



CONTACT

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NEWS & REPORT:

Last fall, Glenn County Resource Conservation District (GCRCD) hired Greg Baker to fill a *NEW* position: Soil Health Coordinator. Greg is a Certified Crop Adviser in Gridley, CA and has owned a consulting business the last 8 years. He comes to Glenn County with over 20 years of work experience specific to the agriculture sector; farm management, high school agriculture instruction, and direct sales to growers. Greg is very passionate about Soil Health as Soil is the foundation to agriculture production, especially in drought situations like we are experiencing.

The Soil Health Coordinator, a part-time position, was formed as a joint partnership between GCRCD and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In an attempt to circulate national attention and campaign awareness about Soil Health. Specifically, areas of focus are disturbance reduction, covering soils, crop system diversity and soil biology.

January 2016 marked the starting point of the campaign in Glenn County by Greg attending a Soil Health Monitoring Symposium at UC Davis. February included tasks such as appointing a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of growers representing Glenn County's agriculture diversity. Present TAC members include Mike Vereschagin, Craig Knight, Victor Silveira, and local CCA, Steve Gruenwald. The TAC is the heart of this effort and members are steering the path of Greg's focus to ensure a successful partnership. This is being accomplished through interaction between them to decide what may prove beneficial topics to growers and more. Subsidiary agency support comes from the NRCS, University California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and local agri-business expertise.

The 1st field day of "A Growers Perspective" was held at Vereschagin Farms on March 28, 2016. Cover crops from mustards, radish, and barassicas were observed and discussed in the field. In addition, Wendy Krehbiel, NRCS provided additional demonstration plots from the NRCS Soil Test Kit. Approximately 20 plus were in attendance including 10-12 local growers, local PCA's, seed representatives, and agency staff.

The 2nd field day of "A Growers Perspective" was held at MTSJ Dairy on April 20, 2016. The emphasis was in strip – tillage. In strip – tillage, the seed row is tilled prior to planting to allow some residue removal, soil aeration and warming. The production design allows growers to "double crop" in a growing season. While saving significant energy costs. A popular production design for diversified growers raising livestock and crop production.

Additional outreach efforts of the Soil Health Coordinator have been attending and having a booth at the Butte-Glenn Walnut Day in Chico, CA, attending courses to assist growers, PMC Open House attendance in Lockeford, CA, lecturing at Butte College on Soil Health for Bruce Hicks, and speaking at the RCD of Tehama County, AG Ambassador Program on Water Penetration Solutions.

If you are interested in learning more about Soil Health or receiving information about the field days, please contact Greg Baker, Soil Health Coordinator, via email at greg@glenncountyrcd.org or calling the GCRCD office at 530-934-4601 x5. ~