Science Societies

Undergraduate soil science training in the USA

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Dickinson State University students learn to describe soils in the field in 2018. Photo by Cindy Burgess, Dickinson State University.

Well-trained soil scientists are important to meet many of the challenges facing our modern world. There has been considerable interest in the status of soil science education in the USA over the last 20 years. However, there is no comprehensive list of university programs that provide soil science training in the USA, which makes it difficult to determine if we are losing, gaining, or holding steady with regards to these programs.

In an article recently published in the *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, researchers evaluated the bachelor's degree offerings of all of the regionally accredited colleges and universities in the USA. The research team identified a total of 92 soil science preparatory degree programs at 86 universities (six universities offered two degree programs that met the established standards).

This study provides a baseline for soil science preparatory programs in the USA as of 2020, which can be used in the future to investigate program changes over time. It also provides information on the programs that should be considered for investigation when soil science education studies are being conducted.

Dig deeper

Brevik, E.C., Dolliver, H., Edinger-Marshall, S., Itkin, D., Johnson-Maynard, J., Liles, G., … & Vaughan, K. (2020). Undergraduate degrees that train students for soil science careers at universities in the USA and its territories. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, *84*. **https://doi.org/10.1002/saj2.20140**

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