

RESILIENT AGRICULTURE

Photo by Artisan Grain Collaborative

By 2025, Delta Institute will directly **support 1,000 farmers** as they transition to resilient, sustainable, and regenerative practices—thus improving the environment, mitigating the impacts of climate change, strengthening a farmer's bottom line; **one million Midwestern acres** will successfully transition.

Delta Institute (Delta) is expanding conservation practices to farms—both independent and commodity—throughout the Midwest via practical, feasible implementation activities grounded in science and proven to sequester carbon while mitigating financial risk to farmers.

Why our work is needed today. Agricultural land management decisions are situated within a complex yet interconnected system, influenced by social and economic factors that are difficult for farming communities to control. In the Midwest nearly 50% of agricultural land is leased, and therefore managed by farmers who do not own the land and operate on razor-thin margins. Current land management practices often include using fertilizers such as phosphorus and other harmful chemicals, polluting the local water table through overuse. Watershed-scale conservation programs are typically time-delimited by funding source and do not have standard rollout or implementation.



**ONE MILLION
ACRES**



**ONE THOUSAND
FARMERS**

Compounding matters, many farmers have stated to Delta that conservation incentives are often missing or misaligned between federal and state cost-share programs. Moreover, even though soil health testing is necessary for greenhouse gas programs and emerging carbon markets, soil health data is lacking and not standardized—meaning there is no cheap, effective, or uniform way for farmers to utilize these measurements in their operations.

Our Renewed Focus. Delta is realigning our organizational strategy to do a deeper level of impact on Midwestern agriculture through our programs. Our current and recent Resilient Agriculture goals and related projects include:

Goal: Standardize Soil Health Testing and Increase its Use as a Metric for Farm Management. Projects include:

- [Creating a soil health testing guide](#) so that more farmers can benefit from carbon markets and incentive programs;
- [Addressing the perceived asset value—or lack thereof—of regeneratively farmed land](#); and,
- [Developing a land valuation approach that incorporates soil health](#), with a keen focus on [farmland appraisals](#).

Goal: Create an Integrated Administration Program to Scale-up Conservation Practice Implementation. Projects include:

- [Assessing current conditions and providing strategic recommendations](#) with regional expansion of conservation practices throughout Southeast Michigan, with statewide (and beyond) implications;
- Evaluating the [gaps, needs, and interconnectedness between conservation practice adoption](#) and incentive programs;
- Sequestering carbon, reducing nutrient pollution, and improving water quality through land management (including [pay for performance in target watersheds](#)); and,
- Creating Midwest-specific value chains that

By 2025, our Resilient Agriculture programs will remove more than one million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually from the atmosphere. That is comparable to reducing the pollution from 1.1 billion pounds of coal per year.

center regeneratively produced materials while investing in local farmers.

Creating an economically vibrant Midwest. In addition to their environmental and climate benefits, resilient agricultural practices provide significant economic benefits for rural communities, as demonstrated in our past and current work. Implementing conservation practices also increases working lands' resilience to extreme events like flooding and drought, ultimately leading to more profitable and resilient farms. Please join us today.

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Delta Institute works with communities throughout the Midwest to solve complex environmental challenges. We envision a region in which all communities and landscapes thrive through an integrated approach to environmental, economic, and social challenges.

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Delta Institute is a 501c3 nonprofit with a 2021 Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar.