
Issue: Agricultural nutrient runoff and farmers’ adoption of conservation practices have become a hotly debated topic across the Corn Belt. With almost half of the acres leased in the Midwest, and the majority of those from non-operator landowners, it is important to investigate how tenants and landowners make conservation practice decisions. It’s also important to explore what economic and legal incentives are necessary to achieve greater adoption.

Objective: The overall goal of this project is to enhance adoption of nutrient management practices and result in win-win situations for landowners and tenants.

Approach: Two statewide surveys will be conducted to examine the economic incentives of adoption. A special section on land tenure and conservation will be added to the state-mandated Iowa Farmland Ownership and Tenure survey. This statewide survey has been conducted by phone every five years from 1982 through 2012. Second, a similar but separate survey will be conducted among tenants in Iowa.

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