

# THE ILLINOIS SOIL HEALTH INCENTIVE PROGRAM (SHIP)

*Summer/Fall 2021 Limited Pilot*

For a limited time, the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District has funds to pay farmers for keeping soil carbon in their fields.

## Get paid for the climate benefit of conservation practices

### Eligible practices:

- Residue and Tillage Management
- Cover Crops
- Critical Area Planting
- Contour Buffer Strips
- Filter Strips
- Grassed Waterways
- Riparian Forest Buffers
- Avoided Conversion of Expiring CRP



## Why participate?

**Improve soil health and implement nature-based solutions to climate change**

**Receive financial reward for storing soil carbon**

**Get local technical assistance through Champaign SWCD**

Open Now; Payments made in October 2021

# Program Description

The concept for an Illinois Soil Health Incentives Program (SHIP) is being piloted in East Central Illinois to better understand the key elements and processes that are needed for a statewide carbon farming program to pay farmers for capturing and storing carbon in the soil.

Agricultural conservation practices—such as cover crops, conservation tillage, and perennialization—help keep carbon in the soil and also offer numerous co-benefits, including operational resilience, improved soil health, and reduced erosion. Expanded financing options are key for more farmers to adopt these practices as part of ongoing operations.

Under a limited SHIP pilot for Summer/Fall 2021, farmers may select from a set of eligible practices and select fields where practices will be implemented. Using modeling tools, the SHIP application estimates the resulting carbon storage and other greenhouse gas benefits. The program awards payments based on the total climate benefit of the practices and the length of time the practice will be maintained.

The Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District will enroll farmers over Summer 2021, with decisions on funding made in October 2021. The carbon payment is additional to other cost-share payments available for conservation practice implementation. Applications are prioritized based on highest carbon storage and longest practice commitment. Participating farmers will agree to a 30-minute exit interview with the project team on their experience with SHIP after harvest in Fall 2021.

## Contact for More Information and Application



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