



The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) held an informational meeting January 17 in Madison, South Dakota, for farmers interested in learning about how they could potentially participate in a [project](#) that will use USDA funds to pay for conservation practices. Over 100 farmers joined us in Madison last week, along with representation from project partners South Dakota Corn, Dakota Ethanol, South Dakota State University, and Cultivating Conservation.



Since then, we've had inquiries about next steps from attendees and others who are interested in learning more. Read on for project information, and keep subscribed to this email listserv for future updates. If you know of someone who didn't receive this email and would like to be informed about this effort, please have them get in touch with Katie Muckenhirn on the ACE staff at kmuckenhirn@ethanol.org.

Meeting Follow Up

Thanks to all who attended the meeting last week! For those who weren't able to join or would like to review the presented information again, you can access a PDF of the Jan. 17 presentation and recording of the discussion via the buttons below.

[MEETING PRESENTATION](#)

[MEETING RECORDING](#)

During the meeting, we encouraged eligible farmers to fill out a survey. If you filled it out and turned it in to us, thank you! If you didn't turn it in or didn't get a chance to attend the meeting, please fill it out electronically by clicking on the button below.

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)



Q&A

What's the name of the project?

Expanding Soil Health Through Carbon Markets Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The RCPP promotes coordination of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation activities by investing with partners to implement projects like this one.

Where can I go for project information/updates?

Visit ethanol.org/usda-rcpp.

What's the project's purpose?

This project is part of a strategy to secure compensation for farmers who produce low carbon intensity commodities through existing and future low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) markets. For this specific project, participating farmers can be paid for adopting specific conservation practices and sharing soil sample data that will be used to help secure future access to LCFS markets.

How much funding is available?

\$5.25 million in USDA funds will be made available for farmers to implement conservation practices known to sequester carbon, reduce GHG emissions, and improve soil health. Further, the RCPP will pay for on-farm sampling and quantification which will be coordinated through SDSU. The rates are TBD based on demand, interest in practice types, and project needs, but will be better than existing NRCS payment rates for comparable practices implemented under existing NRCS programs. Payment rates will be announced shortly based on these factors.

What's the timeline of this project?

Project terms are still being negotiated and finalized between the partnership and USDA. We anticipate beginning to deploy funding in 2022. The program will take place over a 5-year period.

Who's eligible to participate?

Farmers in Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Miner, McCook, Minnehaha, and Moody counties. There is no minimum number of acres to enroll to participate in the program. Farmers can choose to adopt one or more eligible practices, which includes reduced tillage, nutrient management, and cover crops. Past soil sample data isn't necessary for participation, but if you have prior soil records, this information will be useful for the project and its use will be compensated under the program. SDSU will provide technical assistance about which practices to consider implementing if you are seeking advice and will conduct on-farm soil samples during the life of the project.

What do I do if I want to participate?

Make sure you fill out the producer survey (linked above) and indicate you are interested in participating in the program. From there, ACE and other project partners will be in touch with more information once the partnership finalizes its negotiations with USDA.

