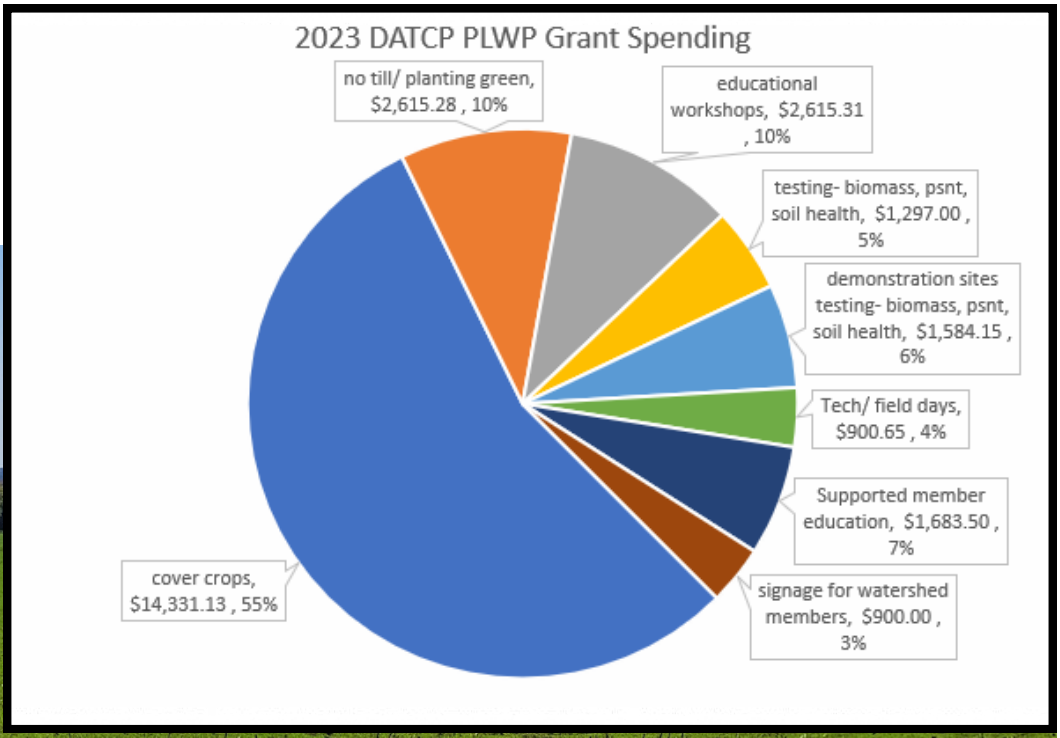
Est. 2018
A Producer-Led Watershed Group™
Farmers of the Sugar River
Promoting Conservation Practices

Farmers of the Sugar River Activities Update Feb 2024



2023 EVENTS & OUTCOMES

- -Roundtable @ Pink Heifer- Monticello (Feb 2)- 15 people shared how the past crop year went- things that worked well, or not, things that they'll try this upcoming year
- -Annual meeting @ Albany Lions Club (Feb 21)- 83 people learned from Steve Apfelbaum on the role farmers have in carbon sequestering; a no-till farmer panel of Greg Theron, Roger Markham, Alvin Francis & Steve Earleywine; Biomass study of cover crops- growing your own nutrients; a rainfall simulator video and different ways to handle manure- composting and grazing- Jeff Endres, Jason Fuller and Jeremy Luckey.
- -Roundtable @ Bridges Bar & Grill- Brodhead- Feb 28 (13 attendees) chatted about biomass sampling project further, past crop year good & bad, and things to try in the future.
- -Shop Talk on Herbicides in the cropping system @ Jerry Daniels' shop (March 14th 3-7pm) 17 people learned more about making better herbicide applications, half-lives of chemicals, chemical families and weed ID from Jake Kaderly, Al McGuire & Josh Kamps.
- -Spring Field day- Benefits of Planting Green- May 23 @ Alvin Francis's farm- Evansville (31 attendees) watched the rainfall simulator described by Tonya Gratz, discussed tips for success in planting green, spring biomass sampling numbers and looked at cover crops in fields.
- -July 21-"pop- up" road trip to Greg Theron's "Nutrient Stewardship Field Day" in Stockton, IL (5 people) Mitchell Hora- keynote speaker- soil health data intelligence & understanding the value of farm data; Dennis Busch & Andrew Cartmill- UW-Platteville- soil loss research plot update; John Musser & Art Scheele- parasites in grazing systems- is insecticide needed- BMPs to avoid the need, tour Greg's crop trials
- -Pollinator & Prairie Field Day- Aug 22 @ Bob Zurfluh's, Monticello (21 attendees) learned from guest speakers Micah Kloppenburg (Xerces Society), Olivia Kovacs (UWEX) and Sam Anderson (PhD student) what plants were present, what beneficial insects we were seeing, the benefits of pollinator habitat.
- -Pop-up field day- 10/16- at Jerry Daniels' shop & fields- looked at biomass sample analysis results and varieties of cover crops in the field (11 farmers)

2023 INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

21 farmers participated in incentive payments ($16,946.40 paid out)

- Average cost to put in cover crops= $49.86 (up $2.11 from 2022)
- 1,887 acres planted covers with incentives (1,115 acres more than last year)
- Cost to plant green/ no till ranged from $0-18/ ac
- 512.5 ac no till/ planting green incentivized (230.5 ac less than last year)

2024 PLANS

- Feb 27th- Roundtable Meeting- Noon at Spring Grove Town Hall, N2475 Hwy GG, Brodhead- please RSVP to Tonya for lunch count
- March 19- Shop Talk- at Wenger's shop- Time: TBD- drill maintenance & planting methods for cover crops
- ** two zero nitrogen corn demo plots- 1 ac**
- pop up field days- TBD
- Summer Field Day- TBD

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

Jake Kaderly, lead farmer- 608-558-5589
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