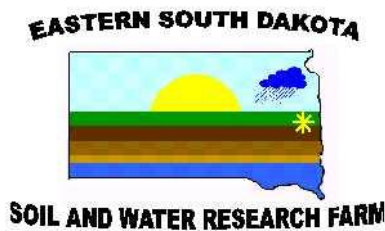


**Business Office:**

205 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brookings, SD 57006-1459  
Telephone: 605-695-1269  
EMAIL: brookingscd@sdconservation.net



**Research Farm Location:**

3714 Western Avenue  
Brookings, SD 57006

## CUSTOMER FOCUS GROUP MEETING

February 9, 2021

Dear Friends:

You are invited to a meeting of the Customer Focus Group of the North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory (NCARL). Because of COVID-19 restrictions, **the meeting will be held via Zoom on Monday, February 22 beginning at 11 am.** You can join the meeting through this link

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1616360703?pwd=REFOOVloRm5nM0o3UUJQZTZxQkVEQT09>

Or you may call

1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 636 0703, Passcode: 173985

The meeting will follow the second of three virtual field day events presenting NCARL research. The link above will connect you to both the scientific presentations and the Customer Focus Group meeting that will follow; you may join any time. If you are able, please join all the virtual field day presentations on February 8, February 22, and March 1 from 10-11 am to hear more about the lab's research program. I am attaching the schedule and links for the virtual field day presentations for your convenience.

Thanks to the support of stakeholders, the NCARL is expanding its research program and staff! In FY20, the lab received a \$360K funding increase to support research on oat production within cropping systems. Congress passed, and the President signed, a federal budget for FY2021 that provides \$1.492B for USDA-ARS salaries and expenses, an increase of \$77.4M, or 5.5% above the agency's FY2020 operating level. Funding for the NCARL is expected to be stable in FY2021.

The Customer Focus Group works hard to encourage South Dakota's elected officials to support federal funding for agricultural research, especially work at the NCARL. We point out that sound science from the NCARL and other USDA-ARS laboratories improves agricultural production, aids informed policy development, and enhances products. Those efforts were a success, as evidenced by the increased funding for the NCARL and for USDA-ARS in recent years.

We are excited to help the lab strategize for the future and to discuss emerging research needs. I hope that you will attend the February 22 Customer Focus Group meeting to discuss how we can work together to support the USDA-ARS North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory. Because virtual meetings do not always flow as smoothly as in-person meetings, we developed an agenda that includes time for comments from the major stakeholders of the laboratory. We ask that you **prepare comments (3 to 5 minutes) that include important updates from your organization and research needs that the NCARL could address with existing and/or increased funding.** If your organization is not listed on the agenda and would like to be, please let me know and I will make adjustments. If you are listed but cannot attend the meeting, please e-mail your comments to me ([stiefarm@triotel.net](mailto:stiefarm@triotel.net)) and Sharon Schneider (NCARL's Research Leader; [Sharon.Schneider@usda.gov](mailto:Sharon.Schneider@usda.gov)) and we will share them on your behalf. If you have questions, please call me at 605-360-1618 or Sharon at 605-693-5201.

I look forward to seeing you on February 22.

Sincerely,

*Kurt Stiefvater*

Kurt Stiefvater  
Chairperson, NCARL Customer Focus Group

## Draft agenda

Customer Focus Group of the North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory

February 22, 2021 at 11 am

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1616360703?pwd=REFOOVloRm5nM0o3UUJQZTZxQkVEQT09>

1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 636 0703, Passcode: 173985

1. Update from Research Leader
2. Update from the USDA-ARS Leadership
3. Legislative updates
4. Updates/research needs from stakeholders, including
  - Eastern South Dakota Soil and Water Research Farm, Inc.
  - SD Soil Health Coalition
  - SD No-Till Assn.
  - SD Corn
  - SD Soybean
  - SD Wheat
  - General Mills
  - USDA-NRCS
  - SDSU Agronomy, Horticulture, and Plant Science
  - SDSU Extension/Experiment Station
  - Any others?
5. Election of officers

## Schedule for Virtual Field Day

### Presenting USDA-ARS North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory research

#### **Monday, February 8**

Join ZoomGov Meeting

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1613188636?pwd=QVhsbG9MRXI0RUVDWIZUREdTcGZLQT09>

1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 318 8636, Passcode: 423694

- 10:00 am **Soil microorganisms: Hard to understand; Easy to please**  
Dr. Michael Lehman, Microbiologist
- 10:30 am **Diverse rotations - good for microbes, good for plants**  
Dr. Patrick Ewing, Agronomist

#### **Monday, February 22**

Join ZoomGov Meeting

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1616360703?pwd=REFOOVloRm5nM0o3UUJQZTZxQkVEQT09>

1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 636 0703, Passcode: 173985

- 10:00 am **Restoring eroded land by replacing eroded topsoil: effects on crop growth and yield**  
Dr. Sharon Schneider, Soil Scientist
- 10:30 am **Impact of crop diversity on crop growth**  
Dr. Shannon Osborne, Agronomist

The Customer Focus Group of the North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory will meet at 11:00 on Monday, February 22, after the presentations, using the same Zoom link above, or you may call 1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 636 0703, Passcode: 173985. Please join this meeting for updates from the lab and discussions about our research program.

#### **Monday, March 1**

Join ZoomGov Meeting

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1615182059?pwd=RGH1N01vR0F6Vi9qQkJOYytONjJWQT09>

1-669-254-5252, Meeting ID: 161 518 2059, Passcode: 837160

- 10:00 am **Seed treatment, foliar insecticide and a resistant cultivar for managing soybean aphid**  
Dr. Louis Hesler, Entomologist
- 10:30 am **An introduction and preliminary ideas for promoting insect biodiversity in agroecosystems**  
Dr. Karl Roeder, Entomologist