

FARM BILL CONSERVATION IN ILLINOIS



Farm Bill conservation programs provide tens of millions of dollars each year to Illinois farmers and landowners through cost-share, rental payments, technical assistance and more. The voluntary, incentive-based programs help producers steward the state's soil, woods, waters and wildlife, and provide meaningful economic benefits.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

In 2025, **\$20.7 million** was invested in Illinois through CSP. **211 contracts** totaled **226,747 acres** across the state. CSP helps farmers implement multiple conservation practices over a five-year contract to enhance their entire operation.

Top Illinois practices include:

- Nutrient management
- Cover crops
- Conservation crop rotation
- Pest management

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides financial and technical support to help farmers integrate beneficial conservation practices on working lands. In 2025, Illinois producers received **\$38.8 million** from the program, enrolling **108,956 acres** in **417 contracts**. The most popular practices for the state include cover crops, nutrient management, no-till and terraces.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

In 2025, **41,652 Illinois farms** were enrolled in CRP, covering **789,851 acres**. Of them, 92% held at least one Continuous CRP contract—best known for its practices implemented alongside regular production, such as grassed waterways, filter strips, wetlands and pollinator habitat.



Boosting farmers' bottom lines

Some of the most popular practices in federal conservation programs those that improve soil quality, protect the soil from erosion, and have water quality and quantity benefits. Case studies indicate that once soil health practices are established, a farmer can expect:



Improved yields



Savings on machinery, fuel and labor costs



Positive return on investment

Source: American Farmland Trust, Economic Impacts of Soil Health Practice Adoption, 2024

A worthwhile investment

Investments made to federal conservation programs pay off well beyond their natural resource benefits. Conservative estimates show that for the period of 2019-2029, EQIP, CSP, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program will:

- Support more than 46,000 jobs annually.
- Provide a net economic return of more than \$1.58 for every federal dollar invested.
- Generate more than \$2 billion in local, state and federal tax revenue.

Source: The Nature Conservancy, Farm Bill Conservation Programs: An Economic Impact Analysis, 2025

The Izaak Walton League in Illinois

The Izaak Walton League of America was founded in 1922 to conserve outdoor America for future generations. Our founders, hunters and fishermen, named the organization after Izaak Walton, author of *The Compleat Angler*, a classic book about the art and spirit of fishing. Today, the League has **11 local chapters** and more than **900 members in Illinois**.

One of America's oldest conservation groups, the League has been involved in agricultural policy since 1937. Today, our 40,000 members across the country continue the legacy.



Des Plaines, IL Chapter

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