carries forward a rich legacy at the historic Black Leg Ranch in McKenzie, North Dakota. Established in 1882, the ranch has transcended traditional cattle ranching to become a dynamic, value-added agricultural enterprise. Today, it encompasses a hunting outfit, an international agri-tourism operation, a wedding and events venue, a craft brewery, and the latest venture in commercial meats and upcycled grains. Welcoming guests from all 50 states and over 65 countries, Jay and his family are deeply passionate about promoting agriculture and the importance of regenerative practices. Spanning 20,000 acres in central North Dakota, the ranch partners with farmers on 3,000 acres of cropland to facilitate guided crop rotations, no-till practices, and cover crops, while providing residue for cattle forage. On approximately 17,000 acres of grazing land, meticulous attention to soil health enhances forage production and biodiversity, reduces erosion, and lowers costs. The ranch's intensive grazing program, with over 65 miles of high-tensile fence creating 90 pastures, allows cattle to graze in a manner reminiscent of historic bison herds. Over the past decade, the Doan family has received the inaugural Aldo Leopold Conservation Award and was named National winners of the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. Jay currently serves on the North Dakota Rural Development Council, appointed by Governor Doug Burgum, to develop rural communities through

leadership collaboration across the state. He has also been a member of the Central Grasslands REC Advisory Board (CGREC) and is a proud graduate of Rural Leadership North Dakota, which cultivates effective leaders to strengthen rural communities. Before returning to North Dakota, Jay worked as a financial advisor and in marketing/brand development for Hensley & Company and Anheuser-Busch, Inc. His time in Arizona and Texas broadened his horizons and deepened his appreciation for his heritage. Jay's vision for the ranch extends beyond his immediate work. He aims to establish a legacy of innovative stewardship and seamless succession, ensuring that Black Leg Ranch remains a model of regenerative agriculture and community engagement for generations to come. Jay resides in Bismarck with his wife Kari and their two children, Jamisyn (10) and Jayston (8).

Session 17

Title: Crops and Nutrient Considerations Panel

Soil CEU Area: Effect of physical, chemical and biological properties of soils on management practices

CEUs requested: 1

Summary: This panel will include farmers who are working to eliminate purchased fertility and make their own on the farm. They will share how using different inputs at strategic times during crop production can maintain or increase yield without any additional fertility.

Speaker(s): Colby and Jared Stegman, Douglas Poole and Michael Nestor, Liz Haney

Speaker Background(s): Colby is a 5th-generation farmer on my dad's side and a 6th on my mom's. His wife and 3 sons farm with his parents. Their operation consists of roughly 4,000 dryland acres. The rotation consists of wheat and milo, as well as cover crops. The operation is just east of Dodge City, Kansas. They have been no-till for 25 years, but figured out that alone is not enough. Over the past 10 years, they have used manure, ag lime, and compost. Going through the last drought, they decided there had to be a better way. This is the 4th year of almost fully eliminating synthetic fertilizer on all acres. They are focusing on using compost extracts, fulvic and humic acids, sugars, and other biological soil amendments while doing test plots to see if we are missing something. So far, by testing and visually, we haven't seen the need for nitrogen yet while maintaining yield and improving plant health and resilience, and proving to be more nutrient-dense grain. Jared Stegman is currently an agronomy consultant for Teva Ag. He was previously an independent crop consultant at Crop Quest for almost 15 years, where he consulted on

corn, soybean, wheat, milo, alfalfa, canola, and edible bean fields. While helping growers transition to regenerative practices, he is also helping Colby Stegman transition his farm. He currently resides in Clearwater, Kansas, with his wife and 2 sons. My soil had been worked for over a century," he says. In places, erosion had swept it to bare bedrock: "The more we tilled, the more it blew away." It was Poole's third and final attempt at farming. The ranch hadn't been big enough to fully support him along with his dad and uncle, but by 2011, Poole was ready to take over. Farming had always been in his blood. Inspired by other pioneering farmers, Poole began exploring a brave new approach to food and farming: regenerative agriculture. There's no single definition of regenerative agriculture, but broadly recognized principles include limiting soil disturbance, using diverse crops and cover cropping, maintaining growing roots for as long as possible, integrating livestock into fields, and enhancing the health of people and the food system. Michael Nestor is an agronomist from Washington state who is working with farmers to be more sustainable and meet their regenerative goals of reducing inputs. Liz is a soil and ecosystem scientist with experience in soil testing and analyses, carbon and conservation practice modeling, and is the co-developer of the Haney soil health test. Liz's purpose, drive and passion are helping to improve producer profitability, environmental sustainability, and human health through regenerative practices and soil health. Throughout her career she has developed an expansive network of scientists, thought leaders, consultants, farmers and ranchers within the sustainable agriculture space. Liz loves nothing more than creating community and is skilled at coordinating and conducting educational events, workshops and conferences bringing together today's leading innovators in regenerative agriculture. Liz is also a co-founder of Regen Mills and Heritage Ground with Russell. Liz is proud to also be a part of farmer owned Farmers Reserve Distillery.