



### Soil Health Workshop Set For Beresford

VERMILLION — A Soil Health Workshop is open to the public and will be held March 20 at the Southeast SD Experiment Farm, 29974 University Rd, Beresford.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service representing Clay, Minnehaha, Turner and Union County, along with the Southeast SD Experiment Farm, are hosting this special event where you can get the latest scoop on what's critical about soil health now.

The morning's agenda will feature remarks from soil health professionals, including remarks from an area farmer on how to nurture healthy, high-performing, productive soils. You'll hear about how healthy soils can reduce production costs, improve profits, maintain or improve soil quality and retain soil moisture in periods of drought.

The day starts at 9:30 a.m. with registration and runs through noon. For more information, e-mail [jeffrey.loof@sd.usda.gov](mailto:jeffrey.loof@sd.usda.gov) or [laurie.fritsch@sd.usda.gov](mailto:laurie.fritsch@sd.usda.gov) or call (605) 624-7060, Ext. 3 or (605)356-3308, Ext. 3.

### Meeting On Ranch Drought Risk March 27

BROOKINGS — Cattle producers are in the planning phase for the upcoming grazing season. In order to successfully plan for this season, they must take an inventory of the forage available and be able to estimate the grazing potential of pastures, says Kalyn Waters, SDSU Extension Cow/Calf Field Specialist.

"Now is the time to start the planning process. Having the right tools and knowledge to do so, will make a world of difference. Attending the drought management webinars will put those tools in producers' hands," Waters said.

In an effort to proactively aid cattle producers, SDSU Extension Livestock staff partnered with University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension to host a five-part webinar series to help those raising cattle prepare for the possibility of the drought continuing in 2013.

The one-hour Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch webinar series are being held the last Wednesday of each month, concluding in May. All sessions begin at 9 a.m. MST or 10 a.m. CST and are hosted at SDSU Extension Regional Centers.

Each session will include current drought updates, forecasts and presentations about specific information or tools. Following each webinar, SDSU Extension State and Field Specialists will be available for a question and answer session via video conference. They will also present additional information relevant to South Dakota producers.

During the March 27 webinar, Pat Reece, former University of Nebraska-Lincoln Range Management Specialist, will discuss the Cumulative Forage Reduction Index. Reece is currently the owner of and a senior consultant at Prairie Montane Enterprises. He has developed the CFR Index in response to needs of ranchers he has worked with to develop drought response plans. Reece points out that when animal numbers need to be reduced because of drought, delayed marketing can have substantial financial consequences, often costing typical ranches tens of thousands of dollars.

Following Reece's presentation, South Dakota attendees will also have an opportunity to hear from rancher, Bill Slovek of Philip. Slovek is a progressive rancher and current board member for the South Dakota Grassland Coalition. Slovek's ranch lies in the southwestern portion of the state in a region heavily impacted by the drought. His perspective on drought decision making, herd management and hidden opportunities will allow other producers an opportunity to consider their own options.

Scheduled dates and topics for the series include:

- March 27 — The New Cumulative Forage Reduction (CFR) Index: Assessing Drought Impacts and Planning a Grazing Strategy;
- April 24 — Using a Drought Calculator to Assist Stocking Decisions; and
- May 29 — Economic Factors to Weigh in Making Decisions during Drought.

For more information please visit [www.igrow.org](http://www.igrow.org), contact the nearest SDSU Extension Regional Center, or call Kalyn Waters, SDSU Cow/Calf Field Specialist at 605-842-1267 or Pete Bauman, SDSU Range Field Specialist at 605-882-5140.

### Farmers Should Scout For Japanese Beetles

BROOKINGS — The Japanese beetle is becoming an increasingly prevalent pest in the North Central region of the United States and can occasionally be an economic problem in soybean or corn fields, said Kelley J. Tilmon, SDSU Extension Soybean Entomologist.

For clarification purposes, Tilmon wants to ensure that readers do not confuse the Japanese beetle with the Asian ladybeetle, which is often called Japanese beetle by mistake.

"Asian ladybeetles are familiar to many as the yellow or orange ladybeetles that come into houses in the fall and are beneficial predators of crop pests," she said.

Japanese beetles are large - up to a half inch long - and metallic green and copper colored. Adults feed on the leaves and flowers of more than 300 plant species. They are an introduced pest first found in the United States in 1916 in New Jersey.

"Only in recent years have they become common in the Midwest," Tilmon said.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture monitors for this pest with traps, and it has been detected in several South Dakota counties particularly in the southeastern part of the state.

Japanese beetle immatures are soil-dwelling white grubs which feed on roots and organic material and are often pests of turfgrass. The adults typically feed between the veins of leaves causing a characteristic lacy or "skeletonized" damage. They feed on a wide range of plants including various ornamentals, fruits and vegetables.

Though they are more common in horticultural settings, they will also feed in field crops, including corn and soybeans. In soybean fields they cause defoliation of leaves which reduces photosynthesis, and in corn they feed on silks, reducing kernel set.

