

Nutrient Research and Education Council
Final Grant Report

Title: "What Can I Do?", Project to promote Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy in Champaign County

Grantee: Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD)

Grant Award: \$20,000

Grant Objective: Objectives of the grant was to: 1) collect data to form a base line of current agriculture best management practices that reduce nutrient losses and track changes, 2) educate farmers on ways to implement the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS) with minimal costs to the operation.

Summary: A field evaluation instrument was developed to assist farmers with inventorying their conservation management practices. Entitled Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources or "STAR" field evaluation system, will be used to raise farmers' awareness about the adoption of best management practices (BMP). Data obtained by the survey instrument from "Finding Today's Baseline for Agriculture in Champaign County", was linked to the development of a field level evaluation tool. This instrument was developed by utilizing focus groups at several public meetings that included the Conservation Cropping Seminar and the Nutrient Management Conference. Additional input for the development survey was obtained from related committees of the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Educational Outreach Events:

Conservation Cropping Seminar, January 26 at Champaign, 120 attendees.

Educational Events: Seeds Over Central Illinois, June 17 at Henning, Vermillion County, 30 attendees.

What Can I Do for this Old Soil, August 11 at Champaign, 54 attendees.

Future and Sustainable Activities:

STAR field evaluation instrument will be offered to producers and landowners as a nutrient loss reduction strategy. A secondary function of STAR will be to link a producer or landowners to various programs available through CCSWCD or Natural Resource Conservation Service. Success will be measured by number of fields utilizing the STAR instrument and the changes in crop production practices improving the reduction of nutrient losses over time.

Submitted by:

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