Southeast, USDA-NRCS Partner On Technologies To Protect Soil, Water Resources

GORDONVILLE, MO.

Southeast Missouri State University and the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) signed an agreement to collaborate on placing the latest plant and soil technologies at the David M. Barton Agriculture Research Center to safeguard soil and water resources and promote farm profitability.

The five-year partnership will showcase these advancements to agriculture producers across Missouri and Arkansas.

Dr. Mike Aide, chair of the Department of Agriculture at Southeast Missouri State University, said, "From today forward, agriculture producers across this two-state region will have an opportunity to obtain hands-on experience with emerging agriculture technologies and see if they are right for their enterprises. Our goal is to create farms where nutrient runoff is zero."

Dr. Ronald Rosati, Southeast provost, and J.R. Flores, state conservationist with USDA-NRCS, signed the agreement today at Southeast's David M. Barton Agriculture Research Center.

Ongoing projects at the Barton Center include managing irrigation systems to reduce nutrient loss, growing cover crops to improve soil fertility, using riparian buffers for watershed health, using bioreactors to treat on-farm water and studying nutrient uptake in corn and soybeans.

Southeast Department of Agriculture officials agreed to support the professional outreach of conservation efforts by offering NRCS staff in Missouri and adjacent states privileged access to Southeast's David M. Barton Agriculture Research Center, Charles Nemanick Alternative Agriculture Gardens, Biofuels/biomass Research Center at Southeast's Sikeston campus and classroom/laboratory facilities at the three regional campuses.

In exchange, NRCS has agreed to maintain an open dialogue with Southeast staff regarding projects and workshop activities that may help promote awareness of the David M. Barton Agriculture Research Center and the Charles Nemanick Alternative Agriculture Gardens as facilities having appropriate emerging technologies and development of soil and water best management practices. Δ