



SFA Annual Conference, Midwest Soil Health Summit Illustrate Momentum of Our Sustainable Ag Network

By Katie Feterl • SFA Communications Intern

Another SFA Annual Conference and Midwest Soil Health Summit are in the books. Over 250 SFA members and supporters flooded the Gorecki Center at the College of Saint Benedict on Sat., Feb. 13, for a day of knowledge sharing, learning, and networking. Conference regulars and new faces alike enjoyed the warm camaraderie of the sustainable farming community and came away with new connections, ideas, and spirit.

Just a few days later, the third Midwest Soil Health Summit convened on Feb. 17-18 at Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria, Minn. About 80 agriculture service professionals took advantage of the new “Soil Health Experts” programming, growing the total attendance between the two days to 175. Attendees, including Tom Barthel, Tom Ehrhardt and speaker Dr. Allen Williams (pictured above), enjoyed many opportunities in between sessions to directly engage with presenters in conversation, as well as with fellow farmers and several exhibitors.

As a newcomer to both conferences, I was particularly impressed with the size of the SFA network – day to day, we may not come in contact with many others interested in discussing the Cottage Food Law, keyline design, farm incubation, forage, or cover cropping techniques. But events like these illuminate the progress and momentum of sustainable farming practices in Minnesota and nationwide.

The opportunity to connect with folks doing a variety of important work to me was inspiring – I’m sure I’m not the only one who went home with a renewed passion and hope for the future of sustainability in our food system.