

Managing the Risk of Conservation Implementation

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Today's Agenda

- Introductions
- Activity (solo or partner up)
- Tools for managing risk
 - Federal working lands programs
 - Cost-share for cover crops
- Crop insurance
 - Premium discounts
 - Emerging coverage options
- Q&A



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Center for Rural Affairs

Our mission is to establish strong rural communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship, and genuine opportunity for all while engaging people in decisions that affect the quality of their lives and the future of their communities.



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Risk Management Agency U.S. Department of Agriculture

Created in 1996, RMA serves America's agricultural producers through effective, market-based risk management tools to strengthen the economic stability of producers and rural communities. In addition, RMA is committed to increasing the availability and effectiveness of federal crop insurance.



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Who do we have in the room?



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Why is conservation important?

What has kept you from trying new practices on your farm or ranch?



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Working lands programs

How do they alleviate risk?

- Financial assistance for producers implementing conservation practices or new farming methods
- Technical assistance from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff

cfra.org/publications/implementingconservation

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EQIP

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Assists producers investing in conservation
- No conservation experience is required
- Typically 1-3 year contracts
- Project-based
- Used to address a specific resource concern

Common practices

- No-till, cover crops, field borders, terraces



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CSP

Conservation Stewardship Program

- Helps producers already implementing conservation take their efforts to the next level
- Conservation experience required
- 5 year contracts
- Whole-farm approach

Common practices

- Multispecies cover crop, field border with pollinator habitat



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What are cover crops?

FSA definition

- Grass, legume, or forb planted to control erosion, improve soil health, or serve another purpose related to conservation
 - Cereal rye, oats, clover, and vetch, as well as brassicas such as radishes and turnips

Benefits

- Build soil health, reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, grazing, +++



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What incentives are available in Nebraska?



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Federal initiatives

EQIP and CSP

EQIP offers:

- \$24.24/acre basic cover crop
- \$33.92/acre multispecies
cover crop
- \$20.83/acre multispecies
frost-terminated cover crop

CSP offers:

- \$6.93/acre basic cover crop
- \$8.48/acre multispecies
cover crop

nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center



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Local initiatives

Natural Resources Districts

Some NRDs in Eastern Nebraska have established initiatives to support local watersheds

- Payment and acreage caps, as well as compliance with other cost-share programs, may vary
- Contact your local NRD or NRCS office

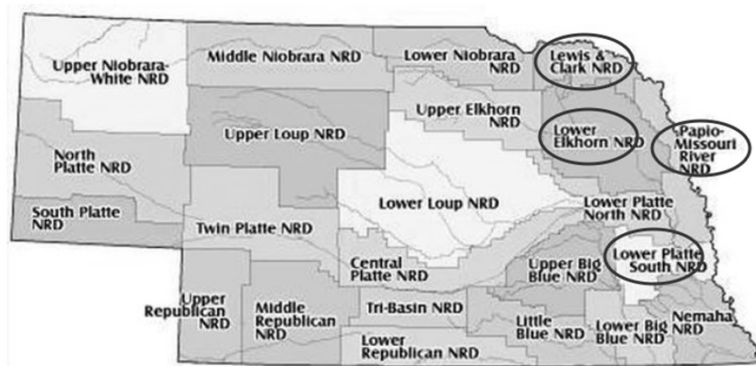
nrdnet.org/nrds/find-your-nrd



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Local initiatives



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Industry initiatives

Practical Farmers of Iowa

PFI offers financial and technical assistance for Nebraska producers seeding fall cover crops.

- \$10/acre up to 200 acres or 10% of farmed acres, whichever is larger
- PLUS \$5/acre for each acre above this threshold
- Funds can be used in addition to any publicly funded government cost-share program.

practicalfarmers.org/cover-crop-cost-share



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What's the connection?

- Industry professionals are beginning to recognize the benefits of practices, such as cover crops, and reward producers for incorporating conservation into their operations



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Incentives



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Crop insurance premium discounts

Pandemic Cover Crop Program

- Administered by RMA
- Offered \$5/acre discount for cover crops planted ahead of 2021 and 2022 planting seasons
- Not yet announced for 2023



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Emerging Coverage Options



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Relay Cropping

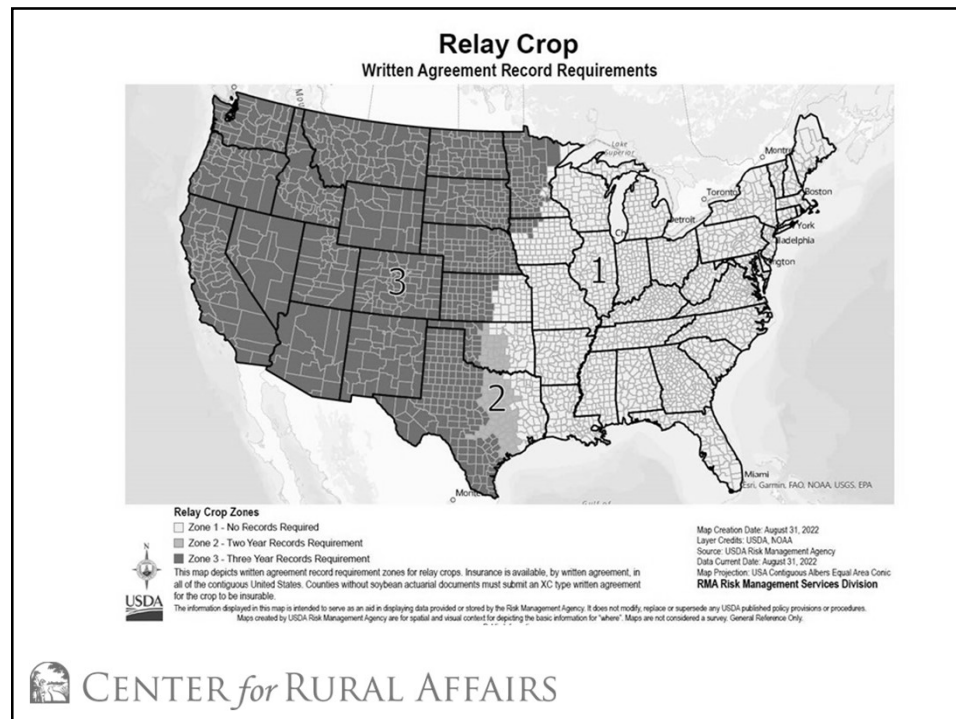
- Produces multiple crops with overlapping growing seasons that are planted and harvested at different times
- Allows for separate maintenance and harvest of each crop

