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The Practical COVER CROPPER

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Carbon credit payments could be a significant additional stream of farm revenue. But questions still exist around verification of carbon sequestration by practices such as cover crops, in part because carbon sequestration is nuanced.

If you imagine your soil as a bank account, sequestered carbon could be compared to the money in your savings account while organic matter would be your checking account. Money, or carbon, can be easily cycled in and out of your checking account, while your savings account would increase slowly with time.

Learn about the complexity of sequestering carbon in agricultural soils by watching **Randy Jackson's** presentation from our 2019 Small Grains Conference.

Rotationally Raised:

MAKING SMALL GRAINS WORK Conference

Can we Sequester Carbon in Agricultural Soils?

RANDY JACKSON

AUGUST 15 -16, 2019



Sequestering carbon in annual, row cropping systems is improbable over a short period, but the very practices being promoted as carbon sequestering have multiple benefits; they can reduce production costs while simultaneously reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Or more simply, cutting costs cuts emissions.

Cover crops retain soil nutrients and reduce soil erosion, lowering future fertilizer rate requirements. High amounts of cover crop biomass can suppress weeds, eliminating the need for herbicide passes or products. Replacing tillage with cover crops could save on diesel expenses. Grazing cover crops can save feed costs. **With or without carbon credit payments, cover crops can still be a low-cost or even cost-saving enterprise.** Stay tuned for our economics of cover crops webinar in March.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Learn about carbon and ecosystem service markets

Join the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership, PFI and other partner organizations for a free webinar exploring different environmental and carbon market opportunities for Midwest farmers on February 12, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CST.

This event brings together Indigo Ag, Nori, Ecosystem Services Market Consortium, and the Soil and Water Outcomes Fund to provide a side-by-side comparison of opportunities. Presentations will cover program enrollment, highlighting key contract terms and conditions, payment schedules, and verification requirements.



Register for the webinar here!

Enrolled in PFI-administered cover crop cost share? Here is how you can - or cannot- double up payments and cost share programs

Privately-funded cost share programs and ecosystem service/carbon credit programs are becoming more widely available to producers, however, there are limitations on "double dipping" from multiple privately-funded programs.

Acres enrolled in any carbon credit payment program, except the Soil and Water Outcomes Fund, cannot receive PFI-administered cover crop cost share. We recommend that you think through the pros and cons of different programs over multiple years to determine which program would be the most beneficial for you. If you enroll in the **Soil and Water Outcomes Fund** there will be extra verification needed to ensure that funds do not overlap on fields.

In contrast, acres enrolled in publicly funded programs such as NRCS and IDALS cost share are still eligible for PFI-administered cost share. Please contact rebecca@practicalfarmers.org if you have questions on our cost share eligibility.

IN THE FIELD

Video: "Carbon markets: Exploring the realities and asking the right questions"

Carbon markets – the buying, selling and trading of carbon sequestration credits – are at the forefront of many farmers' minds.

Carbon Markets: Exploring...



Watch this annual conference session by **Cristel Zoebisch** and **Michelle Wander** to learn more about the latest science and policies related to carbon markets, as well as what questions you should be asking about carbon markets as they relate to your farm.

Video: "Carbon on the farm"

Carbon on the farm isn't simply soil carbon sequestration and tailpipe emissions.

In this recorded annual conference session, **Jasmine Dillon** and **Dave Schmidt** explore stable versus unstable soil carbon and GHG emission implications of different animal protein production systems.

Carbon on the Farm - 202...



UPCOMING EVENTS

Webinar: Short Term Perennial Pasture within a Cropping Rotation

Hosted by: John Lloyd, Keith Thompson & Green Cover Seed

February 9 | 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. CST | Online

Nebraska Cover Crop & Soil Health Conference

Hosted by: UNL Eastern Nebraska Research and Extension Center

February 11 | 1 – 4:30 p.m. CST | Online & Several Locations

Farming for the Future: Exploring Ecosystem Markets Forum

Hosted by: Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership & Partners

February 12 | 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CST | Online

Farminar: Contract Grazing Cover Crops for Winter Feed

Hosted by: Jon and Jared Luhman & Practical Farmers

February 16 | 7 – 8:30 p.m. CST | Online

Virtual Shop Talk: Re-Thinking How We Manage On-Farm Nutrients

Hosted by: North Central Region Water Network

February 17 | 9 – 10:30 a.m. CST | Online

Midwest Cover Crops Council Conference

Hosted by: OMAFRA, Ridgetown BDC & Soils at Guelph

February 23 – 25 | Online

Want to host a virtual cover crop happy hour? We'll help you with the tech, and how to virtually invite your neighbors to the discussion. Contact Sarah if interested sarah@practicalfarmers.org

Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event—virtual or in person? Send the details to rebecca@practicalfarmers.org, and we'll include it in our next newsletter.

COVER CROP POLL

Send us your cover crop poll ideas! We want to know what YOU want to know, reply to this email with your ideas for the next poll.

Are you applying for carbon credit payments for your 2021 crop?

I have applied or plan to apply

Select

I am considering applying

Select

I'm not interested in carbon credit payments this year

Select

Previous poll results:

What is your experience with clover as a cover crop?

- **I don't raise clover, but I'm interested in raising it - 37.5%**
- I saw it on the farm growing up but I haven't planted it myself - **31.2%**
- I raise clover now - **18.7%**
- I'm not interested in growing it - **12.5%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

