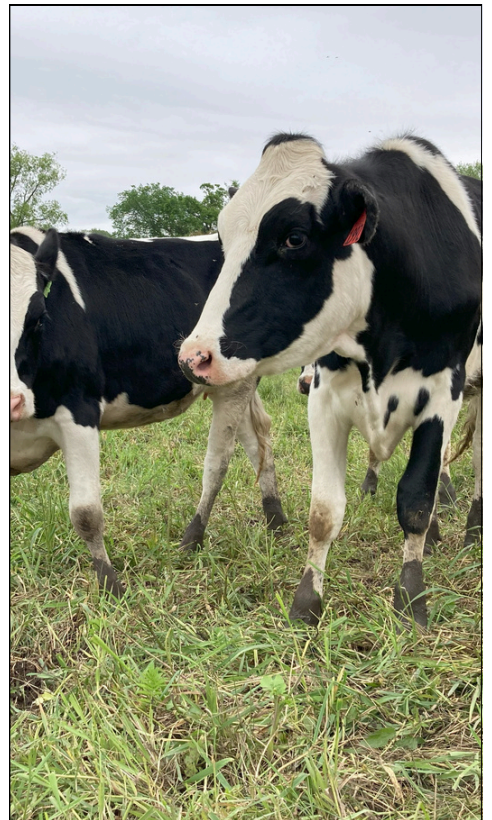




Fields of Sinsinawa

A Farmer-Led Learning Center



The Soul of the Soil: A Case for Fields of Sinsinawa



CARING FOR THE SOIL

“The nation that
destroys its soils
destroys itself.”

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

Breaking the Cycle

There’s a **living web** just beneath our feet—soil that breathes, eats, drinks, and teems with life. Like us, soil needs **air, water, and food**.

But over the last century, modern agriculture has chipped away at that vitality. Yes, it brought higher yields and helped feed a growing world—but it also came at a steep cost: **degraded soils** that produce nutritionally deficient foods and contribute to troubling water pollution.

Today, much of our farmland relies on life support. Heavy tillage, synthetic fertilizers, and repeated chemical use have degraded nearly a third of agricultural soils. Instead of thriving ecosystems underground, we now have fields where microbial life is absent or dormant, water runs off the soil surface without soaking in, and nutrients are locked away or washed downstream. It’s a **vicious cycle**: we degrade the soil, then try to fix it with even more chemicals, which only makes things worse.

And here’s the truth—it **doesn’t have to be this way**. We already know how to bring soil back to life. We know the practices. We know the timelines. We even know the outcomes: better yields, fewer inputs, and more resilient farms. But this isn’t just about practices. It’s about breaking the cycle through something deeper—through community, courage, and care.

It starts **one farmer, one field, one conversation at a time**. And it grows into a movement.

WE BELIEVE

- We believe soil is alive.
- We believe healing the land begins with healing relationships—with each other, with the land, and with future generations.
- We believe farmers are the heart of change.
- We believe in learning by doing, in listening as much as teaching.
- We believe that building a better food and farming system is critical for the future—and our descendants will thank us for it.



SACRED BEGINNINGS

Nestled in the rolling hills of southwest Wisconsin, Fields of Sinsinawa is rooted in a place long known for its spirit of stewardship. The story begins with the **Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa**—women who built something enduring by living out values of care, community, and deep connection to the land. They treated soil like something sacred. And they passed that ethic on to those who came after.

It's no wonder **David Brandt**—regenerative farming pioneer and humble teacher—felt a powerful connection when he came to Sinsinawa. His legacy reminds us that being a good ancestor means living with humility, sharing what we know, and helping others along the way.

Fields of Sinsinawa honors that legacy by building a community where farmers **teach, learn, and lead together**—walking side by side toward a new kind of agriculture.

“Because we recognize Sinsinawa Mound as a sacred place entrusted to our care, our land will be available for spiritual, ecological, agricultural, and educational programs and will be preserved as much as possible for future generations.”

- Land Guiding Principle 2017, Sinsinawa Dominicans

Every Farmer a Learner, Every Farmer a Teacher, Every Farmer a Leader

Here's how our faith in farmers shows up in our work:

- **Teaching Regenerative Practices**

We share proven practices that bring soil back to life—keeping living roots in the ground, reducing tillage, covering the soil surface, integrating livestock, and embracing plant diversity.

