

SOIL HEALTH INCENTIVES MADE SIMPLE

Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio

Ducks Unlimited (DU) has partnered with Archer-Daniels-Midland Company (ADM) and Farmers Business Network (FBN) to incentivize producers in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio to implement 175,000 acres of cover crops to improve water quality and wildlife habitats. Over the next year, DU will work with their partners and private landowners to enroll acres into cover crop contracts with ADM. In return, the landowners will receive a \$10-25/acre incentive payment.

Cover crops are a crucial conservation practice that benefits wildlife habitat and water quality for communities. The conversion of native habitats to intensively farmed row crops can result in decreased soil health, soil erosion, and nutrient run-off. Nutrient run-off from agriculture fields has been known to contribute to harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes, and even the oxygen depleted gulf hypoxia regions in the Gulf of Mexico.

Producers are now seeing new opportunities to plant cover crops to increase soil health, decrease erosion, and reduce nutrients and runoff. According to USDA NRCS, cover crops are only implemented on 6% of the cultivated land in the north-central United States. DU's goal is to help farmers apply cover crop practices to improve soil health, reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases, and improve water resources, while providing economic benefit to participating producers, while maintaining benefits to wildlife.

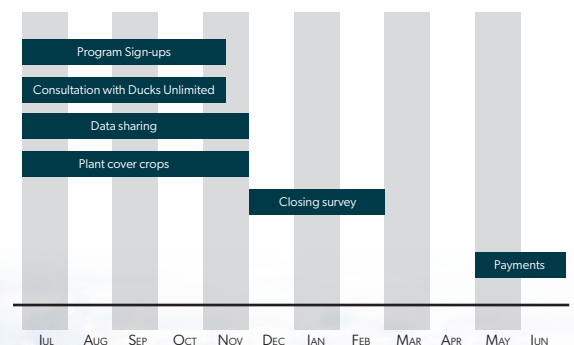
Under this project, cover crop implementation will occur across all of Indiana and Michigan but will be further targeted in the intensively agriculture dominated watersheds of Saginaw Bay and the St. Joseph River, Michigan; and the Western Lake Erie Basin of Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

Cover Crop Partnership Goals:

- Work with private landowners to implement and enroll 175,000 acres of cover crops across the states of Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio with further focus on the identified impaired watersheds.
- Improve soil health, decrease soil erosion, increase water quality, and maintain benefits to wildlife and their habitats.

Timeline/Process:

1. Inquire about Ducks Unlimited Soil Health Incentives Made Simple program
2. Consultation with Ducks Unlimited or approved representative
3. Receive and sign ADM 1-year contract
4. FBN onboarding & data
5. Plant covers
6. Closing survey and final data requested
7. \$10-25/ acre payments made annually



Eligibility:

State	Practice	Compensation	Requirements
Indiana	Cover Crop - New in 2023	\$25/acre	Must provide FSA documents and FSA subsidiary print and will be shared with NRCS/USDA. Cannot be paid for cover crop on the same acres by federally funded programs like EQIP/CSP/RCP. Has to be new practice or expanded practice. Must have wheat, corn, or soybeans in rotation.
	Cover Crop - New in 2018 to 2022	\$15/acre	Must provide FSA documents and FSA subsidiary print and will be shared with NRCS/USDA. Cannot be paid for cover crop on the same acres by federally funded programs like EQIP/CSP/RCP. Acres could not have cover crop prior to 2018. Must have wheat, corn, or soybeans in rotation.
	Plant a cover crop in 2023	\$10/acre	Plant a cover crop no later than NRCS accepted date. Previous cover crop practice allowed on field. Can be in other federally funded program. Must have wheat, corn, or soybeans in rotation.
Ohio	Cover Crop - New in 2023	\$25/acre	Must provide FSA documents and FSA subsidiary print and will be shared with NRCS/USDA. Cannot be paid for cover crop on the same acres by federally funded programs like EQIP/CSP/RCP. Has to be new practice or expanded practice. Must have wheat, corn, or soybeans in rotation.
	Cover Crop - New in 2018 to 2022	\$15/acre	Must provide FSA documents and FSA subsidiary print and will be shared with NRCS/USDA. Cannot be paid for cover crop on the same acres by federally funded programs like EQIP/CSP/RCP. Acres could not have cover crop prior to 2018. Must have wheat, corn, or soybeans in rotation.
Michigan	No available acres for 2023.		

Producer Commitments:

- Complete eligibility survey and return to DU/consultation with DU
- Sign ADM cover crop implementation agreement
- Plant covers according to NRCS standards and specifications
- Report cover crop acres and requested data to FBN
- Complete FBN closing survey



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
CONTACT:**

Jena Herrick
Regional Agronomist, Ducks Unlimited
815-760-1895 • jherrick@ducks.org

Kylie McElrath
Regional Biologist, Ducks Unlimited
734-277-8092 • kmcelrath@ducks.org