

Stewardship Program Fact Sheet

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The International Water Institute's Stewardship Program (SP) provides new information to manage agronomic risk and improve soil and nutrient retention. Enrolled producers can quickly explore how their current and potential farm operations affect their fields' soil and nutrient loss, profitability, and yield by utilizing the SP's Wayfindr (patent pending) technology. Wayfindr helps producers decide whether to pursue a specific farming strategy for their fields based on quantitative water, soil, and nutrient retention metrics.

The SP increases net return per acre while reducing the risks associated with changing the farm operation. SP adds value by opening doors to new revenue possibilities utilizing a "Stewardship Rating" to "certify" the producers' operation at the field and farm scales. The SP generates information to access carbon markets, certify products to make them stand out in the marketplace, negotiate preferred loan rates at the bank, and sell water credits in the ecosystem services marketplace.

APPROACH

The SP approach focuses on increasing net return by exploring ways, developed by you and your agronomist, to farm marginal areas in a field more effectively. Every field has low-yield areas where soil loss is accelerated by wind and water erosion, crops are impacted by water ponding, or the presence of saline groundwater. The SP addresses these resource challenges by simultaneously reducing inputs and modifying the tillage system, crop rotation, fertilizer application methods, and (if desired) implementing conservation practices. The bottom line is that the SP quantifies the amount of soil and nutrients retained/lost given a set of farming practices chosen by you while maintaining or improving your net return.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Increase/maintain net return.
- Quantify and improve water, soil, and nutrient retention within the field.
- Establish and improve your Stewardship Rating
- Leverage market interest in land stewardship.
- Increase yield in low-performing areas of the field
- Improve soil conditions.
- Better management of agronomic risk and preservation of agricultural legacy.
- Detailed analysis and reporting of current and alternative farming strategies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact: David Kramar, Research Director, International Water Institute

david@iwinst.org

