

## How crop insurance discourages use of sustainable cover crops

Cover crops feed soil microorganisms so they can, in turn, deliver more nutrients to the cash crop. They also improve soil structure.... Cover crops also hold [soil nutrients, like nitrogen](#), in place, instead of letting rain and snow wash them into waterways, where they become pollutants.

Leading practitioners also claim financial, not just environmental, gains for adopting cover cropping.... [A] recent survey from Purdue University's Conservation Technology Information Center showed that corn and soybean yields increase year after year with cover crop use. ...

These grand claims, though, raise a compelling question: If there are so many benefits to regenerative farming, why don't more U.S. farmers do it?

....

...Most U.S. farmers who grow corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton and other commodities buy crop insurance.... The insurance helps them ride out the vagaries of weather, market price and other variables, and helps farmers qualify for bank loans to cover the expenses of the growing season.

....

Unfortunately ... crop insurance and cover crops have a hard time getting along. In fact, in a [2015 National Wildlife Federation survey](#), ... over one-third [of farmers] reported that they'd been told by an agent or adjustor that using cover crops could put a claim at risk of denial. ...

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [This Kansas Farmer Fought a Government Program to Keep His Farm Sustainable](#)**