

CELEBRATE IOWA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION WEEK

April 27 – May 4, 2014



SOIL ... don't treat it like dirt!



Soil health and water quality are equally important in the growth of food, plants and habitat for animals.



"Soil can disappear without conservation and so can farms. With conservation, my farm and any farm can do well and be handed down better than it was found."

-Rick Juchems, Butler County Farmer

Attend a local event!

To find a local event, visit www.iowaagriculture.gov/conservationweek.asp



Iowa's prairie, made up of grasses, flowers and roots, reach up to 20 feet deep and make the soils ideal for growing crops.



No-till, where 70% or more of the soil surface is covered with crop residue after planting, reduces soil erosion and surface runoff.



Native turf lawns, with roots down 3 to 6 ft, help break up compaction, increase pore space in the soil profile and build up the organic matter content of the soil.



Bioretention cells filter pollutants out of dirty runoff. They cool and slowly release runoff that otherwise would go directly to streams without any treatment.



After harvest, soil is bare and exposed to wind and rain for 6 months of the year. Not working the land and planting cover crops protects the soil.

Iowa has at least 11,000 different soils that make up some of the richest, most productive land in the world.

It can take 500 years for 1" of topsoil to form. Topsoil is the top layer of soil and the most important layer to growing plants.

Having healthy soils will be key to feeding the 9 billion people expected to populate the world by 2050.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt said: "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself."



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