

Harvesting Sunshine Cargill Grant

The purpose of this program is to increase the use of cover crops throughout Isanti County by Identifying why cover crops are not a widely used practice and what the barriers are to adoption.

Design Standards

All eligible projects must be designed according to the USDA Field Office Technical Guide or other recognized standard.

Cost-share rates

1. 3-year contract rates: \$45/acre single species; \$55/acre multi-species; \$60/acre for inter-seeding (per-year) up to a maximum of 200 acres per operator.

Multi species mixture qualification*: must be a mixture of two or more cover crop species from different plant families to achieve one or more of the following: (1) species mix with different maturity dates, (2) attract beneficial insects, (3) attract pollinators, (4) increase soil biological diversity, (5) serve as a trap crop for insect pests, or (6) provide food and cover for wildlife habitat management.

2. 1-year contract rates: \$20/acre single species; \$30/acre multi-species; \$35/acre for inter-seeding (per year) up to a maximum of 100 acres per operator.
3. Contract length:1-3 years; Maximum of three 1-year contracts per operator.
4. Payment: Annual payments made upon completion of annual site visits as described in these guidelines. Funds can be paired and stacked with EQIP funds.

Eligibility Requirements

- Funding available to producers in Isanti County only.
- Cost share agreement must be signed and approved BEFORE seed purchase.
- Invoices, seed tags, and field inspections are required before payment is made.
- Producer will follow an Operation and Maintenance Plan.
- Producer will allow staff to complete soil health monitoring as described in this document.
- The field to be planted with a cover crop must be planted to an annual crop the following year.
- For rented land-the landowner must sign a Statement of Control of Land.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 6/21/2022

Required Soil Health Monitoring

Annual soil health monitoring to be initiated before 1st cover crop planting.

- I. Annual collection and analysis of soil sample at certified lab- parameters to be measured include phosphorus, nitrogen, potassium, organic content and pH
- II. Annual measure of infiltration rate using infiltration ring
- III. Bury a piece of cotton cloth at each site and annually dig to show rate of degradation, which will illustrate changes in soil biology

Selection

- 1) length of contract i.e. 1-3 years (3 yr is priority);
- 2) location within county (to scatter cover crop projects around the county in different soils);
- 3) crop type (to include diversity of crop types);
- 4) landowner willingness to allow staff to conduct monitoring and provide outreach using their cover crop plot.