

2020 ProfitProAG Winter Conference

Speaker Biographies

Don Reicosky



Don Reicosky is a retired Soil Scientist from the USDA-ARS, North Central Soil Conservation Research Laboratory, Morris, MN, and adjunct Professor in the Soil, Water and Climate Department, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. He has conducted basic research in soil and water conservation for 42 years with the recent emphasis on carbon cycling, carbon management and tillage impacts on soil carbon. His early research dealt with soil-water-plant-atmosphere relationships, with an emphasis on measuring evapotranspiration, photosynthesis and plant water-status as related to soil water deficits and tillage. Later research focused on environmental quality issues related to tillage and residue management with emphasis on soil carbon management and losses of carbon dioxide following intensive tillage. Research used a canopy gas exchange measurement technique to evaluate short-term tillage-induced CO₂ flux from soil that has enhanced our understanding of soil carbon management. His research on short-term tillage-induced carbon losses after moldboard plowing can help explain the long-term decline in soil carbon associated with intensive cropping and that short-term carbon loss is directly proportional to the volume of soil disturbed in the tillage operation. Research focused on carbon cycling, tillage and residue management with an emphasis on tillage-induced carbon loss and carbon management in systems with biomass removal for bioenergy. The research findings demonstrate environmental quality issues associated with tillage and residue management and have helped emphasize the importance of soil carbon management and use of conservation agriculture or no-till to minimize carbon losses in agricultural production systems. The research has attracted international attention through requests for reprints and scientific presentations at farmer-run No-Till or Direct Seed Associations around the world in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, France, Spain, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Finland, India and Ukraine as well as in the US and Canada. The results suggest a need for improved reduced intensity tillage and seeding methods for enhanced soil carbon management for soil health to improve the soil resource and maintain economic and environmental benefits important to our quality of life and food security.

Wendy Taheri, Ph.D.



A specialist in arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF), Dr. Taheri earned a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, with a minor in plant science, from Indiana University. She studied under Jim Bever, one of the top scientists in the field of AMF ecology. Her graduate research demonstrated that selection for the right AMF communities could increase plant biomass as much as 69%. This earned her first research paper a press release. Realizing the tremendous benefits these organisms could bring to agriculture, she went to work for the USDA as a research microbiologist, examining the microbial health of our nation's croplands where she found a severe decline in beneficial AMF. After completing two term contracts with the USDA, she went on to found the research company TerraNimbus, which is currently developing microbial solutions to aid in restoring our nations soil health.

Dr. Taheri's work has been featured in *John Deere's Furrow*, *The Farm Journal*, *Acres USA*, *Prairie Hearth*, *Corn & Soybean Digest*, and other publications.

Ken Hamilton



Ken Hamilton is the owner and president of Bio Minerals Technologies, Inc based in Logan, Utah. Ken serves as a consultant and supplier of specialty products for many sectors in agriculture including soil minerals, soil biology, plant nutrition and livestock - including poultry, hogs, sheep and cattle. Emphasis is on restoring soil life, vitality and health so that plants grow better, are much more disease resistant, produce higher quality with higher yields. Of major importance is reducing or completely eliminating the need for toxic chemicals in growing crops; thereby, saving the farming operation those major expenses. Improving livestock production involves the use of probiotics and minerals, also the use of high moisture fermented forages.

BMT is constantly researching, testing and developing new methods, new products, and finding better products and methods to continually improve farm and livestock production.

BMT is committed to providing research and education information covering all areas of agriculture. This information is provided as a means to help the producers increase their knowledge and understanding of better agriculture and livestock practices.

Dr. Jim Ladlie



As the founder and president of ProfitProAG, Dr. James S. Ladlie has dedicated his life's work to developing a renewable farming system that will support and keep family farms functional and profitable while producing healthy crops and animals. With a PhD in Crop Science from Michigan State University and over 40 years in the agriculture industry, Dr. Ladlie's foresight, research, knowledge and creative solutions have led to a proven crop management system that produces healthy crops/animals and manages risks while maximizing profits. His program, the Full-Circle Animal, Manure and Soil-Plant System™, teaches balance in all facets for improved animal performance, manure remediation, crop performance and enhanced feed quality.

Utilizing these proven principles of crop and animal production has allowed his customers to achieve healthy, nutritionally-balanced crops for both humans and animals. He encourages growers and livestock producers to step outside of their comfort zone and discover alternative ways of farming for profit, health and enjoyment.

Dennis Klockenga



Dennis is a Crop Management Consultant for ProfitProAG. He provides crop input recommendations including fertility, herbicides, insecticides and tillage decisions for farmers. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agronomy from the University of Illinois and his Master's Degree in Soil Fertility from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. After college, Dennis worked three years in pesticide and soybean breeding research. For the last 13 years, he has worked for ProfitProAG as a Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) for top commodity crop producers. He enjoys on-site field visits with soil and crop evaluations to determine how to improve profits per acre for his clients.

Chris Chodur



Chris Chodur of Northwood, IA, is an Animal and Manure Consultant for ProfitProAG. He majored in Agricultural Management and received his Associate/Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) degree from North Iowa Area Community College in 1993. After graduation, he started his career with NIACC as the Farm Manager/Livestock Herdsman where he managed the daily operations on a swine (farrow-to-finish) and beef cow/calf operation. He worked closely with students and the public with an educational emphasis on animal health, reproduction, genetics, nutrition, selection and facilities. Chris was involved with the implementation of many animal studies and trials for the college and business partners. After 17 years with NIACC, he became the Station Manager/Hog Buyer for Lynch Livestock Inc., in Mason City, IA. In his three years there, he developed many business skills in the buying/sales aspect of the animal food industry. He also established many relationships with swine producers across Iowa and Minnesota. He continues to share his educational knowledge with former students, colleagues and friends. He has a huge passion for the show pig industry and still judges a few county fair swine shows.

Grower Panel



Charlie Kollasch

An experienced, transitioning organic grower from Algona, Iowa that raises finisher hogs and bioaugments all his manure to improve nutrient content and soil health.



Jeff Burkley

A 4th generation farmer located near Hampton, Iowa. Jeff's focus is on making each acre as profitable as possible through the use of bioaugmented livestock manure, tile drainage and value-added production.



Ryan Welhousen

A high yielding corn and soybean farmer from Northern IA. He developed an interest in soil biology six years ago and that's what led him to ProfitProAG. Ryan has switched to all non-GMO crops which has been one of the smartest decisions he has ever made.



John Zittel

John and his family farm 1,100 acres of corn, soybeans, hay and wheat 20 miles south of Buffalo, NY. It is a diversified business that includes custom lime spreading, custom grain drying and storing, providing wheat to the local bakeries and custom baling and planting. They also retail all natural Angus beef to local customers and restaurants. They have been using minimum till for 25 years and have been strip tilling for 10 years to promote soil conservation, fertilizer efficiency and increased profits. They also participate in collaborative farming sharing precision equipment with local farmers. In 2017 and 18 they won the New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association yield contest for the highest soybean yield.



Neil Reiten

An experienced industrial hemp grower and marketer from North Dakota. Neil will share past experiences and insight into the Hemp Industry moving forward.