The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has helped Iowa farmers achieve conservation goals on their operations for nearly two decades.

Administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), CSP provides financial and technical assistance for producers to maintain agricultural production on their land, and simultaneously address resource concerns with conservation practices.

In 2018, **1,665,087** acres in Iowa were enrolled in CSP.

**Protecting Iowa’s water, soil, and natural resources**

When enrolled in a CSP contract, producers develop a conservation plan with their local NRCS technicians. These plans include an assortment of practices and enhancements that are then implemented on their operations.

These practices and enhancements benefit a wide array of resources, including water quality and soil health.

**Helping producers achieve their conservation goals**

CSP contracts are five years in length with the option to renew. In 2018, **3,019** CSP contracts were active in Iowa.

Of the new contracts in 2018, approximately **88 percent** were awarded to producers new to the program, and **12 percent** were renewed existing contracts.

In the following year, 2019, **61** active CSP contracts were held by beginning farmers and ranchers.

**TOP 5 CSP PRACTICES IN IOWA**

(rank by the number of contracts utilizing the practice)

1. Cover crops
2. Integrated pest management
3. Nutrient management
4. Herbaceous weed treatment
5. Residue and tillage management, no-till

Financial assistance allocated to Iowa producers from 2018 enrollments and renewals alone. These funds will be spread out over the five-year contract period.
In 2018, Iowa was a leading state for new CSP contracts. These new contracts accounted for 233,523 acres of farmland.

**Decreases in CSP funding impact Iowa producers**

Due to lowered funding for the program, the number of CSP contracts for Iowa producers has decreased in the past five years.

**CSP gives producers the tools they need to be successful**

In 2017, the Center for Rural Affairs surveyed more than 800 CSP users in five Midwestern states. A majority expressed overwhelming support for the program.

- **84 percent** of respondents reported high or very high satisfaction with CSP.

During the federal rulemaking process in 2020, Iowa farmers also told us:

> I feel that CSP is a great tool for farmers. Farmers have always been good stewards of the land and want to leave the land in good productive shape for the next generation. This program really gives farmers the tools they need to do a great job protecting the land and environment for years to come.

> I’m thankful for the program and thankful that I am able to use it. CSP is excellent, and this taxpayer money is really helping people and the environment.

**TABLE 1: CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM IN IOWA, 2015 TO 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New and renewed contracts</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Obligations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>578,410.9</td>
<td>$58,009,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>374,065.1</td>
<td>$31,461,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>321,467.1</td>
<td>$27,602,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>263,622.5</td>
<td>$28,641,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>118,738.5</td>
<td>$16,311,791</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iowa NRCS

Notes

1. Unless otherwise indicated, written years refer to federal fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30.
2. Unless otherwise stated, data is attributable to U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.