



January 30, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Sarah Scroggins, Communications Coordinator

PHONE: 605-368-4091

EMAIL: [sarah.soilhealth@sdconservation.net](mailto:sarah.soilhealth@sdconservation.net)

## **Legacy and Friend of Soil Health Awards Presented at 2020 Soil Health Conference**

PIERRE, SD- The South Dakota Soil Health Coalition (SDSHC) announced the recipients of its 2020 “Legacy Award”, in Watertown, at the fourth annual Soil Health Conference. Kurt and Kathy Stiefvater of Salem, SD were presented the award because of the commitment their family has made to practicing soil health management and stewardship on their farm. The Stiefvater’s actively advocate for agriculture and improving soil health through numerous organizations in their local community and across the state. They have shared their knowledge regarding practices such as no-till, cover crops, livestock integration and much more, greatly impacting those they meet. Additionally, the Stiefvater’s have provided Soil Health School participants with the opportunity to experience a working soil health system and learn from their soil health journey.

The “Legacy Award” was created to honor the late Al Miron, who was a founding board member of the SDSHC. Al dedicated his personal and professional life to agriculture and was a dedicated advocate for improving soil health. Receiving an honorary “Legacy Award” in Al’s memory this year, was his wife Joan and two of their adult children, James and Jennifer.

In addition, the SDSHC awarded the 2020 “Friend of Soil Health” to Jay Fuhrer of Bismarck, ND. He was selected as this year’s deserving recipient because of the great impact he has had in the area of resource conservation and education. Jay recently retired after many years of service with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service where he mentored countless producers, USDA employees, and partners within the industry, in preserving natural resources for future generations. Jay’s expertise and leadership has contributed to the success of the SDSHC Soil Health School and many other outreach events throughout the upper Midwest and beyond.

Throughout the Soil Health Conference proceedings, the SDSHC hosted nearly 400 attendees in Watertown, SD. Local and internationally known speakers energized participants and fueled great discussion. Dr. Christine Jones, Derek Axten, Tom Cannon, and Dr. Andrea Bjornestad were the keynote speakers addressing many diverse ways to improve soil as well as producer health. Other speakers shared their experiences throughout six different breakout sessions. Session recordings from the event will be available on the SDSHC website.

**SD SOIL HEALTH COALITION**

116 N. Euclid Ave. • Pierre, SD, 57501

605-280-4190 • [sdsoilhealth@gmail.com](mailto:sdsoilhealth@gmail.com) • [www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org](http://www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org)



Access Copy of Image [Here](#) *Courtesy of SDSHC*

**“The 2020 “Legacy Award” was presented to Kurt and Kathy Stiefvater of Salem, SD.”**



Access Copy of Image [Here](#) *Courtesy of SDSHC* Access Copy of Image [Here](#) *Courtesy of SDSHC*

**“Kurt and Kathy Stiefvater of Salem, SD were presented the award for the commitment their family has made to practicing soil health management and stewardship on their farm.”**



Access Copy of Image [Here](#) *Courtesy of USDA-NRCS South Dakota*

**“Jay Fuhrer, pictured at right, was selected as this year’s deserving recipient of the “Friend of Soil Health Award” because of the great impact he has had in the area of resource conservation and education.”**