We had a kick-off meeting with project collaborators on November 5, 2018. At this meeting we discussed project objectives, outputs and logistics, and we agreed on the protocol to follow for site selection and management practices evaluation. Briefly, collaborators will try and identify a minimum of 20 field trials (one per farmer field) per state. The goal is to compare the yield and profit measured for the treatment of interest against the replicated strips that represent the average management (control). The treatment of interest in each state has been identified utilizing the results of the previous NCSRP project (Benchmarking soybean production system in the North-central USA).

Project PIs Grassini (NE) and Conley (WI), along with Dr. Juan Ignacio Rattalino Edreira (NE), Dr. Jose Andrade (NE), Dr. Antoine Couedel (NE), Dr. Spyridon Mourtzinis (WI), Mr. Adam Roth (WI) and Mr. John Gaska (WI) will supervise data collection and will be responsible to quality control the data and input them into a digital database. The NE-WI core team has had bi-monthly Skype calls to discuss and monitor project progress. We also had a 2-day meeting at UW in January to finalize project protocols and discuss outcomes derived from the project results.

After substantial input from all project collaborators, we designed the survey form to be used in the project to collect all necessary field data. State collaborators were requested to identify fields before April 15, 2019. The number of collected fields as of April 1 are shown in the table below.

The NE-WI core team has been actively utilizing the legacy data from the initial project. To date we have published two manuscripts from this legacy data (listed below) one in review and three in preparation.

By the end of this 3-year project, we will have validated a novel research approach that utilizes self-reported on-farm production practices, together with on-farm validation, to identify management practices with greatest impact on farm yield and profit. Consequently, we will strengthen state-to-state research collaboration through the managed coordination of the on-farm partnership, build farmer-to-farmer networks and identify and communicate key management practices that increase soybean productivity and return of investment.

We will also build a framework through our farmer-to-farmer networks, farmer video profiles, and field labs to communicate findings directly to farmers from farmers.