PROJECT SUMMARY

SYSTEMS CHANGE PATHWAY(S)
+ De-risking Practice Adoption
+ Engaging Agricultural Retailers
+ Demand for Commodities Produced Using Good Farming Practices

GOALS
+ Enroll at least 100,000 acres in nutrient management, tillage, and cover crops
+ Build Precision Conservation Management (PCM) capacity to demonstrate improved performance and provide agronomic advice
+ Build business case for good farming practices and share learning

APPROACH
+ PepsiCo and Bunge recruit farmers, PCM enrolls farmers, gathers data, provides data compilation, economic analysis options, and agronomic advice. PepsiCo provides cover crop cost share.
+ Address the need in Illinois to increase the number of farmers, retailers, Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs), and conservation practitioners who understand the science of soil health and the interrelated set of production management changes required to transition to this new system.

COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS
Cargill
PepsiCo
Kellogg
The Nature Conservancy

FUNDED PARTNERS
Illinois Corn Growers Association
Precision Conservation Management (PCM)

OTHER PARTNERS
Mars Petcare
Nestle Purina
Illinois Council on Best Management Practices
Bunge
Walton Family Foundation

Project Facts

TIMELINE
2018 - 2019

Status: ONGOING
ACTIVITIES
+ Lead and motivate local partners to coordinate action at the watershed and state level
+ Develop relationships with growers
+ Develop conservation programs and incentives
+ Outreach to grower groups & local agencies
+ PCM measures environmental outcomes, such as improved water quality and GHG reductions, while providing farmers with an analysis of how implementing sustainable agricultural practices impacts profitability.
+ Provided intensive, hands-on training for farmer advisors, retailers, and conservation practitioners about soil health practices, such as cover crops and reduced tillage, and management strategies for shifting production to soil health system.
+ Offered 12,000 acres of cover crop cost share for PCM participants in fall of 2018

KEY OUTCOMES
+ Enrolled 30 farmer participants in year one, scaling to 50 in year two with farmer uptake of cover cropping and a variety of reduced tillage practices
+ 3 new counties, 27 farmers entered program
+ Expanded Advanced Soil Health Training, with 25 farmers completing
+ Created sister program: Advanced Conservation Drainage Program, with 45 farmers and drainage industry reps completing training

ABOUT THE MIDWEST ROW CROP COLLABORATIVE
The Midwest Row Crop Collaborative is an innovative partnership aligned to drive positive environmental change in the upper Mississippi River Basin. It is comprised of leading businesses and nonprofits that span the full food and agriculture value chain, working together to catalyze and implement joint, systemic projects and initiatives that accelerate sustainable agricultural solutions.

ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE
Environmental Initiative is a nonprofit organization that works with business, nonprofit and government leaders to develop collaborative solutions to environmental problems. In 2019, Environmental Initiative became the administrator of the Midwest Row Crop Collaborative.