

Pennsylvania Soil Health and Sustainability for Field Staff
July 21-23, 2026
Harrisburg, PA

Day 1- July 21, 2026

Time	Lesson Title	Instructor
8:30-9:00	Introductions & Logistics – 1. Course logistics 2. Introductions 3. Q&As 4. Group designations and scenario assignments	Dan Ludwig
9:00-9:55	Module: Soil Health Basics 1. Historical context of soil health 2. Soil health demonstrations 3. Define soil health and how soil functions and its impact on resource management	Steve Woodruff
9:55-10:00	Break	
10:00-11:15	Module: Linking Soil Biology to Soil Health 1. Soil functions performed by soil organisms 2. Defining biodiversity 3. Categorizing soil organisms using three broad ecological groups 4. Soil health principles and relation to soil biology	Brian Campbell
11:15-12:15	Lunch	
12:15-1:00	Travel to Farm	
1:15-4:15	Cropland Field activities	
4:15-5:00	Travel to Classroom	

Day 2- July 22, 2026

8:00-8:45	Module: Soil Health Planning Principles 1. Minimize disturbance 2. Maximize diversity 3. Maximize the presence of living roots 4. Maximize soil cover	Brian Campbell
8:45-10:30	Group Scenario- Break Out Activity	
10:30-11:45	Module: Resource Concerns and Soil Health Indicators 1. Identifying resource concerns through conservation planning 2. Identifying soil health indicators and processing the decision tree (In-field assessment)	Steve Woodruff

11:45-12:00	Group Scenario- Break Out Activity	
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-1:45	Travel to Farm	
2:00-4:15	Pasture Field Activities	
4:15-5:00	Travel to Classroom	

Day 3- July 23, 2026		
8:00-9:15	Module: Cover Crop Management 1. Cover crops benefits and impact on soil function 2. Consideration for successful cover crop planning 3. Designing a multi-species cover crop mixes 4. Trouble shooting cover crop problems 5. Examples of CC in various cropping systems	Melissa Erdman
9:15-9:30	Group Scenario- Break Out Activity	
9:30-10:15	Module: Grazing management to improve soil health 1. Incorporating soil health principles into a grazing system 2. Grazing principles that can improve soil health 3. Understanding the impact of manure 4. Grazing impact on nutrient cycling	Brian Campbell
10:15-10:30	Group Scenario- Break Out Activity	
10:30-12:00	Module: Social and Economic Considerations 1. Value of improving soil health, reducing risk, and building resilient soils 2. Cost of soil health improving practices and ROI 3. Stages of Adoption and social outreach 4. Let's Strategize for Change 5. Learning from and leveraging others' successes	Steve Woodruff
12:00-1:00	Lunch	
1:00-2:30	Module: Strategizing and Implementing a Soil Health Management System (SHMS) 1. Considerations for planning and implement SHMS in cropping systems 2. Orchards and Vegetables 3. Small Grains/Row Crops 4. Grazing/Pasture with Cover Crops	Melissa Erdman
2:30-3:30	Finalize Plans	
3:30-4:45	Presentations	
4:45-5:00	Wrap Up & Close Out	