HOW CAN COVER CROP ADOPTION IN TARGETED ZONES IMPACT NUTRIENT LOSS REDUCTION?

INFORMATIONAL SHEET

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Project Status: NEW

EVALUATION OF A TARGETED CONSERVATION PLAN IN THE LAKE BLOOMINGTON WATERSHED

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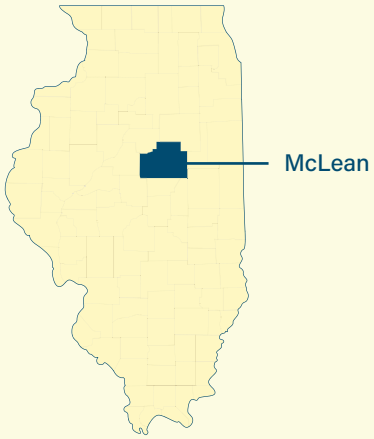
PROJECT SUMMARY

When faced with non-point nutrient loss reduction goals, it truly does take a village. Farmer-led watershed groups are critical to drive cover crop adoption in watershed hot spot areas. Through this project, researchers will use historic and current water quality and conservation practice data for the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake watersheds to conduct a "Nutrient Loss Risk Analysis" that pinpoints high and low risk nutrient-loss zones. They will share the high-risk hot spots with farmer-led watershed groups and agencies, as well as deliver educational resources to help area farmers adopt cover crops and other practices to mitigate nutrient loss.

TRIAL LOCATIONS



WHY THIS RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT

- When evaluating the effectiveness of cover crops on reducing nitrogen levels in watersheds that feed into the Mississippi River, the studies have been conducted using scientifically controlled parameters. These practices are not reflective of all farms within a watershed.
- In addition, when water samples are taken and averaged across a watershed area, they do not reflect the variability and areas of highest risk for nutrient loss through subsurface and surface drainage.
- This project intends to identify high-risk zones to target cover crop education and resources.

HOW THIS RESEARCH BENEFITS THE FARMER

- Researchers plan to pinpoint high and low risk nutrient-loss zones within the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake watersheds. For farmers in high-risk hot spots, this knowledge can inform their engagement with farmer-led watershed groups and agencies about best practices for implementing cover crops and other practices to contribute to further nutrient loss reduction. If proven successful, this model could be used in other watersheds around the state in the future.

CHECK OUT FIELD ADVISOR!

See updates and learn more about this project, the research team and other projects at **FieldAdvisor.org**.

Contact the ISA agronomy team: **agronomy-team@ilsoy.org**.

The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) checkoff and membership programs represent more than 43,000 soybean farmers in Illinois. The checkoff funds market development, soybean production and government relations efforts, while the membership program, Illinois Soybean Growers (ISG) and the Illinois Soybean Growers PAC actively advocates for positive and impactful legislation for farmers at local, state and national levels. ISA upholds the interests of Illinois soybean farmers through promotion, advocacy, research and education with the vision of becoming a trusted partner of Illinois soybean farmers to ensure their profitability now and for future generations.