



Soil and Plant Science Division

Technical Soil Services

South Central Soil Survey Region

NextGen Ag Career Panel

Kerrville, Texas, Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Office (SSO)

Purpose

Emily Grant, the county extension agent in Gillespie County, Texas, asked the SPSD Kerrville MLRA SSO to provide career information about soil scientists as part of the NextGen Ag Career Panel at the Texas A&M AgriLife Career Day in Fredericksburg. The career panel provided local seventh- and eighth-grade students with information about careers in the agriculture sector, including educational requirements and what a typical day looks like for each of the agriculture-related careers represented.

Background

Travis Waiser, soil scientist with the SPSD Kerrville MLRA SSO in the South Central Soil Survey Region (fig. 1), was one of five people who sat on the agriculture-related career panel on August 6, 2025. The panel members each gave a summary of what their day-to-day activities might include. The students were grouped together around tables, and each group was tasked with asking the panel questions. From those questions, the students gathered more insight into each of the jobs represented by the panel. It was a great experience for those who attended, and the students were able to get firsthand experience from professionals in the agriculture sector. The students also learned other professional skills during the multi-day training event, including skills related to social etiquette (fig. 2).

Key Outcomes

Exposing the next generation of students to potential jobs in the agriculture sector will broaden their viewpoints of what it means to work in agriculture. Many people, adults and students included, might believe the agricultural sector only involves farming or ranching, but there are many jobs that support local farmers and ranchers. One of the key roles of NRCS soil scientists, like Travis Waiser, is supporting local farmers and ranchers with soil information. Exposing students to the field of soil science and the important information it provides will continue to help our local producers in Texas and across the country.

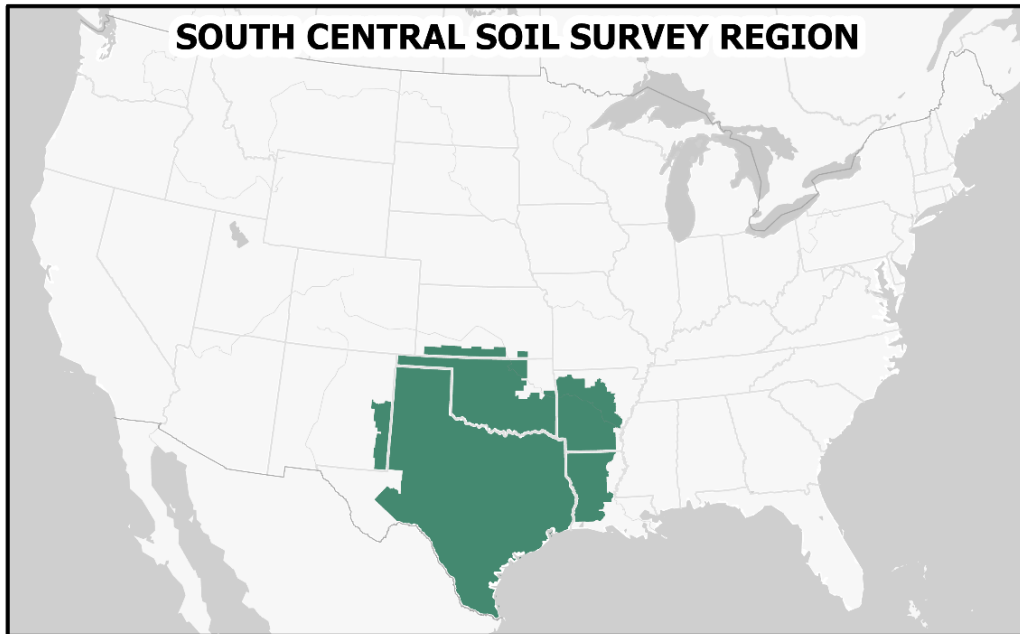


Figure 1.—The Kerrville, Texas, MLRA SSO is part of the South Central Soil Survey Region.



Figure 2.—Students who took part in the career day engaged with the NextGen Ag Career Panel and learned important social etiquette.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.