

## Harvesting Cover Crop Program & Guidelines

**Purpose:** 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.

**Goal:** Establish 650 Acres of Demonstration Cover Crops over three years.

**Funding Available:** \$61,200 (12/22/2022 Expiration)

**Design Standards:** All eligible project must be designed according to the USDA Field Office Technical Guide.

### **Cost Share:**

1. \$30/acre single species; \$40/acre multi-species (per-year) up to a maximum of 200 acres
2. Contract length: 1-3 yrs. (3 yr contracts are priority)
3. Annual payments made upon completion of annual site visits as described in these guidelines.

### **Guidelines:**

1. Ineligible for this program if you receive cover crop incentive and or/cost-share payment through another program (i.e. EQIP, CSP).
2. Funding available to producers in Isanti County only.
3. Cost share agreement must be signed and approved BEFORE seed purchase.
4. Invoices, seed tags, and field inspections are required before payment is made.
5. Producer will follow an Operation and Maintenance Plan.
6. Producer will allow staff to complete soil health monitoring as described in this document.
7. Producer is eligible to re-apply for program if the acreage and/or species level of the cover crop planting is enhanced.
8. The field to be planted with a cover crop must be planted to an annual crop the following year.
9. For rented land-the landowner must sign a Statement of Control of Land.

### **Soil Health Monitoring:**

Annual soil health monitoring to be initiated before 1<sup>st</sup> cover crop planting.

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

### **Site Visits:**

1. **Pre-cover crop**- soil tests, infiltration tests, bury cotton cloth
2. **Verify cover crop was seeded and germinated**

Participants will be selected and prioritized based on scoring related to;

- 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.