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CONSERVATION

Cost share available for water quality practices

IOWA COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig announced the 2018 sign-up period is open for statewide cost share funds to help farmers install nutrient reduction practices. Practices eligible for this funding are cover crops, no-till or strip till, or using a nitrification inhibitor when applying fertilizer.

"This program has been very popular with farmers interested in adding water quality focused practices on their farm. We continue to see farmers and landowners taking on the challenge of improving water quality and this is a great way for them to get started with a new practice," Naig said.

The cost share rate for farmers new to planting cover crops is \$25 per acre (\$15 per acre for past cover crop users) and for farmers trying no-till or strip till is \$10 per acre. Farmers using a nitrapyrin nitrification inhibitor when applying fall fertilizer can receive \$3 per acre.

Farmers are also encouraged to visit their local Soil and Water Conservation District office to inquire about additional opportunities for cost share funding through other programs offered at their local SWCDs.

Last fall, 2,600 farmers signed up to participate in the program and invest an estimated \$8.7 million in funding to match \$4.8 million in state cost share funds. Participants included 1,000 farmers using a practice for the first time and more than 1,600 previous users who received a reduced rate of cost share