

Producer- Led Watershed Protection Grants Program Conservation Outcomes

WI Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection

BACKGROUND

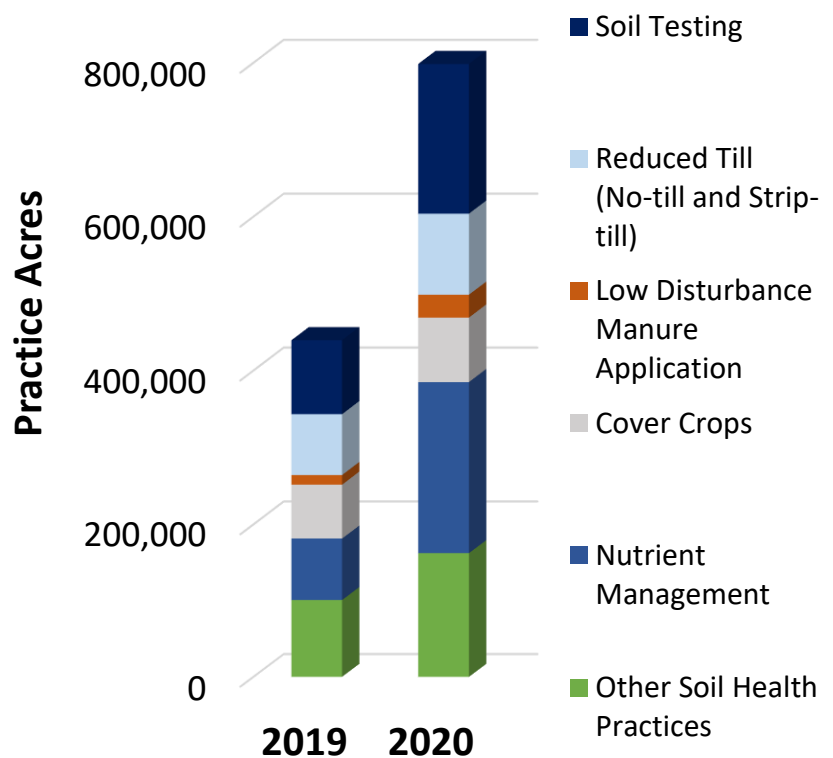
Producer-Led groups play an important role in **advancing conservation practices and promoting soil health farming systems** across the agricultural landscape in Wisconsin. These efforts help **improve water and soil quality** throughout the state.

CONSERVATION PRACTICES

In 2020 there was an **82% increase** in reported conservation practices implemented by farmers in Producer-Led groups compared to 2019.

2019 Practice Acres: 439,237 acres

2020 Practice Acres: 798,221 acres



Note that some acres are reported more than once for multiple practices.

SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT REDUCTIONS

Conservation practices implemented through the Producer-Led Program in 2020 helped reduce soil erosion and phosphorus loss from farm fields. Sediment and phosphorus has impaired water quality in Wisconsin waterbodies.

NO-TILL ACRES

62,587 acres (+19% from 2019)
across **211 farms**

Estimated* reduction:
84,860 tons of soil erosion** and
54,072 pounds of phosphorus

COVER CROP ACRES

83,843 acres (+19% from 2019)
across **423 farms**

Estimated reduction:
75,364 tons of soil erosion and
41,492 pounds of phosphorus

SOIL HEALTH SYSTEMS

Many farmers in these groups adopt **multiple practices** to develop their own soil health management system for their farm, which can provide even greater benefits to water quality and the environment!

*Sediment and phosphorus reductions are estimated using models. They are not measured reductions in pollutants. **For reference, one pound of phosphorus that reaches a waterbody can feed 500 pounds of algae; excessive algae impairs water quality. A soil loss of 100 tons is about 10 standard dump truck loads of soil; the nutrients in topsoil are most valuable when kept in farm fields and out of waterways!