

# **IDOA "Fall Covers For Spring Savings" Crop Incentive Program Returns**

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**SPRINGFIELD** – Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is implementing its fifth year of the Fall Covers for Spring Savings Program.

New this year, users will be able to enter their information into the application and validate it during a pre-enrollment period starting at 8:00 A.M. CST on December 4, 2023. Applications can be submitted once the program opens at 8:00 A.M. on December 15, 2023. Applications can be saved and edited at any time, prior to submittal.

- Pre-Enrollment Period --- 8 a.m. Dec. 4, 2023
- Program Submittal Period --- 8 a.m. Dec. 15, 2023
- Program Closes --- 11:59 p.m. Jan. 15, 2024

A total of 140,000 acres are available for the 2024 program. In the 2023 program, this acreage allotment was met in under 24 hours and a total of over 182,688 acres were requested by the time the application period ended. Funding of eligible acreage is on a first come, first serve basis.

“The ‘Fall Covers for Spring Savings’ program provides a ‘jump start’ to initiate what may be a new practice for some producers,” said Jerry Costello II, Illinois Director of Agriculture. “The proven versatility of cover crops to improve soil health, reduce erosion, increase moisture availability during drought, and reduce pests, weeds and diseases are just some of the benefits of making this investment.”

“Illinois’ participation in the U.S. Gulf Hypoxia Task Force made it possible for the state to enroll an additional 40,000 acres in 2023,” said John Kim, Director of Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. “We are thrilled to offer the additional acreage once again in 2024 to continually increase the number of producers implementing cover crops on their farms.”

The program is applicable for acreage in Illinois seeded to cover crops in the fall of 2023 that will be planted to an insurable crop in 2024. Eligible applicants will receive a premium discount up to \$5 per acre on the following year's crop insurance, depending on individual crop insurance policies, for every cover crop acre enrolled and verified in the program.

Applicants will be required to certify that their cover crops are approved through their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office before applying. Applicants will also need their current FSA-578 and federal crop insurance policy number(s) for the application.

The discount program was designed to promote additional acres of cover crops that are not covered by other state or federal incentives. IDOA will use a combination of tools to verify that acres applied for through this program are planted in cover crops. The program is only applicable for those with coverage through the United States Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency (USDA-RMA) crop insurance program. Confirmed applications will be forwarded to the USDA-RMA for processing and for application of premium discounts to 2024 crop insurance invoices.

Pre-enrollment and applications are available at: [IDOA | Cover Crop Application \(illinois.gov\)](https://illinois.gov/IDOA/CoverCropApplication) Applications will be available until 11:59 P.M. CST on January 15, 2024. Further information can be obtained by contacting the IDOA at (217) 782-6297.

