

## Promoting Sustainable Agriculture Using Cover Crops and Agent Training

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### Education Needs

Many Extension agents and other professionals are in need of advanced training in sustainable agriculture and proper cover crop usage. They need to become familiar with the various cover crops and in their comfort level in recommending cover crops. Additional education will help contribute to overall soil health and long term sustainability.

### Objectives

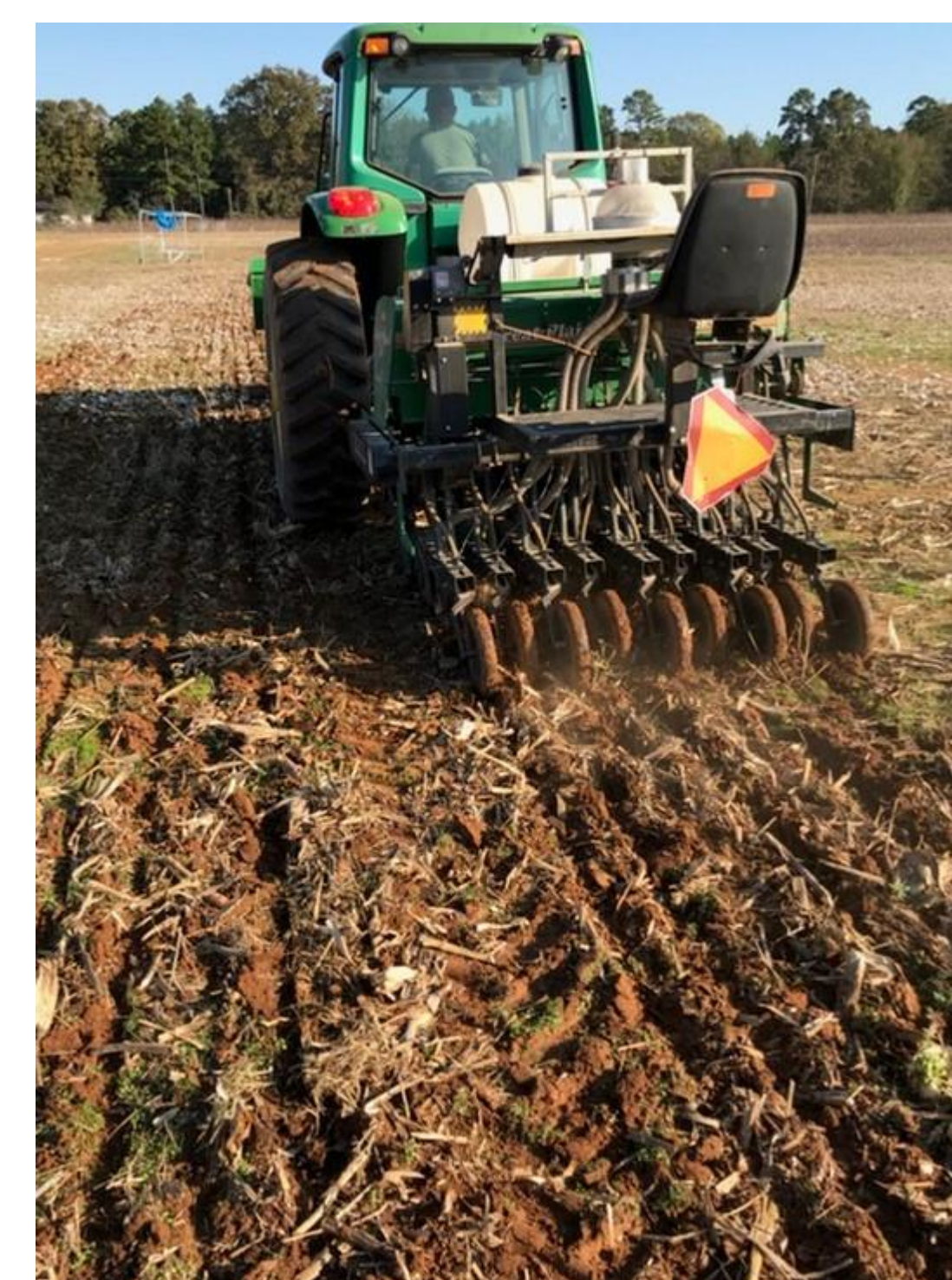
1. Develop and implement a statewide Plan-of-Work program that provides county Extension agents a “ready-to-use” program as a means to conduct cover crop education.
2. Develop and increase baseline knowledge of Extension agents and NRCS field staff.
3. Increase producer awareness on benefits of single and multiple-specie cover crops suitable for MS production systems.

### Methods

1. Develop state-wide “Plan-of-Work” plan
2. Author Extension publications
3. Develop resource book with refereed articles and guides
4. Provide thumb-drives with resource materials
5. Establish demonstration plots for in-field training sessions
6. Conduct 2 hours of formal classroom training at field days
7. Offer individual training upon request

### Results

1. 3 Extension publications
2. 4 popular press articles
3. 1 resource book
4. 6 county level presentations
5. 2 national presentations
6. 3 demonstration sites established
7. 4 field days
8. 1 grant to continue overall project



“Cover\*It\*Up”

Soil Health Initiative



### Participant Summary & Learning Outcomes

1. 126 attendees
2. 67% increase in favorability of using cover crops
3. 72% increase in comfort level of discussing cover crops
4. 65-100% increase in specific agronomic proficiencies
5. 82% indicated they intend to utilize cover crops
6. 76% will recommend cover crops to producers
7. \$5-300/acre establishment cost is justified to use cover crops (depends on cash crop)