

Celebrating



2015
International
Year of Soils



soils.org/IYS

To learn more about the Soil Science Society of America and our commitment to disseminating the science of soils, providing resources to teachers, and serving as a resource to our members, visit www.soils.org and www.soils4teachers.org



SSSA International Year of Soils Overview

The 68th United Nations General Assembly has declared 2015 the International Year of Soils (IYS)! The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN is implementing the IYS 2015, within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), which aims to increase awareness and understanding of the profound importance of soil for human life – including food security, essential ecosystem functions, and sustainable development.

Working with FAO and GSP, the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) is celebrating this important year to raise awareness and promote the sustainability of our limited soil resources. We all have a valuable role in communicating vital information on soils, a life sustaining natural resource. Therefore, we want to provide you with resources to learn about soils and help us tell the story of soils!

To do this, we have developed themes with coordinating messages, and materials for each month in 2015. And everything is downloadable for use. Here's what you'll find on soils.org/IYS:

Activities for Members and Soil Scientists—Each month includes member activities for soil scientists to download, including presentations and activities to use for outreach in their communities. Whether it's with a group at your local university, college, community college, civic organization, library or other group – take the soils message to the public!



Activities for Educators—Each month includes activities appropriate for use in the classroom (grade level will vary) that educators can download and use. Educators have also signed up to receive monthly emails about the themes and messages and available activities each month. And, a special IYS Launch Packet is being sent with an IYS overview, January Soils Overview sheet, coloring book, *Soil! Get the Inside Scoop* publication, and more to integrate into classroom lesson plans.

Classroom Visits—Educators (both formal and informal) and community groups can request a classroom visit from soil scientists at www.soils4teachers.org/ask

Videos—SSSA worked with Jim Toomey to create 12 two-minute videos based on the monthly themes selected for IYS. Subtle humor, wonderful graphics and a quick pace is used to explain complex topics such as carbon sequestration and water cleansing. In addition to posting on soils.org/IYS, they are posted on our SSSA YouTube channel. The videos make excellent additions to member presentations, use in classrooms, promoting on social media and will also be featured in our monthly new releases to encourage broader distribution.



Monthly Overviews—A monthly overview of each theme has been written, providing a snapshot of the science and issues around it. The overviews can be used to provide additional background to the activities and for distribution to all interested audiences.

Monthly Themes

January

Soils Sustain Life

February

Soils Support Urban Life

March

Soils Support Agriculture

April

Soils Clean and Capture Water

May

Soils Support Buildings/
Infrastructure

June

Soils Support Recreation

July

Soils are Living

August

Soils Support Health

September

Soils Protect the Natural
Environment

October

Soils and the Products We Use

November

Soils and Climate

December

Soils, Culture, and People

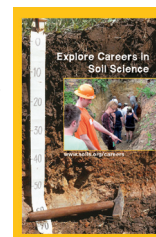
Coloring & Activity Book—Designed for the younger audience (K-2), the coloring book and activities demonstrate the themes of each month and are designed to get kids thinking about soil. Teachers and parents can use this to talk about soil and how it is important to kids, families, and the world!



News Releases—In conjunction with the themes, news releases will be sent out around the specific topics and are designed to generate additional interest among the media.

Social Media—We'll also be posting to SSSA Facebook and Twitter. Everyone interested in soils is encouraged to repost, so we can make the maximum impact!

Careers in Soil Science—There are many exciting professional opportunities and challenging careers in soil science! A Careers in Soil Science poster is being distributed to get students thinking about this type of career and information on colleges and universities offering courses and programs is available at www.soils.org/careers



Ask a Soil Scientist—Have a question on soils, soil science, and careers in soil science? Educators, students, and anyone interested in soils with questions are encouraged to use our Ask a Soil Scientist program to get answers at: www.soils4teachers.org/ask

I "Heart" Soil Stickers—Our I "Heart" Soil campaign, started in 2011 is a unique and fun way to say you "Love" soil! There are now stickers in 14 languages. You can request stickers and then submit them for posting on our "Love" map! Just take a photo while at a favorite location, on vacation, or at an interesting soil site that shows soil and/or can teach people something about soil and soil science. They are also available to order in rolls of 250 or 500 for use while out in the community! All sticker information is available at www.soils.org/IYS/stickers



Partnerships—Collectively, we have a larger impact on getting the message out about the critical importance of soil and its role in a sustainable future. This is just the beginning:

- Partnered with the USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) on the development of their 2015 Soils Planner using the monthly themes,
- Collaborating with the National Committee on Soil Science to promote the Soils Security conference at the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC, on September 18, 2015,
- Working with the California Museum on a "Dig It! The Secrets of Soil Science Fair Project contest" on soil erosion, with a \$1000 scholarship for grade school students,
- Providing support to the California Museum, which is featuring *Dig It! Secrets of Soil* exhibit through March, 2015 and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, where the exhibit will be hosted from May 16-Aug 16, 2015.

You can also learn more about the FAO and Global Soil Partnership and their IYS activities at www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/iys-2015/en/