

# How Illinois Soybean Growers Conserve the Land, Water, and Air for Future Generations

For as long as they've been farming, Illinois soybean growers have taken extra steps to protect the land, water, and air for future generations. Whether it's in the practices they use on their farms, or through the care they take when planting and harvesting, Illinois soybean growers are at the forefront of sustainability and land conservation efforts.



## Here are a few ways Illinois soybean growers demonstrate their care for the land:

### Complying with National and State Programs... and Implementing Their Own

The [U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol](#) (SSAP) is a certified approach managed by the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) where third parties audit soybean growers' practices to verify sustainable soybean production. In this way, conservation practices on Illinois farms help meet customer demands, protect the environment, and support the long-term viability of Illinois farmers.

Illinois-headquartered ADM announced a new partnership with USSEC in July 2020 to export soy as part of the [U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol - Renewable Energy Directive](#) (SSAP-RED), a voluntary program that certifies U.S. soy meets the European Union's (EU) biofuel sustainability requirements.

Illinois soybean growers implement practices that align with Illinois' long-range plan, the [Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy](#) (NLRs), to reduce loss of nutrients from agricultural fields due to rain and irrigation.

ISA partners with non-profit organizations, such as The Nature Conservancy, American Farmland Trust and The Wetlands Initiative, as well as the Soil Health Partnership, universities, farmers, commodity groups, and others to help implement new conservation programs on an ongoing basis.



### Making Conservation Advancements While Increasing Yield

Illinois growers are always working to conserve the land, water and air for future generations.

#### OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS ILLINOIS SOYBEAN FARMERS HAVE REDUCED:



LAND  
USE PER  
BUSHEL



ENERGY  
USE PER  
ACRE



SOIL  
EROSION  
BY 90%

### Preventing Soil Erosion & Protecting Water Quality Through Reduced Tillage

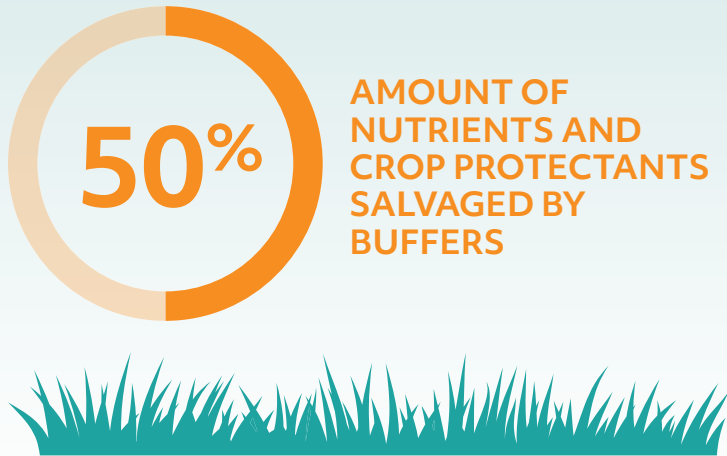
Reduced tillage leaves stalks and plant matter from last year's harvest on the ground, providing a "blanket" that prevents soil erosion and protects water quality.



## Salvaging More Nutrients Through Buffers

Buffers use strips of grass or other vegetation to trap valuable nutrients and sediment from being carried off fields by heavy rain.

**MORE BUFFERS = MORE NUTRIENTS**



**Source:** United Soybean Board & Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture

## Creating More Than Half-a-Million Acres of New Natural Wetlands

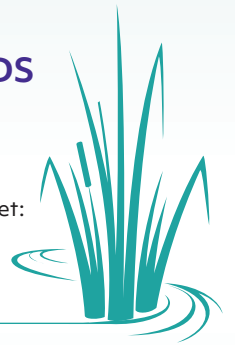
Near waterways and in significant watershed areas, farmers have been slowly releasing acreage from crop production and allowing it to return to its natural wetland state.

**ILLINOIS PRODUCERS HAVE CONVERTED**



**OF FARMLAND TO WETLANDS OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS**

**Source:** United Soybean Board & Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture



## Contributing to Cleaner, Healthier Air by Powering Alternative Biodiesel Fuels

Compared with regular diesel fuel, biodiesel, a form of diesel fuel derived from soybean oil, has significantly fewer emissions of particulate matter and other harmful pollutants.



**BIODIESEL GENERATES 5.54 UNITS**

of renewable energy for every unit of fossil energy used to produce it



**BIODIESEL GENERATES 75.8%**

fewer CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from production and use than regular diesel fuel

**Source:** National Biodiesel Board

## In the Words of an Illinois Soy Farmer

“ We first tried cover crops on 20 acres in 2012, then one-third of our acres in 2013, and then we jumped in 100 percent after that. We put cover crops on all of our acres every fall.

**Chad Bell**  
Soybean and Corn Farmer  
Viola, IL

