

Soil Conservation and Health

NIFA supports research, outreach, and education to promote soil conservation and minimize soil erosion.

The Conservation Reserve Program was set up to encourage farmers with highly erodible croplands and other environmentally sensitive acreages to adopt practices to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation in streams and lakes while improving water quality and protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat, forests, and wetland resources.

The major practices to accomplish this are permanent vegetative cover, such as tame or native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filter strips, or riparian buffers. Farmers receive payment for multiyear contracts, as well as cost sharing, to establish the vegetation in these sensitive areas. NIFA supports research and extension activities to improve, promote, and evaluate these practices.