



Soil and Plant Science Division

Technical Soil Services

North Central Soil Survey Region

Soil Survey Staff Present Soil Tunnel at the Switzer/Kansas State University (KSU) National Society of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Agriculture (AG) Camp for Youth

Hays, Kansas, Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Office

Purpose

On June 25, 2025, the staff from the Hays, KS, MLRA Soil Survey Office participated in the Switzer/KSU MANRRS AG Camp held in Osborne, Kansas. This event was held by Nicodemus Camps and was for urban youth who participate in the MANRRS organization. The camp brings a diverse range of students together to participate in outdoor recreation and to tour various farm operations in an educational and event-filled week.

Background

Soil Scientists Ryan Still and Lucas Scott walked campers through the inflatable soil tunnel during presentations on soil properties (fig. 1). They discussed core information about soil science, summarized NRCS operations, and fielded questions about nutrient cycles and other concepts of soil health. There was even a brief introduction to soil maps, where students were shown how to access public soils information through online applications, such as [SoilWeb](#) and [Web Soil Survey](#). Other demonstrations featured at the AG Camp were the rainfall simulator and the erosion simulator. Students also participated in more interactive activities like agriculture trivia and a native plant identification walk.



Figure. 1—Soil Scientists Ryan Still and Lucas Scott answer questions from attending students.

Key Outcomes

The unique focus of the Switzer/KSU MANRRS AG Camp gives campers from urban areas an opportunity to learn about soil conservation and the agricultural sciences. It also allows NRCS staff to raise awareness for the USDA's mission and establish interest in natural resources and conservation work among younger generations.

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