NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Soil Renaissance celebrates International Year of Soils

December 5, 2015: Today, on World Soil Day, the Soil Renaissance is celebrating a year of progress in advancing soil and soil health, and joining in the kickoff of the International Year of Soils.

The United Nation’s Food & Agriculture Organization has designated 2015 as the International Year of Soils to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of healthy soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions. The celebration officially begins today on World Soil Day 2014.

Launched on Dec. 5, 2013, the Soil Renaissance is a movement to make soil health the cornerstone of land use management decisions, and bring attention to the critical role of healthy soils in vibrant natural resources systems. The Soil Renaissance is led by Farm Foundation, NFP and The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation.

In its first year, farmers, ranchers, educators, researchers, suppliers, NGOs, foundations and government agencies have joined the Soil Renaissance with their expertise and support. “Collaboration has been the linchpin to our success so far,” said Farm Foundation President Neil Conklin. “The multitude of challenges in understanding healthy soils requires many hands at work. No single person or organization can fully address the diverse and complex issues of soil health across the nation and the world.”

During its first year, the Soil Renaissance has begun work on implementing a Strategic Plan that focuses on four foundational issues key to all aspects of soil health work: a standard for measuring soil health; economic tools to assess the value of soil health; identifying research needs; and education and outreach. Teams of experts from across the United States have formed working groups around these four areas, and are working to accomplish important goals.

“Soil health is a key factor in any agricultural production system, whether conventional or organic. Yet soil is too often ignored or overshadowed by other facts,” said Noble Foundation President Bill Buckner. “It is critical that producers—the people working directly with the land—be in close communication with researchers and policymakers to ensure that their challenges are recognized and our soils are protected and sustained for future generations.”

During IYS, the Soil Renaissance will partner with the Soil Science Society of America to bring attention to the importance of soil and soil health.
The Soil Renaissance serves as a central hub through which interested parties can gain new information about measurement and economic tools, research gaps to be filled and ways they can help. To stay current on all the latest developments, view the complete strategic plan or sign up for the Soil Renaissance newsletter, visit [www.soilrenaissance.org](http://www.soilrenaissance.org).

###

For media inquiries contact
Robyn Peterson, Noble Foundation, (580) 224-6294, rlpeterson@noble.org.
or
Mary Thompson, Farm Foundation, NFP, (630) 571-9393, mary@farmfoundation.org

---

Far* Farm Foundation, NFP, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, serves as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster a deeper understanding of issues shaping the future of agriculture, food systems and rural regions. The Foundation does not lobby or advocate. Our 81-year reputation for objectivity allows us to bring together diverse groups from across the food chain, producers, private agribusiness leaders, representatives of NGOs, academics and government agency representatives—for meaningful discussions of economic and public policy issues. ([www.farmfoundation.org](http://www.farmfoundation.org))

---

**THE SAMUEL ROBERTS NOBLE FOUNDATION**

The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation (www.noble.org), headquartered in Ardmore, Oklahoma, is an independent, nonprofit institute conducting plant science research, plant breeding and agricultural programs to enhance agricultural productivity, which influences agriculture regionally, nationally and internationally. The Noble Foundation also provides grants to nonprofit charitable, educational and health organizations.