



## **Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council**

151 Saint Andrews Court, Suite 710 • Mankato, MN 56001  
Phone (507) 388-1635 • Fax (507) 388-6751 • (888) 896-9678  
[www.mnsoybean.org](http://www.mnsoybean.org)

### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **Sediment Seminar Draws Large Crowd from Across the State to Address Water Quality Concerns**

Mankato, MN – June 30, 2011 – More than 250 members of the agriculture community gathered for a Sediment Seminar last Friday hosted by Minnesota Ag Water Resources Coalition (MAWRC) and sponsored by the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) and the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC). The seminar served as a forum for experts in sediment science, agricultural drainage and natural resource protection to discuss sources of sediment in Minnesota waters.

Researchers from across the country were on hand to discuss real solutions for protecting our environment. They are working diligently to insure that water quality programs are performing at their full potential. Speakers at the event included: UCLA geologist, Stanley Trimble, Oklahoma State University soil scientist Garey Fox, and several University of Minnesota agricultural and climate experts.

#### **Farmers Have a Role and a Voice in Water Quality**

Farmer-leaders from the MSR&PC and Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA) boards of directors attended the seminar as part of their commitment to help educate farmers and the public on emerging research regarding water quality in Minnesota.

“Minnesota farmers must have a role and a voice in Minnesota’s water quality solution,” said Kurt Kruger, a Rothsay farmer and MSGA president. “We believe it is crucial for farmers to work closely with state and local officials to correctly identify where sources of turbidity originate so that measures to protect water quality are effective for our environment and fair to farmers.”

#### **Natural Sources of Water Impairment**

A consistent theme of the research presentations at the seminar is that many of Minnesota’s water quality impairments are caused by turbidity (particles suspended in water), which come from many different sources.

Drew Kessler, a University of Minnesota researcher, has conducted extensive research on the portion of the Minnesota River that runs through Blue Earth County. Most of his research has been conducted using airborne Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), which over time, is able to help quantify riverbank erosion contributing to sediment loads in rivers. According to Kessler, “As much as 73 percent of the sediment in the river is coming directly from banks or high bluffs.”

#### **Farmers Care About Water Quality**

“Farmers are very concerned about water quality, air quality and soil,” said Kevin Paap, Minnesota Farm Bureau president and Blue Earth County farmer. “We care about the environment because that’s how we make our living as farmers. We utilize sustainable practices so that the land is good for future generations. I am the fourth-generation on our farm, and want my sons to be the fifth, so we are continually improving our practices through new technology and new science to do the best job to conserve resources.”

Minnesota farmers learned the importance of understanding the different ways they can help prevent sediment runoff and the effectiveness of these measures from Dr. Garey Fox, Associate Professor in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering at Oklahoma State University. “Buffers and filter strips work in certain locations, but farmers need to determine which practices work best for them. It is not a one-size-fits all approach.”

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) state representative, Don Baloun, challenged attendees to implement one new conservation practice per year. “We have countless examples of agricultural producers who have implemented conservation practices on their land, but we can all do more. These folks have done a wonderful job of striking a balance between cropland production and conservation. It is time for all of us to join them by doing one conservation practice each year.”

#### **Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council**

The Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council is an elected board of 15 soybean producers from across the state. The mission of the council is to invest soybean checkoff dollars in well-defined research, marketing, education and commercialization programs designed to increase demand and thereby improve the profitability of Minnesota's soybean farmers. For more information, visit [www.mnsoybean.org](http://www.mnsoybean.org).

#### **Minnesota Soybean Growers Association**

MSGGA is a non-profit, farmer-controlled membership organization established in 1962. Its goal is to assure profitable soybean farming by influencing favorable ag legislation, monitoring government policies and supporting research and market development activities.

For more information, please contact Maureen Degnan at 612.760.0497 or [mdegnan@wideopenthinking.com](mailto:mdegnan@wideopenthinking.com).