- **On-Farm Research and Demonstration**

Seeing is believing. That's why we support farmer-led trials and field days that show how regenerative practices work in real-world conditions.

- **Soil Carbon Benchmarking**

You can't manage what you don't measure. We help farmers track soil carbon and biological activity to understand their progress and reduce synthetic inputs over time.

- **Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Sharing**

The best teachers are fellow farmers. We foster networks where farmers share stories, troubleshoot challenges, and support each other on the journey.

Growing the Movement

Since receiving our 501(c)(3) non-profit designation in 2024, Fields of Sinsinawa has launched a variety of programs to grow the regenerative movement in the Midwest and beyond:

- **Soul of the Soil Conference** – A yearly gathering of farmers, conservationists, and curious minds who want to explore the deep connections between soil, food, health, and community.
- **Field Days and Learning Events** – Hands-on workshops on adaptive grazing, companion cropping, soil structure, and more—held throughout the region, grounded in lived experience.
- **Soil Carbon Benchmarking Program** – A collaborative effort with farmers across Wisconsin and Illinois to gather baseline data, track progress, and build confidence in soil-based solutions.
- **Farm-to-Table Gatherings (Launching 2025)** – Shared meals that celebrate food grown with care—and the people who grow it. These events will weave community into the heart of every learning experience.

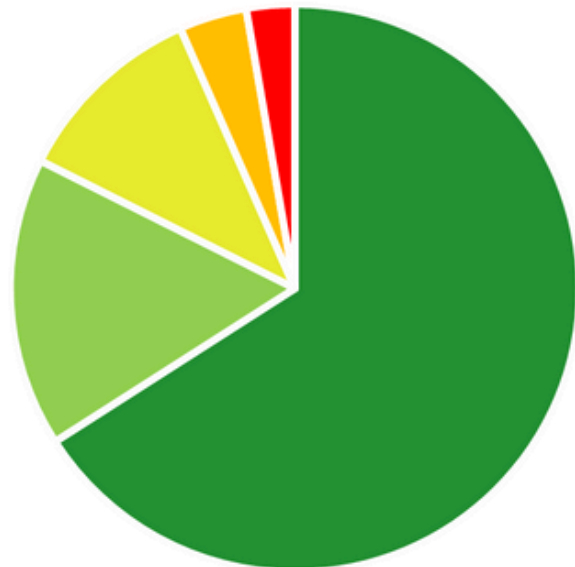


Building for the Future

Looking ahead, we're preparing to launch new initiatives to deepen our impact:

- **Monthly Community Breakfasts** – Free, drop-in breakfasts open to all—a space to nourish body and spirit while building local relationships.
- **Producer-Led Watershed Group** – A new collaborative in Grant County, where farmers will shape conservation goals and lead efforts to improve soil and water health together.
- **Soil Care Stories Podcast + Video Series** – Real stories from real farmers across the country who are rebuilding soil and reshaping their futures.
- **Soil Care Training and Mentorship Program** – Practical, farmer-guided support to help others adopt holistic soil practices that last.
- **Fields of Sinsinawa Soil Life Center (Future Goal)** – A welcoming hub for learning and gathering, featuring interactive exhibits that tell the story of soil as the foundation of life, food, and community. Dedicated investments in existing facilities will be needed to support the buildout of this learning environment.

Anticipated Future Expenses



What We All Stand to Gain

Revitalized soils mean revitalized communities. This movement is about more than sustainability—it's about regeneration:

- Soil that **sustains itself** because it's alive again.
- Reduced inputs, **lower costs**, and steady yields.
- **Cleaner water** and fewer toxins in our environment.
- **Healthier food** grown closer to home.
- Reinvigorated rural places, where people stay **rooted and connected**.

We're not just fixing what's broken. We're growing something new—together.

LAND AS COMMUNITY

“We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

— Aldo Leopold

Join the Movement

We can't do this alone. Breaking the cycle of soil degradation and disconnection takes all of us. That's where you come in.

- **Donate** – Your tax-deductible gift supports farmer education, community gatherings, and on-the-ground soil transformation.
- **Come to an Event** – Meet us in the field, at a breakfast, or around the table. Bring a friend.
- **Spread the Word** – Share this story. Invite others into the work of soil and soul.
- **Partner with Us** – Foundations, schools, nonprofits, businesses—we're building something that grows through collaboration.

Together, we can build a farming future rooted in care—for the soil, for each other, and for generations to come.

Contact Us

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