

OVERVIEW

Private citizens own over 90 percent of the land in Indiana which includes nearly 15 million acres of farmland and about 4 million acres of forestland, making stewardship absolutely critical to the health of our environment. Each day, farmers and forest landowners are making decisions about natural resource use and management that impacts soil and water quality. With the **Natural Resources Conservation Service's** help, many are creating more productive lands while maintaining healthy ecosystems.

Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service

CSP

Conservation Stewardship Program



Planting a cover crop will improve your soil health by keeping living roots growing as long as possible.

The **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems on their land and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment (limit of \$40,000 annually over 5 years).

BENEFITS

Through CSP, participants take additional steps to improve the resource conditions on their land—including soil, air and habitat quality, water quality and quantity, and energy conservation.

CSP provides two types of payments through five-year contracts: annual payments for applying new conservation activities and maintaining existing conservation systems; and supplemental payments for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation. Producers **may** be able to renew a contract if they have successfully fulfilled the initial contract and agree to achieve additional conservation objectives. Payments are made as soon as practical after October 1 of each year for contract activities applied and maintained in the previous year and following annual contract reviews.

WHAT'S NEW IN CSP

- The 2014 Farm Bill increased the program's focus on generating additional conservation benefits, removed the limitation on the number of nonindustrial private forestland acres that can be enrolled in CSP, and increased flexibility to enroll land coming out of the Conservation Reserve Program.
- Payment Limit: A person or legal entity may not receive more than \$200,000 total for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (\$40,000 annually over 5 years).





Cover crops such as red clover have deep roots that provide air and water channels that improve soil resiliency and protection from erosion.

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ELIGIBILITY

Eligible lands include both private and Tribal agricultural lands, cropland, grassland, pastureland, and nonindustrial private forestland. CSP is available to all producers, regardless of their operation size or type of crops produced. Applicants may include individuals, legal entities, joint operations, or Indian tribes that meet the stewardship threshold for at least two priority resource concerns when they apply. They must also agree to meet or exceed the stewardship threshold for at least one additional priority resource concern by the end of the contract.

Producers must own or control the land for the term of the proposed contract. Contracts include all eligible land in the agricultural operation.

Additional restrictions and program requirements may apply.



Practices such as buffers filter water as it leaves the field.



www.in.nrcs.usda.gov

HOW TO APPLY

Landowners may apply at any time by contacting their local District Conservationist (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/contact/>) or visiting: www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information visit the Indiana NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program website at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/programs/financial/csp/>.

Helping People Help the Land.

