Strengthening Links Between Crop Insurance and Conservation:
An AGree Strategy to Drive Adoption of Conservation Practices

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Presentation Roadmap

1. Overview of AGree

2. AGree’s Conservation and Crop Insurance Task Force
   a. Objective
   b. Membership
   c. Strategies
   d. Current Efforts

3. Q&A
AGree’s Key Challenges

Meet future demand for food

Strengthen farms and communities to improve livelihoods

Improve nutrition and public health

Conserve and enhance water, soil, and habitat
Three Phases of AGree

1. • Established a unique voice (diverse leaders and brand) and trusted platform for dialogue

2. • Develop consensus recommendations
  • Identify advocacy and action priorities
  • Identify implementation partners, funders, and coalitions

3. • Support and build out coalitions, and advocate for policy change
  • Catalyze and advance “proof of concept” projects
  • Serve as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and innovative thinking
AGree Initiatives for the Future of Food and Ag

- Achieving a stable, legal workforce
- Cultivating healthy communities
- Achieving productivity, profitability, and environmental outcomes
- Promoting development through food and agriculture
- Strengthening agricultural research, education, and extension
- Attracting young people to food and agriculture
- Protecting farmers, conserving resources
- Revitalizing community-based food systems
Eight Integrated Initiatives

1. Immigration Reform
2. Working Landscapes
3. Food & Nutrition
4. International Development
5. Research & Innovation
6. Local Food
7. Risk Management
8. Next Generation
AGree’s Conservation and Crop Insurance Task Force (CCITF)
CCITF Objective:

Drive broader adoption of conservation practices through data integration and analysis
CCITF Members:

- Barry Barnett: Mississippi State University
- Rich Bowman: The Nature Conservancy
- Larry Clemens: The Nature Conservancy
- Keith Coble: Mississippi State University
- Neil Conklin: Farm Foundation
- Craig Cox: Environmental Working Group
- Randy Dell: The Nature Conservancy
- Kristin Weeks Duncanson: Duncanson Growers
- Suzy Friedman: Environmental Defense Fund
- Viola Glenn: Rural Advancement Foundation
- Nick Goeser: National Corn Growers Association, Soil Health Partnership
- Ferd Hoefner: National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Bruce Knight: Strategic Conservation Solutions, Former Chief of NRCS
- Doug Lawrence: Blackwoods Group
- Carl Mattson: George Mattson Farms, Inc.
- Stephanie Mercier: Farm Journal Foundation, Former Chief Economist for the Senate Agriculture Committee
- Sarah Mine: Datu Research
- James Moseley: AGree Co-Chair, Former Deputy Secretary of USDA
- Rob Myers: Midwest Regional SARE Coordinator, University of Missouri
- James Robinson: Rural Advancement Foundation
- Bill Salas: Applied GeoSolutions
- Susan Schmidt: Cargill Crop Insurance Agency
- Zeke Spears: K·COE Isom
- Ryan Stockwell: National Wildlife Federation
- Wally Tyner: Purdue University
- Paul Wolfe: National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Josh Woodard: Cornell University
- Fred Yoder: Ohio Corn Growers Association
CCITF Strategies:

1. Support data integration and analysis to examine the correlations between soil type, conservation practices, and yield risk

2. Advocate for specific changes to federal crop insurance policy so that the program supports innovation and does not impede producers’ willingness or ability to adopt conservation practices
CCITF Strategy 1:

1. Support the integration and analysis of USDA data to examine the correlations between soil type, conservation practices, and yield risk
CCITF Strategy 1:

If supported by data, AGree plans to advocate for adjustments to crop insurance ratings to more accurately reflect the correlations between soil type, conservation practices, and yield risk.
Data Challenges:

**Existing USDA datasets** on crop insurance payment and loss history, yield, soil type, weather, and other environmental indicators **could be integrated and analyzed** to assess the impacts of soil type and conservation practices on yield risk.

This data is collected by multiple USDA agencies:

- ERS
- FSA
- NRCS
- RMA
- Others

However, the data exists in multiple databases and is collected at various temporal and spatial scales. It cannot be easily integrated for analysis.
Maintaining Data Confidentiality:

Data analysis could be facilitated while maintaining full confidentiality of field- and farm-level data:

– A researcher could be placed under contract or work under a cooperative agreement with one or more USDA agencies; or

– A data warehouse could enable analysts to query confidential data without the ability to view confidential, identifying information.
Potential Outcomes:

Findings from a data integration and analysis effort could help support:

- Changes to the federal crop insurance program or other federal policies and programs
- The business case for producers to adopt conservation practices
- Industry supply chain sustainability standards
- Carbon and ecosystem services markets
CCITF Strategy 2:

2. Advocate for specific changes to federal crop insurance policy so that the program supports innovation and does not impede producers’ willingness or ability to adopt conservation practices

Examples of potential policy changes:

- Eliminate cover crop termination rules
- Establish that all conservation practices as adhered to by NRCS standards meet qualifications for Good Farming Practices
1. Supporting research by Cornell University Professor Joshua Woodard to provide evidence for the correlation between soil type and risk

2. Engaging leadership and senior staff at multiple USDA agencies to facilitate the integration and analysis of existing datasets to assess the correlations between soil type, conservation practices, and yield risk

3. Developing communications and outreach strategies to advocate for specific crop insurance policy changes
Questions?

More information on this work is available at:
foodandagpolicy.org/content/Working-Landscapes