

Farmers Learn about Adaptive Nitrogen Management at Evening Meeting

During the evening of November 12, 2025, the Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) invited local farmers to learn about adaptive nitrogen management. This first-of many “Farming for the Future Meeting Series” gatherings was a chance to learn from agricultural experts, share experiences, and connect with other local farmers who are passionate about sustainable and successful farming. Five farmers sat in the discussion.



Andrew Lefever (*above photo, standing*), an Agricultural & Environmental Plant Science Penn State Ph.D. Candidate, gave a presentation on current and planned research on adaptive nitrogen (N) management tools available for field corn producer listed below.

He and Charlie White, Penn State Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Associate Professor & Extension Specialist, are investigating the new Nitrogen Decision Support Tool (N Tool) and revised Pre-Sidedress Soil Nitrate Test (PSNT) at multiple Pennsylvania farms. These on-farm experiments compared various N sidedress rates ranging from zero to what the farmer would normally apply to N Tool and PSNT recommended rates. Yields and economic costs and gains were gathered for each sidedress rate plot.

Penn State Extension is looking for farmers willing to test out the N Tool and PSNT research, as well as seeing if the current Corn Stalk Nitrate Test (CSNT), taken between 1/4 milk line to 3 weeks after black layer, needs to be recalibrated. Contact either Charlie White (CMW29@psu.edu) or Andrew Lefever (AML7322@psu.edu) for more information if interested assisting Penn State improve corn N recommendations.



Stroud Water Research Center, PA Soil Health Coalition, and Penn State Extension also have an incentive program for farmers to try out Adaptive N Management with a control strip to compare different N rates. Contact Lisa Blazure, PA Soil Health Coordinator (lblazure@stroudcenter.org) for incentive program details.

Additional Resources on Adaptive N Management:

Penn State Nitrogen Decision Support Tool Webpage:
<https://extension.psu.edu/nitrogen-recommendations-for-corn>

Soil Organic Matter & Cover Crop-Based N Recommendations for Corn:
<https://extension.psu.edu/soil-organic-matter-and-cover-crop-based-nitrogen-recommendations-for-corn>

Penn State Pre-Sidedress Soil Nitrate Test for Corn:
<https://extension.psu.edu/pre-sidedress-soil-nitrate-test-for-corn>

Penn State Late Season Cornstalk Nitrate Test:
<https://extension.psu.edu/late-season-cornstalk-nitrate-test>

Stroud Center Incentive Program for Adaptive N Management Flyer:
https://stroudcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Incentive-Program-for-Adaptive-Nitrogen-Management_flyer.pdf

Barry Spangler, SCCD Ag. Conservation Technician, opened the meeting with a brief description of its “Soil Health” bucket service being offered. At this time, participants would have to pay for the soil health test fees. Contact him (agtech@snydercd.org) at 570-837-3000, extension 5, for more information.

The SCCD’s hope is to hold meetings periodically in which soil health and sustainable farming practices are discussed where farmers can ask questions and learn from each other in a less formal setting. Farmers in nearby counties have been holding similar meetings for some time, and the SCCD would like to help “plant the seed” to do the same.

If you would like to know when the next “Farming for the Future” meeting will be held, contact Barry Spangler at 570-837-3000, extension 5, or agtech@snydercd.org.

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