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To support the U.S. Dairy Industry's 2050 Environmental Goals, the Dairy Feed in Focus Program (FiF) aims to pilot, replicate, and scale up the adoption of best management practices in feed/forage production and feed efficiency to drive environmental and economic benefits for dairy farms of all sizes. These practices are expected to result in significant benefits for climate change mitigation, soil health, water quality/quantity, and biodiversity. The program provides data tracking; technical support regarding best management practices (BMPs) implementation; monitoring, reporting and verification; and incentive payments for participating farmers who adopt conservation practices.

Current Status

The Feed in Focus program currently has over 40 dairy farmers enrolled across MI, ID, and WI. They have chosen a variety of practices, including cover crops, reduced till, nutrient stewardship, edge-of-field buffers, feed additives, and more. These farms represent almost 20,000 acres of direct impact through their practice implementation.

TNC has a [NFWF award](#) through the end of 2026 for implementing FiF in the Great Lakes Region. This will allow us to continue to provide TA and data collection support to FiF farmers across the state. We are grateful to our partners at NFWF for supporting our program costs in the Great Lakes Region and are looking for other funders who are aligned with our mission of reducing GHGs and water use, improving soil health and water quality, and increasing biodiversity on dairy farms of all sizes.

"We are committed to working with the dairy industry and farmers around the nation to find and implement climate solutions while improving the resilience of the farms, the livelihoods of producers, and the lands and waters we all share."

*Alisha Staggs
Dairy Program Director, NA Agriculture*

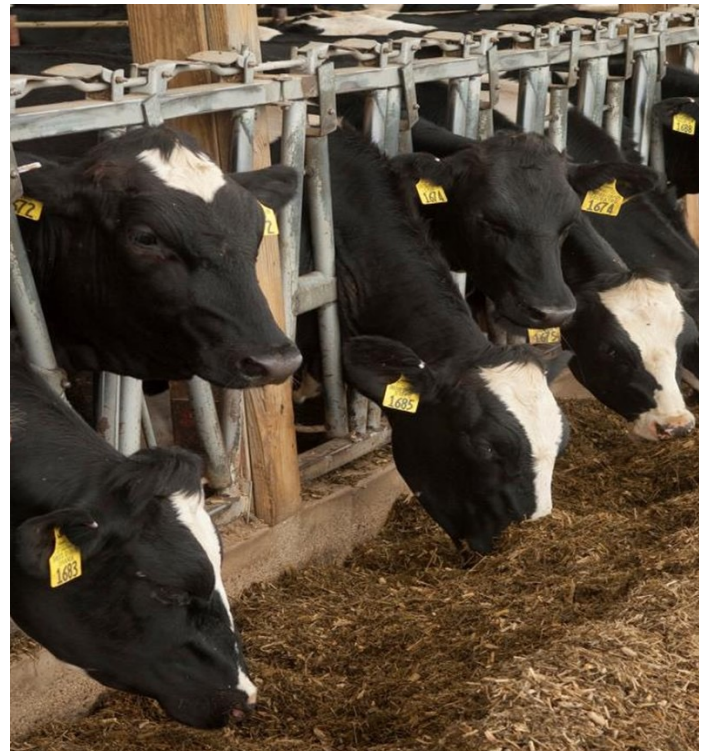
Practices & Outcomes

CATEGORY	PRACTICE	CLIMATE/ GHG	SOIL HEALTH	WATER QUALITY	WATER QUANTITY	BIO- DIVERSITY	ECON / OPS
Continuous Cover	Cover Crops - Single or Multispecies (340) or Interseeded Forage (e.g. alfalfa)	●	●	●		●	●
	Pasture and Hay Planting (512)	●	●	●		●	●
	Native Perennial Cover (327)	●	●	●		●	●
Crop Residue Mgmt	Reduced Till (345)	●	●	●		●	●
	No Till (329)	●	●	●		●	●
Crop Diversification	Diversified Rotation* (328)	●	●	●		●	●
Grazing Mgmt	Prescribed Grazing (528)	●	●	●		●	●
Edge of Field	Non-native Vegetation Buffer (386, 390, 512)	●	●	●		●	●
	Native Buffer (386, 390)	●	●	●		●	●
	Tree/Shrub Buffer (380, 391, 422)	●	●	●		●	●
Nutrient Stewardship	Improved Nutrient Stewardship - Basic (590)	●	●	●		●	●
	Improved Nutrient Stewardship - Advanced (590)	●	●	●		●	●
Feed Mgmt & Innovation	First time use of commercially available, FDA approved or GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) status Feed Additives	●					●
Irrigation Management	Irrigation Water Management (449)	●	●	●	●		●
	Irrigation Package Upgrades / Retrofits	●	●	●	●		●

Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change focuses on driving positive environmental outcomes, while assuring the value of participating is greater than the cost of participating for farmers. Although other similar initiatives exist, our program has some key differentiators, including:

- **Focused specifically on dairy feed grown by the dairy farmer**, including varieties grown, crop rotation, cover crops, use of manure, etc.
- Less prescription, more choice: a **“menu” approach** that allows for multiple entry points to meet farmers where they are
- **Targeted agronomic advice** and incentives for farmers
- A bottom-up approach to meeting value chain goals and **industry commitments**
- **Less complexity in data collection** and reporting requirements; data collection that yields meaningful agronomic and environmental management information
- **Incentives** for data access through cost-share and for adoption of conservation practices
- **Access** to knowledge and technical support to inform decisions



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Incentives Rates benchmarked against current NRCS-EQIP conservation practice standards



The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a leading global conservation organization with a mission to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends. With boots on the ground in all 50 states, we work with and support farmers to adopt and test cutting-edge, science-based management practices that contribute to land and water stewardship. *Contact: Alisha Staggs, alisha.staggs@tnc.org.*

Dairy Management Inc. (DMI) is the U.S. dairy checkoff responsible for building trust and sales in U.S. dairy on behalf of dairy farmers and manages the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy – a collaborative effort that brings together the dairy value chain to address precompetitive issues. *Contact: Jacqi Coleman, jacqi.coleman@dairy.org.*

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
www.nature.org/usdairy