THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF SOIL HEALTH

These six universal principles guide and direct the soil health movement. They are also the principles that the Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund promotes, encourages, and funds.

CONTEXT Each farmer must consider their goals, environment, and resources in order to know how to best implement a soil health system on their own operation.

KEEP THE SOIL COVERED Cold, heat, sunlight, and wind can all be damaging. Keeping the soil covered with living plants (including cover crops) and plant residue protects soil temperature and moisture and keeps soil microbes functioning properly.

MINIMIZE DISTURBANCE Physical (tillage), chemical (overuse of pesticides), and biological (excessive fertilizer use) disturbances damage soil structure, reduce water infiltration, deplete soil organic matter, and increase weed pressure.

MAXIMIZE DIVERSITY Natural systems show us that a diversity of plants and biology will lead to healthy, productive, and resilient ecosystems.

LIVING ROOTS Keeping living roots in the ground for as much of the year as possible supports soil microbial life, builds soil organic matter, improves water infiltration, and enhances carbon sequestration. Living roots support all life, both below and above the soil.

LIVESTOCK INTEGRATION Proper grazing management stimulates plant regrowth and stimulates soil biology and sets in motion a series of positive compounding and cascading effects.

OUR FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Randy Pryor, Chair
UNL Emeritus Extension Educator

Keith Berns
Owner of Green Cover (Bladen, NE)

John Wilson
UNL Emeritus Extension Educator

Gary Lesoing
UNL Emeritus Extension Educator

Steve Chick
Retired Nebraska NRCS State Conservationist

Kerry Hoffschneider
Co-Founder: Difference in Action and Graze Master

Jim Schneider
UNL Emeritus Extension Educator and NRCS District Conservationist

Rebecca Gillespie Evert
Family representative

Tim Gillespie
Family representative

Brooke Wiese
Family representative

LEARN MORE AND SUPPORT OUR WORK

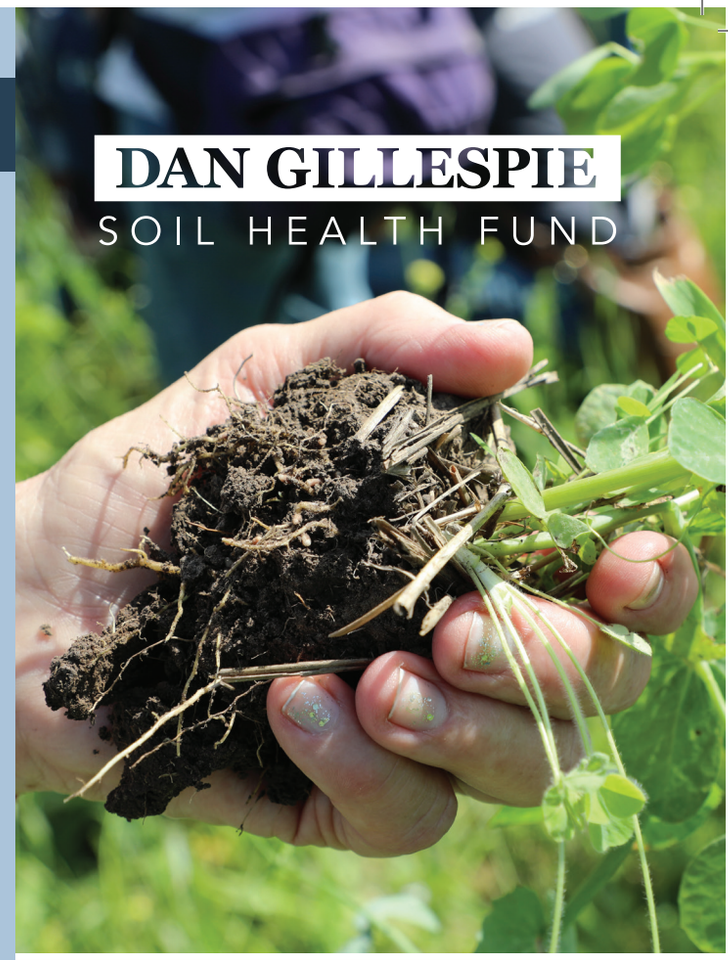
go.unl.edu/dgfund

CONTACT US

Rebecca Gillespie Evert
Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund

707.322.0670 | revert@sonic.net

Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund is an affiliated fund of Nebraska Community Foundation



WE HAVE A PROBLEM IN AGRICULTURE

In US agriculture, topsoil loss is double the rate that the USDA says is sustainable, and experts fear the productive capacity of our soils will sharply decline over the next 50 years. Excessive tillage, lack of soil cover, minimal diversity, and overgrazing all contribute to this looming crisis. And loss of organic carbon from the topsoil that does remain makes it even more difficult for farmers to be productive and profitable.

But the soil health and regenerative agriculture movement is providing hope. Open to learn more…

DAN GILLESPIE
SOIL HEALTH FUND



ABOUT OUR WORK

"People are always looking up at the sky when we need to be looking at what's below our feet."

- DAN GILLESPIE

The Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund was established to honor Dan Gillespie, a life-long farmer who was deeply passionate about no-till farming and especially the use of cover crops. DGSHF makes grants to support charitable organizations and causes that will advance soil health and regenerative agriculture and carry on Dan's legacy.

We envision a future where soil health practices and advanced agricultural technologies lead to maximum profitable yields by mitigating damage to soil biology and microbial life that are fundamental to the cycling of soil nutrients and the natural defense and health of growing plants.

We raise money and make grants to support charitable causes, organizations, young people, and farmers who are furthering regenerative agriculture, improving soil health, as well as promoting no-till farming, water conservation, tree conservation, and planting cover crops with geographic focus on Nebraska and surrounding states.

WHAT WE FUND



DGSHF awarded a grant to the Battle Creek FFA chapter to work with a sixth-generation farmer on better soil health practices.

Contributions to the Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund help fund grants made to organizations, projects, people, and initiatives that are advancing soil health and regenerative agriculture.

On March 1 and October 1, the Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund Advisory Committee begins reviewing grant applications to make awards of up to $2,500 to projects and programs like the following:

- Educational events and programming related to soil health and regenerative agriculture for youth, current farmers, ranchers, and others involved in agriculture
- Training activity expense reimbursement for farmers who want to learn how to better steward their land.
- On-farm (or-ranch) research projects that seek to quantifiably improve soil health practices.

DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION

Visit **go.unl.edu/dgfund** | Click **APPLY FOR GRANT**



HOW TO SUPPORT SOIL HEALTH

Scan this code

The Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund provides an avenue for those who share our vision and passion for promoting more sustainable agricultural practices to make an impact. We humbly ask that you consider making a contribution to support the work of the Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund and further the soil health and regenerative agriculture movement.

Mail a check made payable to:
Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund
Nebraska Community Foundation
8100 S. 15th St., Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68512



Ray Ward, Ward Laboratories Kearney, will donate a personal handmade clock (with wood from his farm in Saline County) to any donor of $1,000 or more to the Dan Gillespie Soil Health Fund.