

## Frequently Asked Questions:

# 2024 Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance – a USDA-Supported Program

### **What is the 2024 Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance – a USDA-Supported Program?**

The Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance– a USDA-Supported Program can help support eligible farmers’ conversion to strip/no-till and/or addition of cover crops on a single contiguous field of no more than 160 acres by providing financial assistance and expanded knowledge sharing. Converting to conservation agriculture practices can feel like a major undertaking. This program aims to streamline and simplify the transition, empowering farmers to embrace regenerative practice change opportunities with greater confidence.

### **What is the payment for eligible farmers who participate in the program?**

Eligible farmers may earn on one contiguous field of up to a maximum of 160 acres:

- \$25/acre for tillage conversion to strip/no-till
- \$55/acre for cover crop addition
- \$80/acre for both practice changes (strip/no-till and cover crops)

### **What crops are eligible for the Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

Corn, cotton, soybeans or wheat in crop year 2024.

### **What practice change is required to be eligible for the Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

Conversion to strip-till/no-till (NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (“CPS”) 329) and/or the addition of cover crops in crop year 2024 (NRCS CPS 340).

### **How many acres can a farmer enroll in the Truterra<sup>®</sup> Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

Farmers are eligible to enroll one contiguous field up to a maximum of 160 acres.

## **What is the timeline for the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

*The below dates are subject to change at Truterra's discretion:*

- The Truterra Financial Assistance - a USDA Supported Program is open for enrollment from December 1, 2023 – February 2, 2024.
- Field verification deadline: June 1, 2024.
- Data collection deadline: December 1, 2024.
- Estimated farmer payment: Q1 2025.

## **How long is the commitment?**

There is no long-term commitment or reporting tail. The agreement participating farmers will sign extends for approximately one year, but the duration depends on when the farmer successfully completes the data collection and validation requirements.

## **Is a farmer who participates in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program eligible for other Truterra programs?**

Depending on eligibility and program parameters, fields may be enrolled in this program plus the Truterra® carbon program, Truterra® nitrogen management program, or the Truterra® soil health assessment. To enroll in another program, the field must also meet the eligibility requirements for that program. The field enrolled in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program may not be enrolled in another publicly-funded program for the same practice change.

## **What data is required for the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

Eligible farmers must provide 3 years or a full rotation of historic data (whichever is longer).

## **If a retailer does not offer *network provider-managed* Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program, can their farmers still participate?**

Even if their retailer cannot, or chooses not to offer it, farmers can still participate in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program. If a farmer is connected to a retailer offering Truterra-Managed Services or a retailer offering Network Provider-Managed Services that chooses not to offer the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program, a Truterra Field Verification Specialist will manage all farmer/field certification and a Truterra data coordinator will manage data collection.

## **Where will retailers upload the documents for verification?**

The retailer will receive a DocuSign form for each farmer enrolled in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program. The documents required for verification will be attached/uploaded with the DocuSign form.

### **Will any FSA Farm & Tract Map work for crop certification?**

Yes. Any FSA map for the field enrolled will be accepted. The FSA map is to verify boundary, acreage and farm/tract/field ID. Understandably, the field will not be 'certified' for the 2024 crop at the time of verification. A historic FSA map is acceptable.

### **Can a drone be used for the field verification picture?**

Yes. A drone can be used for the verification picture as long as the practice is visible.

### **Who is responsible for completing the necessary forms from NRCS/FSA?**

Farmers are responsible for completing the necessary NRCS/FSA forms. The retailer will receive a DocuSign form for each farmer enrolled in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program. The DocuSign will request two attachments: the farmer's subsidiary print and FSA field map. The subsidiary print will verify if the required FSA forms are in compliance. If a farmer does not have the forms in compliance, they can simply request the form, complete it, and submit to their FSA office. Retailers will help farmers request and complete the FSA forms.

### **When does the cover crop need to be planted?**

For the spring enrollment of the 2024 Truterra® Financial Assistance - a USDA Supported Program, the cover crop needs to be planted fall 2023 or spring 2024. The 2024 Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program is unique in that we are looking retrospectively at the addition of a cover crop. Cover crops planted in fall 2023 will qualify for the program.

### **Do farmers participating in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program have to use the NRCS seeding date for cover crops?**

Farmers participating in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program who are adding cover crops are required to adhere to the NRCS CPS 340. NRCS CPS 340 at a national level requires seeding dates be consistent with applicable local criteria and soil/site conditions. Please refer to your state's practice standard guidelines: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#>.

### **What if the cover crop is seeded but there is no visual above-ground vegetation prior to planting?**

If cover crops were seeded in compliance with NRCS CPS 340 and a stand did not establish due to weather conditions, the field remains eligible for payment. NRCS CPS 340 at a national level requires seeding rates, seeding dates, and fertility requirements to be consistent with applicable local criteria and soil/site conditions. Truterra will collect this information via the farmer/field verification form to verify the practice is compliant with NRCS CPS 340. If visual evidence is not possible due to the cover crop not establishing, farmers will need to attach a cover crop seed receipt within the field verification form.

### **Can cover crops be harvested?**

No. NRCS CPS 340 does not allow harvesting cover crops for grain or seed. Burning is also not allowed. Herbicide termination, baling, haylage, and grazing are allowed.

### **Is biomass removal or grazing allowed?**

Yes. NRCS CPS 340 allows for biomass removal including haylage, grazing or baling.

### **To be eligible for the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program, when would conversion to strip-till/no-till need to take place?**

For the spring enrollment of the 2024 Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program, conversion to no-till/strip-till needs to take place in the 2024 crop year, independent of rotation.

### **Will local USDA offices (FSA, SWCDs, etc.) have any follow-up with our farmers as a result of their participation in Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Supported Program?**

Truterra is the implementing entity in connection with this program. We do not anticipate local USDA offices will reach out to farmers as a result of participation in the Truterra® Financial Assistance – a USDA Support Program.

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