



Cover Crop Incentive for Carolinian Priority Place

Project Requirements

Performance Incentive: \$15/acre

Maximum Payment: \$1,500 (maximum 100 acres per applicant)

Purpose:

- This program will encourage growers to try new cover crop mixes and techniques and help demonstrate their use around the county.
- To promote the establishment and over-wintering of cover crops (living or dead), which help provide soil protection and reduce soil erosion to watercourses.
- To protect groundwater by promoting biological nitrogen fixation.

Details:

- Landowners may apply every year.
- Each application to the Carolinian Priority Place must be for a different cover crop mixture.
- There must be a **minimum of three** species in the cover crop. With the exception, that a multi-species mixture is not required for late season cover crops planted after corn or soybean harvest; these fields will still need to meet the 50% residue measurement.
- Oats and barley will be considered as one species within a multi-species mixture.
- Priority will be given to innovative practices and producers willing to demonstrate practices to others.
- Applicants must register their eligible fields with SCRC staff, providing location and management plan for the cover crop.
- Crops may be tilled no sooner than the spring of the year following planting (may be chemically killed the previous fall).
- Applicants must notify staff well before spring tillage so the final crop residue measurement can be made.
- A final residue measurement of at least 50% is required prior to planting the next crop in the following spring.
- Cover crop residue will be measured prior to April 1, establishing a firm spring deadline for measurements of success, and achieving the goal of ensuring over-winter cover.
- Cover crops are not to be used for forage or grazing. The project is not eligible for funding if the field is grazed or harvested.
- Applicants with more than 100 acres planted into cover crops can receive payment for the best 100 acres that meet the 50% cover crop residue measurement.

Performance Incentive:

Producers will be paid the incentive after SCRC staff has confirmed the field(s) were managed according to the guidelines. Producers do not have to produce proof of payment for cover crop seed as would be required for other grant categories. Thus, producers who grow their own seed are eligible to participate in the program.