

Illinois Cover Crop Initiative



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Acres & Eligibility

Is there an acre limit for my application?

There is not an acre limit for individual applications.

How are participants chosen?

Applications are reviewed and contracts are administered on a first come, first served basis. There is currently funding available for 75,000 acres in Illinois. After 75,000 acres are reached, a waitlist will be established. In case an enrolled farmer is unable to plant their cover crops, a waitlisted farmer may move into their spot.

Am I eligible if I've planted cover crops on these acres before?

Yes- previously cover cropped acres are eligible for this program.

If I only plant cover crops before soybeans, can I enroll in a multi-year contract?

Contracts require the same acres to be cover cropped year after year with no breaks. If you only cover crop before soybeans and plan to do so this year, you are eligible for a 1-year contract that covers this year only.

What if I sign up for multiple years, but the weather does not permit me to plant cover crops one year?

We understand weather is a variable that no one can control and we are able to work with individual growers and their situation.

Am I eligible if I'm enrolled in other programs on the same acres I want to enroll in the ICCI?

The ICCI program is eligible to be stacked with federal funding like CSP, EQIP, and CRP programs as well as state programs like Fall Covers for Spring Savings. The program does not stack with privately funded programs, or programs that offer payments for carbon market credits. If you are enrolled in Partners for Conservation funding, please chat with our team to find out if you're eligible.

Seed & Planting

Are there requirements for seeding mixes and rates?

Please follow NRCS guidelines when establishing and tending to your cover crops. This includes following seeding rates and using approved mixes. Information on rates and mixes can be found on the Midwest Cover Crop Council's website at www.midwestcovercrops.org.

Do I need to use your listed seed suppliers?

You are able to use the cover crop seed dealer of your choice. We have supplied a list of four cover crop seed dealers that we are partnering with to promote the ICCI program as recommendations for farmers who may not currently have a dealer.

When do I need to plant my cover crops?

Cover crops must be planted no later than December 1, 2022 but can be planted as early as this summer. If you are planting some summer annuals after wheat, for example, those acres are eligible for the ICCI program.

Can I plant my cover crops however I like?

Following NRCS guidelines, you can drill, broadcast, or aerial seed your cover crops. Interseeding is also allowed if the type of seed chosen is a good fit for that practice.

How do I know what seed mix, rate, and planting type is best for me?

If you have questions on any component of your cover crop strategy, reach out to your local SWCD/NRCS office for advice that follows NRCS guidelines. Your cover crop seed dealer is also a great source of information. Both sources will provide you with information pertinent to your area for best results.

NRCS Common Seeding Recommendations

Post-Soybean, Into Corn:

Oats/Oilseed Radish

Seeding Rates (lb/ac)

	Oats	Radish
Drilled:	32-40	1.5-3
Broadcast:	50-70	1.5-3
Aerial:	50-70	1.5-3

Post-Corn, Into Soybean:

Cereal Rye

Seeding Rates (lb/ac)

Drilled:	30-90
Broadcast:	40-100
Aerial:	40-100

NRCS recommendations are based on Midwest Cover Crop Council Illinois Cover Crop Selection Tool. The above recommendations are common; consult www.midwestcovercrops.org for other species and options.

Data & FBN

What data do I need to share?

Farmers will be **randomly selected** to share either a "lite" version of their data or a "full" version of their data. The needs are outlined below:

"Full" Data Collection

- Crop types
- Tillage/cover crop program
- Fertilizer program
- Crop protection program
- Farm energy usage
- FSA 578 form
- Field boundaries

"Lite" Data Collection

- Cover crop plans
- FSA 578 form
- Field boundaries

Do I need to keep my seed tags, receipts, and other proofs of purchase?

You will report your cover crop acres on the FSA 578 form, and this will be used for verification. FBN will also be completing randomized remote sensing to verify if cover crops have been planted. No seed tags, receipts, or other proofs of purchase are required.

Who am I sharing my data with?

Farmers Business Network, or FBN, will be collecting and securely keeping all of the data collected in their Gradable platform. Data will only be shared in aggregated form to demonstrate carbon sequestration and energy usage, never individually.

Do I have to pay for my data to be stored on Gradable?

FBN's Gradable platform comes at no cost to participants in the ICCI program.

Will I have to listen to a sales pitch from anyone?

The project partners will not reach out to you to sell any of their products or services. If you are curious about any products or services they offer, they will be more than happy to share the requested information with you.

Other Questions?

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www.farmland.org/icci