UnderstandingAG

Restoring soil, profits, farms and futures

Understanding Ag's team of world-class consultants help our clients successfully implement practices that restore soil health and ecosystem function, which reduces dependency on expensive inputs and leads to sustained profitability.

Meet Rodney Saunders

Rodney Saunders grew up on a family farm near Shelbina, Missouri, raising corn, milo, soybeans and wheat, as well as cattle and hogs. After graduating from high school, he attended college at Missouri Western State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agronomy and Animal Science.

He began his career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service (later to become the Natural Resources Conservation Service) where he worked for 34 years. During that time, Rodney worked two years as a Nutrient Management Specialist, later becoming a District Conservationist, working 25 years in Northwest Missouri. During those years, he specialized in grazing management and soil health, along with his normal duties as a District Conservationist. In December of 2021, Rodney retired from the USDA-NRCS and recently started working with Understanding Ag.

In his soil health-focused work with NRCS, Rodney was inspired seeing the positive impacts of diverse cropping rotations, cover crops, no-till and livestock integration. He also witnessed how desire and commitment can lead to remarkable transformation on the land. In his new role as a UA consultant, Rodney will continue working with private landowners who share similar interests and who want to make these same impacts on their own farmland.

Our mission

Understanding Ag is a regenerative agricultural consulting company that provides the support and confidence to help our clients reduce input costs, generate actual profits and ensure family farming futures. We accomplish this by educating and mentoring farmers, ranchers, landowners, businesses, and communities in the principles and practices needed to restore, repair, rebuild, regenerate their farming and ranching ecosystems.

Who we are

Understanding Ag's consultants are real farmers and ranchers who combine decades of experience to help our clients successfully implement regenerative agricultural and ecological principles that replace the input-intensive, agricultural model to enable sustained profitable farming and ranching operations. Understanding Ag, LLC also offers consulting and planning services for multi-enterprise systems, businesses, organizations and communities.

Meet Rodney Saunders

Rodney and his wife, Alicia, live in Savannah, MO on a small farm. He has two grown, married children, one grandchild and another one on the way. He still has the passion for grazing management and soil health and continues to be driven to educate producers about the benefits and sustainability of regenerative farming practices.

Your partner in regenerative agriculture

I grew up in a rural community in northeast Missouri, working for my dad and later with my brother, farming row crops and raising livestock. All I wanted to do was farm, but the financial crisis of the 1980's redefined my future and directed me to college.

While in college at Western Missouri State University, my views and knowledge expanded greatly, meeting people from other regions of the country and experiencing life outside the family farm. After graduating 1987, I began a career with the USDA's Soil Conservation Service—a career that was full of challenges and successes as I worked with many great people throughout Northern Missouri.

In my third year of work with the SCS, I attended a Grazing School in Linneus, MO, where Jim Gerrish was the primary instructor. This schooling may have had the biggest impact of all training I would receive during my next 20 years of service. I took that knowledge back from this schooling, in addition to the information I learned at other grazing management training, to educate and assist the many producers in Northwest Missouri throughout the next two-plus decades.

In the spring of 2013, as the soil health movement gained traction, I used every opportunity to build my knowledge base, attending multiple workshops and listening to speakers such as Gabe Brown, David Brandt and many others.

With the information I learned, I educated my staff about the benefits of soil health and began sharing my knowledge with literally hundreds of farmers throughout NW Missouri through workshops and in one-on-one meetings. Over the next eight years, tens of thousands of acres of cover crops were planted in my four-county work area.

Retiring after 34 years of service with USDA NRCS, I am ready for new challenges. As a consultant with Understanding Ag, I am excited to continue my work with private landowners, helping them expand profitability in their operations by successfully implementing regenerative farming practices.

Contact us today

Begin your journey to greater profitability by visiting **understandingag.com**, by calling (256) 996-3142, or by e-mailing kathy@UnderstandingAg.com.

Your first 30-minute phone consultation is free and without obligation.