



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **NCGA's Soil Health Partnership receives \$1 million Conservation Innovation Grant**

*Project to develop model for large-scale greenhouse gas reduction incentives*

(ST. LOUIS) – A \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will help spur a groundbreaking effort to optimize farm enterprise profitability, reduce Greenhouse Gases and improve agronomic productivity. The [National Corn Growers Association](#) received the grant to develop a system for scalable carbon accounting in agriculture, to be developed through its [Soil Health Partnership](#) initiative.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced this year's Conservation Innovation Grant recipients on September 8. The competitive grant "stimulates the development and adoption of innovative approaches and technologies for conservation on agricultural land."

Under the NCGA project, the SHP and other project partners will develop a "greenhouse gas insetting framework." The framework will serve as a model for corporations and other entities to drive conservation adoption and achieve GHG reductions, as well as economic profitability benefits.

Carbon insetting is similar to "offsetting," in which a third party is paid to plant trees or implement other practices to "offset" carbon emissions. Carbon insetting is common in the coffee and chocolate industries and is used by companies to incentivize grower adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture practices in their supply chains.

The SHP, in conjunction with the project partners (AgSolver, Applied GeoSolutions, DNDC-ART, Monsanto, Climate Smart Group and CropGrowers) plan to develop a framework that draws on existing offset standards, emerging low-cost verification technologies (remotely sensed data), and proven precision business planning methods to drive conservation adoption and achieve GHG reductions.

Farmers enrolled in the SHP program will be invited to participate in the carbon reduction incentive system, in which growers are paid by corporations to sequester carbon in their soil.

"This is a great opportunity for farmers to continue being a part of the solution to carbon sequestration, and gain financial incentives for carbon-smart ag practices like growing cover crops and using minimum tillage," said Nick Goeser, NCGA director of soil health and sustainability and director of the SHP. "We hope to provide businesses with a quantifiable method to reduce their carbon footprint by increasing these on-the-ground conservation practices."

*(more)*

Improved soil health on the farm is one of the best opportunities to reduce GHGs. The SHP is a recognized leader in field-scale testing and measuring of management practices that improve soil health.

Entities receiving the CIG grants are given up to three years to complete their projects.

**About the Soil Health Partnership**

The Soil Health Partnership brings together diverse partner organizations including commodity groups, federal agencies, universities and environmental groups to work toward the common goal of improving soil health. Over a period of at least 10 years, the SHP will identify, test and measure farm management practices that improve soil health and benefit farmers. We believe the results of this farmer-led project will provide a platform for sharing peer-to-peer information, and lend resources to benefit agricultural sustainability and profitability. An initiative of the National Corn Growers Association, we provide the spark for greater understanding and implementation of agricultural best practices to protect resources for future generations. For more, visit [soilhealthpartnership.org](http://soilhealthpartnership.org).

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