



# FARMERS DELIVER VALUE THROUGH COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability is not only important to consumers, but it's also vital to Indiana's farms. Relying on the land to produce crops each year, Indiana farmers carefully steward their farmland to ensure environmental and economic benefits to the state. This comes in the form of sequestering carbon, preventing runoff, and capturing nutrients before they leave the farm.

Through the organizations that make up the Indiana Conservation Partnership, 50,000 conservation and farm best management practices were implemented across Indiana farms in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

## DOING MORE TO IMPROVE SOIL HEALTH AND PROTECT LOCAL WATERWAYS

Farmers' sustainability practices have advantages on and beyond the farm. Reduced tillage or no-till and cover crops protect the soil and make it more productive. The practices also keep nutrients in place by limiting runoff and drainage into local waterways. Here's a look at some practices farmers use that benefit their productivity and the local environment.

**70%** of Indiana's farmed acres were no-till, and 18% were reduced-till acres in 2021.<sup>2</sup>

1.6 million acres used cover crops in 2023.<sup>3</sup> Cover crops planted in 2023 helped to protect waterways by reducing sediment by over 1.6 million tons. These cover crops also reduced nitrogen by 3.6 million pounds and phosphorus by 1.8 million pounds.

No till practices and the **1.6 million acres** of cover crops sequestered an estimated 41,000 tons of soil organic carbon which is the equivalent to the carbon emissions of more than 30,168 cars.

Currently **31%** of Indiana farm acres are using cover crops, which puts Indiana at 2nd in the nation for total cover crop acres. Indiana, through the Indiana Ag Nutrient Alliance has implemented a goal to increase Indiana cover crop acres by **40%** by 2025.

#### INDIANA SOYBEAN FARMERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO SUSTAINABILITY IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 1980.<sup>4</sup>

- ↑ 61% irrigation water use efficiency improvement in acre inches per bushel of production
- ↑ 47% land use efficiency improvement in acres per bushel of production
- ↑ 45% energy efficiency improvement per bushel of production
- ↑ 42% greenhouse gas emissions efficiency improvement in pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>e per bushel of production
- ↑ 35% soil conservation improvement per acre

## PROGRAMS THAT DRIVE AND MEASURE IMPROVEMENTS

A wide variety of programs exist to help the state's farmers steward Indiana's resources, ranging from Natural Resource Conservation Services programs to local soil and water conservation district grants, carbon reduction programs, university and company product and practice trials, the 4Rs Nutrient Stewardship program and many others.

Infield Advantage, an Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) program funded by the state's farmers, provides insights that drive beneficial practice changes for Indiana farmers while positively impacting soil health and water quality. Infield Advantage offered a cover crop trial, providing cover crop seed, soil testing, biomass sampling, soil health assessment and field reports. Learn more at [Infieldadvantage.com](https://infieldadvantage.com)

In 2021, **210,000 cover crop acres** in the ICP program were modeled to quantify carbon sequestration equivalents.<sup>2</sup> As part of Indiana's Nutrient Reduction Strategy, this modeling effort illustrates the continued success and challenges of conservation and serves as a tool to help set watershed priority and reduction targets, manage conservation resources and to further stakeholder involvement across Indiana.

Through various conservation programs and best production practices, Indiana farmers participate in the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol, which outlines the regulations, processes and management practices that ensure sustainable soy production for the vast majority of U.S. soybean farmers.

Learn more about  
farmer contributions at  
[FarmersDeliver.com](https://FarmersDeliver.com)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/74b9ac1e7373478fb4050711c90cb4a8>

<sup>2</sup> ISDA.gov

<sup>3</sup> 2021 ISDA Transect Data

<sup>4</sup> Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, 2021. Environmental Outcomes from On-Farm Agricultural Production in the United States (Fourth Edition), ISBN: 978-0-578-33372-4



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