

December 2021



President's Message



I can't believe 2021 is coming to an end. This will be my last year of writing a year-end message for UACD. It has been a great privilege to represent you and I look forward to one more year of seeing you at zone meetings, the annual convention and other paces throughout the state.

The past two years have been some of the most challenging years ever in the agriculture business with the drought, low prices and COVID. Most of us have lost friends and neighbors during this pandemic.

Just when I thought things couldn't get worse, we have had a very dry fall and things don't look good for the next while. We have all appreciated the help we have received from the state and federal programs through the past few years.

We have worked closely with Commissioner Butters and our state legislators to have district funding restored to \$11,000 per year.

My message this year is to become more involved.

- Take time to visit with and become better acquainted with our NRCS friends. They can help us improve the land and water in our area.
- Take time to get involved with other state programs. The Grazing Improvement Program (GIP) and the Watershed Restoration Initiative Program (WRI) have been instrumental in improving thousands of acres of Utah's rangelands.
- Take time to become acquainted with the Utah Department of Agriculture staff. Your resource coordinators are critical to your success as a district. We have a great commissioner and a new Conservation Director, Jim Bowcutt. Jim has been a friend to the conservation districts for many years and will do an excellent job.

You are all important and can have a positive impact in your area. I thank you for your service, keep up the good work. You deserve more credit for the work you do; it doesn't hurt to blow your own horn once in a while.

At this Christmastime, take the time to enjoy your family and count your blessings. It wouldn't hurt to pray for rain and snow either. As the new year approaches, I hope times improve, the snow falls and the pandemic subsides. Set some goals in your district and work hard to get conservation on the ground.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

-Allen K. Henrie

President, Utah Association of Conservation Districts

Upcoming Events

- Legislative Session Starts - January 18
- NACD Annual Conference - February 12-16
- Zone meetings begin in January.
- UWUA Conference - March 15-17, St. George



Happenings

UACD Annual Convention

Thank you to all who attended this year's annual convention. There were several excellent presentations given. Many interesting topics were covered and we hope you learned something new. Congratulations to the award recipients. Tony Richards received the Connecting Conservation Award, Monte Twitchell; UACD President's Award, Kim Evans-William B Righy Award, Jay Olsen - Graham Quate Award

(from UDAF), Jeff Middleton and Fred Oswald - The Forest Steward Achievement Award (from FFSL)

UACD in an agreement with NRCS hired a Partnership Director. This position, accepted by Joshua Palmer, will work with our various conservation partner organizations to coordinate training of conservation employees and other conservation efforts throughout the State. We welcome Josh to the team!

CSP Workshop

For those districts who would like to host a CSP workshop, call Jon Hardman to schedule one. It is easy to work the presentation into your crop school, pesticide training, or other meetings or tours you may already be planning. Funding for these will end June 30.

Please make an effort to participate in your upcoming zone and LWG meetings!

UACD with partners Utah Department of Ag & Food and USU Extension, received a \$1.7 million, 5 years grant to do on-farm soil health trials on 12 sites. USHN project utilizes on-farm trail sites focused on diverse farming systems throughout the state to provide for demonstration, outreach, education and research on soil health systems specific to our state and region. We leverage partnerships with federal and state agencies, USU extension, agriculture industry / crop advisors, to create cross training, educational materials and focused support for field advisors / planners, that will in turn provide greater support and communication for producers in the state.

USHN goal is to increase adoption of soil health best practices to promote climate resiliency in Utah where adoption rates are among the lowest in the nation. Needs assessments will be conducted at the establishment of each on-farm trial.

Land owners will receive incentive payments to participate from \$3,000 - \$6,000 per year of participation. Applications to participate will be available in January.

Soil Health in the West Conference and Beginners Workshop

February 15th-17th 2022

Dixie Center St. George UT

Soil health, cover crops, no-till, regenerative agriculture, composting, livestock integration, and nutrient cycling. These are just a few terms floating around agriculture nowadays. With operating costs increasing, markets becoming more volatile, droughts, floods and an assortment of unpredictable weather, farmers and ranchers are looking for ways to ease the burden on their operations. How can the principles of soil health help?

The event includes an optional Beginner Workshop on Feb 15th, for those just starting to get into soil health. This workshop will include a field day with multiple hands on demonstrations to learn about the principles of soil health, how to evaluate the health of your soil, and how to get started into soil health practices like no-till and cover crops.

Following the Beginners Workshop, the Conference will include two days of learning opportunities with presentations from national experts, as well as farmers and ranchers from around the region. The workshops will include 12 unique breakout sessions, a vendor fair and networking social, and lunches will be provided with registration. Presentations will cover a broad range of soil health topics and will include farmers and ranchers from around the region as they share their personal journeys down the soil health road. Producer presentations will include dairy operations, dryland farms, irrigated row crop systems, cow calf operations, small scale and specialty crops, and more.

Visit www.utahsoilhealth.org to register and make hotel reservations.

