MIKE DANIELS – SOYBEAN RESEARCH PROFILE

Farmer Blog



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Why did you decide to pursue a career that includes soybean research?
My love for the people in agriculture and the desire to help them led me to my career. I wanted to serve these people, and that's why I am in extension. I developed my passion for soils, water and more while interacting with the people in the ag industry.

What research topic have you completed in the past or are working on now that could have or has had the most significant impact on soybean production?
Our work found that row crops are losing more potassium than we realized. Understanding what is happening in these fields may help farmers improve nutrient retention and save on fertilizer costs. Our work on irrigation water management also makes soybean production more cost-efficient.

How has the soybean checkoff enhanced your ability to find answers to production problems for farmers?
The work done on Arkansas Discovery Farms can't be done by one person. We need a team. The United Soybean Board helped get the program started, and the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board has consistently helped fund a technician who collects on-farm samples and helps troubleshoot data collection. The technician is a vital member of the team, and our partnership with the soy checkoff makes that possible. The data from those samples provides information we rely on to secure additional grants and private funding.

Within your area of expertise, what are the top two or three general recommendations you would offer farmers to improve their management practices?

- *Test soils to continually improve nutrient management. This information allows*

farmers to add nutrients as needed and adjust agronomic practices to keep those nutrients for their crops.

- *Manage irrigation water carefully, relying on information from fields and recommendations from research to optimize water use.*
- *Don't be afraid of sustainability initiatives. Take advantage of opportunities to learn how to benefit from specific programs and practices that can improve soil physical and microbiological properties to support fertility.*

Within your area of expertise, what do you consider to be critical soybean research needs that can impact the profitability of famers in the future?
Water will be the critical issue for agriculture in the future. We need to figure out how to hold on to water and use it effectively. We need research focused on more efficient use of water, ways to reduce runoff and improve soil drainage. Management practices that improve these factors cause changes that happen very slowly, so we also need to take the time to fully understand their potential value.

SRIN articles:

Discovery Farms Engage Arkansas Farmers in Finding Sustainable Solutions

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