Benefits

- Soil health
- Longer growing season
- Produce two crops that generate income

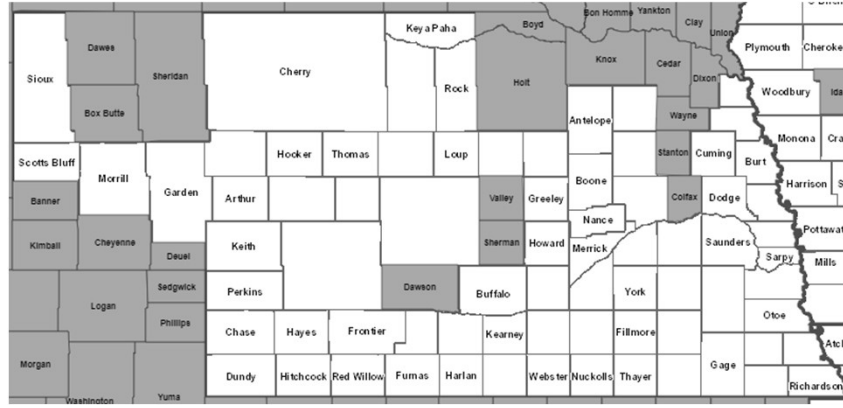


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Barley, 2023

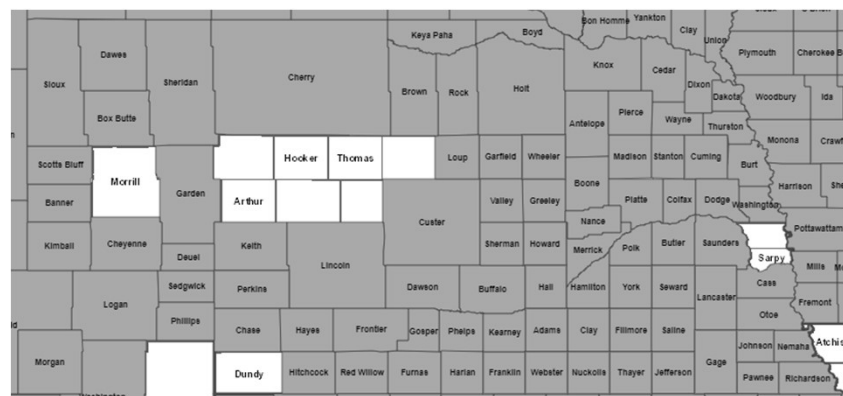


Source: USDA Risk Management Agency

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Oats, 2023

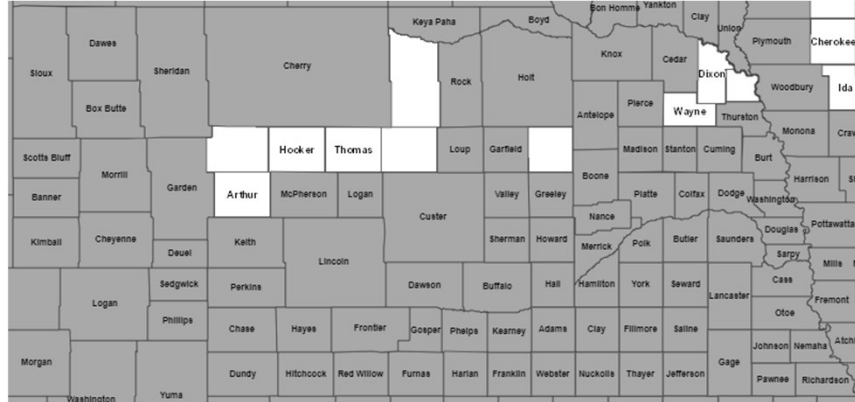


Source: USDA Risk Management Agency

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Wheat, 2023



Source: USDA Risk Management Agency



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Acreage reports

To maintain coverage, producers must:

- Report cover crop acres to FSA on form FSA-578
 - For fall-planted cover crops, the reporting deadline is March 15 of the following spring
 - Or May 31 for cover crops planted after March 15
- Maintain accurate crop acreage reports including small grains for July 15 deadline



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Final thoughts



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Q&A

- Questions for us?
- Questions for you
 - How can crop insurance better support conservation efforts?
 - Any practices you're hesitant to try because it's unclear if your coverage will be affected?



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