

# [***PAYMENTS AVAILABLE FOR 2023 COVER CROPS THROUGH FARMERS FOR SOIL HEALTH***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B7X-M9G1-JCBF-S0T9-00000-00&context=1516831)

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The following information was released by the Illinois Corn Marketing Board (ICMB):

Farmers in Illinois can receive incentive payments for cover crops planted in 2023 by enrolling in Farmers for ***Soil*** Healthby February 28. Farmers for ***Soil Health*** is a collaborative initiative led by the National Soy Checkoff, National Pork Checkoff, and National Corn Growers Association in partnership with state commodity groups and conservation organizations such as Precision Conservation Management(PCM).

This program is unique because it was built by farmers for farmers, and it assists with the cost and learning curve of adopting cover crops, says Ben West, executive director for Farmers for ***Soil Health***. We built flexibility into the timing, allowing farmers to enroll their fields before or after planting cover crops.

PCM is the state Technical Assistance partner for Farmers for ***Soil Health*** in Illinois, Kentucky and Nebraska. Since no carbon credit is claimed through Farmers for ***Soil Health***, there could be opportunities to stack payments from more than one program on each acre of cover crops. Reach out to a PCM Specialistto see if you qualify for additional payments.

The Illinois Soybean Association prioritizes providing agronomic support for farmers as well as on-farm conservation practice research and adoption, says Brady Holst, ISA Soybean Production Committee Chair. Resources such as Farmers for ***Soil Health*** that encourage and assist farmers in adopting practices such as planting cover crops, is just one way ISA meets that priority and helps farmers reach their conservation goals.

Cover crop payments from Farmers for ***Soil Health*** are available statewide. If a field was planted to cover crops for the first time in Fall 2023, it is eligible for a three-year contract payment of $50 per acre. This is structured as $25 the first year, $15 the second year and $10 the third year. Enrollment is a simple online process that also positions farmers to take advantage of a future marketplace, providing a direct channel between farmers and end users. Enrollment for cover crops planted in fall 2023 must be completed by February 28, 2024. Enrollment for cover crop planting in 2024 will be available from March 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

According to IL Corn Growers Association President Dave Rylander, IL Corn is really focused on helping farmers adopt conservation practices to achieve the goals set in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy without additional government regulation. We know that cover crops are an important opportunity to address nutrient loss, and these funds can help farmers offset the costs associated with implementing the practice.

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