Though still a minor field crop pest, Japanese beetle outbreaks are becoming more common in Illinois and Iowa soybeans and corn. So far, in South Dakota, most reported problems with Japanese beetles have been in gardens near urban centers, but as it becomes more common in South Dakota, producers should also be on the lookout for this insect in crops.

Japanese beetles have one generation per year and overwinter as grubs in the soil. Adults emerge from the soil in late May or early June and can be found through early September. Feeding damage is most noticeable in July and August.

"Japanese beetle feeding damage in soybean may be confused with bean leaf beetle feeding because both make holes in the leaves," Tilmon said.

The difference she says is that bean leaf beetle feeding produces more smooth-edged "shot-holes" in the leaves, whereas Japanese beetles create a lacy patchwork of holes between the veins.

"Also, unlike bean leaf beetles, Japanese beetles are not shy or skittish and are usually found easily at the scene of their crimes. Damage often appears first at field edges," she said.

Soybeans can bear a fair amount of defoliation before yield is lost, so modest numbers of Japanese beetles and other defoliators can be tolerated.

Tilmon says to consider management when total defoliation from all leaf-feeding pests reaches 40 percent in pre-bloom, 20 percent during bloom and pod-fill and 35 percent from pod-fill to harvest. Consider the whole plant when making this decision, not just upper leaves. If beetles are aggregated in border rows, consider an edge treatment first.

A number of pesticides are labeled for Japanese beetle control in soybean. See the SDSU Extension 2013 South Dakota Soybean Crop Protection Guide for examples available on iGrow: <http://igrow.org/product/2013-soybean-crop-protection-guide/>.

# Playing It Safer

## How Will Food Safety Modernization Act Impact On-Farm Sales?

BY RITA BRHEL  
P&D Correspondent

William Powers mostly raises a garden for his own family's needs, but on occasion, he offers some of his extra vegetables to the neighbors when they pick up their weekly order of farm-fresh chicken eggs from his acreage north of Lincoln, Neb.

Now with a new food safety law going into effect, small farmers like him may be wondering how their plans will need to change for selling off the farm and through farmers markets.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), passed by Congress in 2010 and signed into law by President Barack Obama in January 2011, is to be the first major overhaul of how food safety is handled in the United States since the 1930s, explains Ariane Lotti, assistant policy director for the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition in Washington, D.C. And it does address small farms that direct market to consumers.

While no farmer, no matter the size of his operation, likes the idea of more government oversight, Lotti assures that the FSMA was written on four principles that take this into account:

1. Everyone has a role to ensure safe food, from the farmer to the consumer;
2. The focus of food safety should be on the highest risk in the food supply chain;
3. One size does not fit all when it comes to ensuring food safety;
4. Any food safety plan must be based on scientific evidence.

While the FSMA does include regulations for small farms serving local and regional markets, it strives to complement the National Organic Program's existing regulations, Lotti says. It also endeavors to minimize paperwork for producers as well as rules for low-risk processing of value-added products.

"This is a key point for many farmers," Lotti said.

The FSMA will affect vegetable and fruit produce sold directly off farms, but the emphasis is on reducing microbial contamination, she says. There are exemptions to the FSMA: produce rarely consumed raw, produce grown strictly for personal consumption, and farms selling an annual average value of \$25,000 or less. This income threshold excludes backyard gardeners and others with more of a side business or hobby farm.

The FSMA has a tiered nature, so that the more reach a business has in the food supply, the more accountability it has to demonstrate.

"Generally, the larger the buyer, the more they'll demand some sort of assurance of a food safety plan," said Scott Warshawer, food safety coordinator for the National Good Food Network in Arlington, Va., comparing institutions buying produce in bulk such as for



a restaurant or food processor to individual consumers buying directly from a farmer.

For farms selling more than \$25,000 a year of non-exempt produce up to \$500,000 a year, the defining variable switches to how many consumers that farm serves. Regulated farms in this income category are those selling 51 percent or less of its produce directly to consumers within 275 miles of the farm. These farms need to submit documentation of the farm's status as well as provide information on a label or point-of-purchase sign identifying the producer.

"Essentially, the USDA wants to ensure that if there is a food safety risk, it can be traced back to the farm," Lotti said.

While the FSMA seems to be in tune with the different sizes of farms and therefore the varying levels of responsibility to be expected, Lotti says that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration - which is the entity that will roll out the FSMA regulations - does lack knowledge as to how different farming tech-

niques differ from one another and their effect on food safety. There are several dockets open for comment at this time, which will guide the implementation of the FSMA. For example, one of the proposed rules regards the standards for growing, harvesting, packing, and storing produce. It's comments are due by May 16. For dockets related to the FSMA, go to [www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm261689.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm261689.htm).

MCT ILLUSTRATION

Thursday,  
April 18, 2013

Riverfront Event Center, Historic Downtown Yankton  
Doors Open 4:30pm  
Dinner Served 5:00-7:00pm  
Booths Open 4:30-7:00pm  
Speaker 7:30pm at Dakota Theatre

Advance Tickets:  
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