


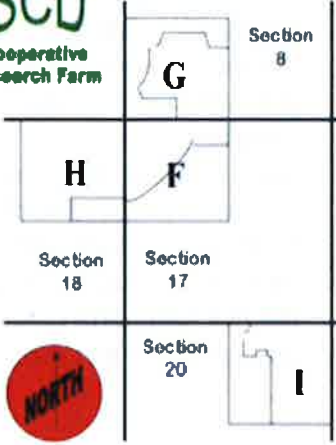
The Area IV Soil Conservation Districts Cooperative Research Farm: Thirty years of collaborative research to improve cropping system sustainability in the Northern Plains

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Long-term cropping system studies are a critically important component of U.S. research infrastructure. Such studies serve to elucidate agronomic, environmental, and economic outcomes associated with implemented treatments through the measurement of key metrics consistently over time, and accordingly, guide the development of productive and resilient cropping systems.



Cooperative Research Farm
Area IV Soil Conservation Districts
USDA Agricultural Research Service
Founded 1983



USDA Agricultural Research Service
Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory

Developing Sustainable Food production Systems

- ✓ Long-Term Agro-Ecosystem Research
- ✓ Carbon and Nitrogen Cycling
- ✓ Dynamic Cropping Systems
- ✓ Production Economics
- ✓ Water Use Efficiency
- ✓ Cover Crops
- ✓ Soil Quality

* McIntosh County SCD, Burleigh County SCD, Oliver SCD, West McLean County SCD, Stutsman County SCD, Emmons County SCD, Sheridan County SCD, Morton County SCD, Cedar SCD, Kidder County SCD, South McLean County SCD, & Logan County SCD

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In this article, we describe the history and influence of one long-term cropping systems research site located in the heart of the northern Great Plains. Since its inception, the Area IV Soil Conservation Districts (SCD) Cooperative Research Farm near Mandan, ND USA has served as a focal point for improving the sustainability of dryland cropping systems through team-focused, systems-oriented research and technology transfer.

Future challenges associated with increasing food, fuel, and fiber production during unprecedented climate change suggest long-term cropping system sites throughout the U.S. will have even greater importance to national food security. Given the convergence of past investment and future opportunity, the Area IV SCD Cooperative Research Farm should serve to guide the evolution of dryland cropping systems in the northern Plains by continuing to provide practical, science-based information and decision *support tools*.

Liebig, M.A., Archer, D.W., Hendrickson, J.R., Nichols, K.A., Sanderson, M.A., Tanaka, D., Merrill, S., Harner, L., Olsen, D. 2014. The Area IV Soil Conservation Districts Cooperative Research Farm: Thirty years of collaborative research to improve cropping system sustainability in the Northern Plains. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*. 69(4):99A-103A.

<http://www.jswnonline.org/content/69/4/99A.extract#>