



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

California Farmers Will Share Lessons Learned in Improving Soil Health During Virtual Cotton Farmer Showcase

Davis, CA, February 9, 2021 – The Soil Health Institute (SHI), the non-profit charged with safeguarding and enhancing the vitality and productivity of soils, is hosting the latest episode in its virtually held *Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton Farmer Showcase* series at 1 p.m. (CST) on February 23.

In this fourth episode of the event, "Improving Soil Health in a Dry Climate, Spotlight on California," Dr. Jeff Mitchell, cropping systems specialist at the University of California, Davis, will be joined by cotton farmers John Teixeira, of Firebaugh, CA, Cannon Michael, Los Banos, CA and Gary Martin of Mendota, CA, along with Cary Crum, a California Ag Solutions crop consultant, Marcia Gibbs, with Sustainable Cotton Project, and Rebecca Burgess with Fibershed. These panelists will discuss the unique financial, regulatory and agronomic challenges of implementing soil health systems for cotton in the San Joaquin Valley; the specific practices local farmers have been implementing and with what outcomes; and the progress being made on pricing negotiations that are underway with buyers to reward American cotton farmers for their good production practices.

"For us to continue to produce organic cotton profitably, we've had to change our old ways of doing things," said Teixeira. "Now we use cover crops to help rebuild organic matter, carbon levels and dynamic microbial communities in the soil where we grow."

In addition to cover crops, Crum advises silage growers to use no-till practices to improve their soil health. "My clients who stopped tilling their fields are seeing less erosion of their topsoil during the winter rains," said Crum. "I'm excited to share what we've learned along our soil health journey to help growers overcome these agricultural challenges."

The *Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton Farmer Showcase* is a series of eight online discussions with U.S. cotton farmers and soil health experts that started livestreaming on February 2, 2021 at 1 p.m. (CST), and runs every Tuesday through March 23, 2021. Cotton producers, consultants and other interested parties may register one time to attend all eight episodes. Registration is free but required to participate.

To register for the *Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton Farmer Showcase* and learn more about other episodes in the event, visit <https://soilhealthinstitute.org/soil-health-training/farmer-showcase/>.

This event is part of the *Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton* project, which provides farmer-focused education and training events delivered by Soil Health Institute scientists, partnering with local soil health technical specialists and farmer mentors who have implemented successful soil health management systems. The project aims to increase the adoption of soil health management systems among cotton producers while documenting environmental and economic benefits.

University of California's Conservation Agriculture Systems Innovation Center is sponsoring the February 23 showcase in conjunction with the Soil Health Institute.

Healthy Soils for Sustainable Cotton is supported through the generosity of the [Wrangler](#)[®] brand, the [VF Corporation Foundation](#) and the [Walmart Foundation](#). For more information about the project, visit <https://soilhealthinstitute.org/soil-health-training/>.

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About the Soil Health Institute

The Soil Health Institute (www.soilhealthinstitute.org) is a non-profit whose mission is to safeguard and enhance the vitality and productivity of soil through scientific research and advancement. The Institute works with its many stakeholders to identify gaps in research and adoption; develop strategies, networks and funding to address those gaps; and ensure beneficial impact of those investments to agriculture, the environment and society.

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