

Explore Idaho's Diverse Agriculture on CTIC's Conservation in Action Tour

Idaho's Treasure Valley will be the focus of the ninth annual Conservation in Action Tour, hosted by the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) on August 23 and 24. The tour will give more than 100 participants an up-close look at how Idaho's farmers address pressing water, soil and nutrient management issues—and send each tour-goer home with ideas for conservation programs and practices for his or her community.

The program kicks off with a social event at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 23, at Jack's Urban Meeting Place (JUMP), a beautiful and dynamic new space in downtown Boise, Idaho, that is perfect for the networking and idea sharing that makes every Conservation in Action Tour a highlight on the conservation agriculture calendar.

Bright and early Wednesday, tour buses will leave Boise for a tour of farms representing some of the most prominent of the region's 180+ crops, run by some of the region's most innovative farmers. Stops include:

- Dixon Farms, where David Dixon will provide insight into the water management strategy on his diversified crop operation, which includes drip irrigation system in mint—a system that is tightly tied to water quantity and water quality issues.
- M&M Feedlot, likely the only cattle feedlot in the nation with a 1.5-acre landscaped park for visitors in the middle of the pens...testament to the Mann family's masterful control of odor and flies through an integrated system that includes pen management, manure management and composting. We'll also learn about the operation's engineered wetland, which boosts the quality of water before it is discharged to the Snake River.
- Arena Valley Farm, which includes company and university trials on a production field. There, leading farm managers, extension researchers and nutrient management specialists will explain conservation and soil building strategies in potato rotations.
- McIntyre Farms, where Brad McIntyre and his family are building the thin soils on their sloping operation through cover cropping, no-till (a practice Brad taught himself in the absence of local farmers with any experience) and the reintroduction of livestock to the operation.



Along the way, the group will enjoy lunch and an informative display at the Bayer Crop Science/Nunhems Seeds facility in Parma, as well as a look at the remarkable seed-producing hub in the Treasure Valley, part of a global network of unique seed-growing areas. There, J.R. Simplot President/CEO Bill Whitacre will share his insight on the importance of sustainability to his huge, highly diversified company, which extends from fertilizer mining through retail crop nutrient sales, crop advising, crop production, food processing and logistics and works closely with global customers to meet their growing demands for affordable, sustainably produced food.

Finally, dinner at the Indian Creek Winery will showcase some of Idaho's renowned wines—and provide another great opportunity to network with farmers, crop advisors, ag retailers, agribusiness leaders, university and extension experts, and representatives of government agencies and non-governmental organizations. There will also be an expo of conservation technology and a chance to talk one-on-one with the farmers we visited and other local experts for more insight.

Don't miss the CTIC Conservation in Action Tour, August 23-24 in Boise, Idaho. For details and to book your seat, visit www.ctic.org/CIATours or call CTIC at (765) 494-9555.

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