

2017 Soil & Water Conservation Week Talking Points

Use these talking points to submit a letter to the editor or call your local radio, newspaper, environmental/commodity publication or news station and schedule a time to talk to them about Soil and Water Conservation during the week of April 30 – May 7, 2017!

- This year Iowa celebrates its 76th Soil & Water Conservation Week. The celebration is part of the nationally celebrated Soil and Water Stewardship Week. The theme is “Healthy Soils Are Full of Life!”.



- Insert interesting facts about soil health and soil microbiology. For example:
 - It can take over 500 years to create an inch of topsoil.
 - Healthy soil holds more water and one percent of organic matter in the top six inches of soil holds approximately 20,000 gallons of water per acre.
 - Many widely used antibiotics originated in the soil. Penicillin for example, which comes from Penicillium, a fungus found in the soil.
 - There are more living organisms in a handful of soil than there are people on earth.
 - Earthworms are an important part of healthy soils. A typical earthworm population can easily consume 2 tons of dry matter per acre per year, partly digesting and mixing it into the soil. Earthworm casts have higher available nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and calcium contents than surrounding soil.
 - Iowa has some of the best soil in the world because of our glacial history, perennial prairie plants and climate.
- Every week is Soil & Water Conservation Week for the state of Iowa’s 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Soil and Water Conservation Districts were established after the Dust Bowl to ensure sustainable agriculture and clean water.

- Insert Information about your Soil & Water Conservation District. For example:
 - Tell a personal story about soil and water conservation.
 - Indicate the acres of conservation practices installed by the district over the last year.
 - Promote your district's fundraiser.
 - Invite people to attend an upcoming district activity, field day, etc.
 - Encourage listeners to visit the office and nominate a farmer for an award!
 - The Van Wall Group of Perry will be donating up to 12 months or 200 hours use of a John Deere 6E Series Utility Tractor for the **Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP) Farmer of the Year** again this year!
 - The **Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award** celebrates its sixth year in 2017! A joint effort of the Governor, Lt. Governor, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and Iowa Department of Natural Resources to recognize the exemplary voluntary efforts of Iowa's farmers as environmental leaders committed to healthy soils and improved water quality.
 - Ask people to participate in a district program, poster contest, scholarships, awards, etc.
 - Provide your District's contact information so people can find out more!