

Case Study

Iowa Grower

Introduction

In the cornbelt one of our farmers is raising cattle and growing corn and soybeans. In an effort to combat erosion and explore more sustainable management, they joined Agoro Carbon Alliance and elected to bring the sustainable farm practice of cover cropping to their operation.

Body

This farmer planted cover crops on their farm in Northwest Iowa. First, they began incorporating covers by planting green into waist-high cereal rye. Follow along to learn about this experience with us. Notes taken from this farmer

- It was not the original plan, and they did have some issues getting their row cleaners to push the residue aside.
- In a few spots on the field, there were minor germination issues due to planting depth.
- This geographic area has had catastrophic downpours this past spring/summer. Erosion is evident in the surrounding fields, but not this one! The residue is doing its job, shielding the soil surface from raindrop impacts and surface runoff.
- When the rain has stopped drought-like conditions are in many areas, and there is still moisture under the residue mat that is nurturing the soil. Due to the rain shut off mid-season many neighboring fields are starting to show drought stress. In this field, however, there is still adequate moisture in the soil, keeping the crop growing, while the neighboring fields have stalled out.

- There is no evidence of root-inhibiting compaction, even with this field's history of having silage chopped two years in a row-which usually turns fields into roads.

The decision to add cover crops has yielded some favorable outcomes for this grower.

Row Crop



Cover Crops



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