



It started with a simple idea...

Help farmers talk to other farmers about protecting Iowa's soil and water, with the goal of increasing conservation on the land and building a Culture of Conservation that will last for generations.

## 2005-2014 By the Numbers



**151** field days/workshops

**8,158** attendees

Average of **54** attendees per event

ILF field days place a much greater emphasis on a suite of conservation practices in comparison to other field days. ILF field day topics include:

**Bioreactors**  
**Strip-till**  
**Prarie STRIPs**  
**CREP wetlands**  
**Cover Crops**  
**Strip-till**  
**Biofuels**  
**Grazing/Pasture improvement**  
**Nutrient management**

ILF Group represents farmers/landowners who have attended an ILF event over the last 10 years.  
 Control Group represents farmers/landowners in similar geographic areas who have not attended an ILF event.

ILF Group n=635 Control Group n=267

## ILF Group: Number of Conservation Practices



ILF field day attendees are conservation-minded. Over the last 10 years, the vast majority of the ILF Group have implemented multiple conservation practices on their land.

## Cover Crop Implementation

### Planting a Cover Crop



vs.

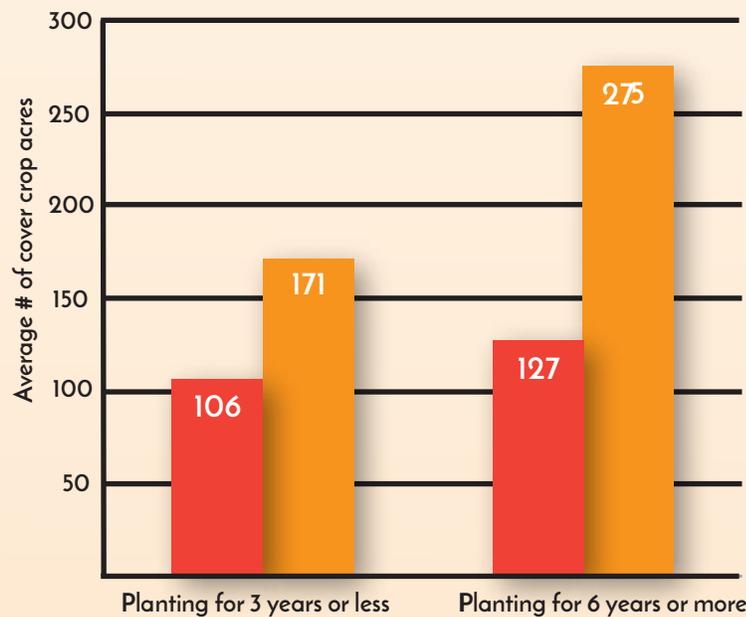


Total acres planted in 2014\*

ILF Group: 68,423, average acres: 198  
 Control Group: 5,363, average acres: 99

59% of farmers in ILF Group reported planting a cover crop on their farm in 2014 vs. 25% of farmers in Control Group.

\*ILF Group represents 1/5 of all cover crops planted in 2014



ILF field day attendees are reporting more cover crops on their land in comparison to their peers and that number goes up the longer they use them. Field days provide the information and confidence needed to sustain and increase acres.

# Conservation Tillage Implementation

## Increasing No-till/Strip-till Acres



50% of ILF Group reported increasing residue on their farm vs. 33% of the Control Group.

ILF field day attendees are adopting reduced tillage practices (no-till/strip-till) much more readily than their peers.

Total new acres planted in 2014

ILF Group: 113,005, average acres: 454  
Control Group: 15,739, average acres: 267

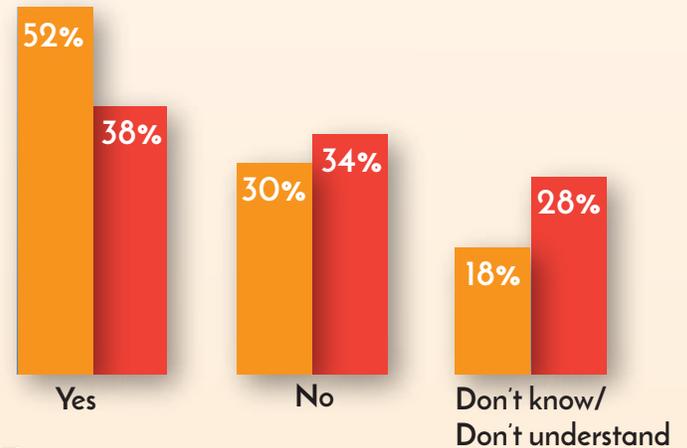
## Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy

The Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy calls for reductions in nonpoint source loads: 41% for nitrogen and 29% for phosphorus. Based on your knowledge of the local area, is this achievable?

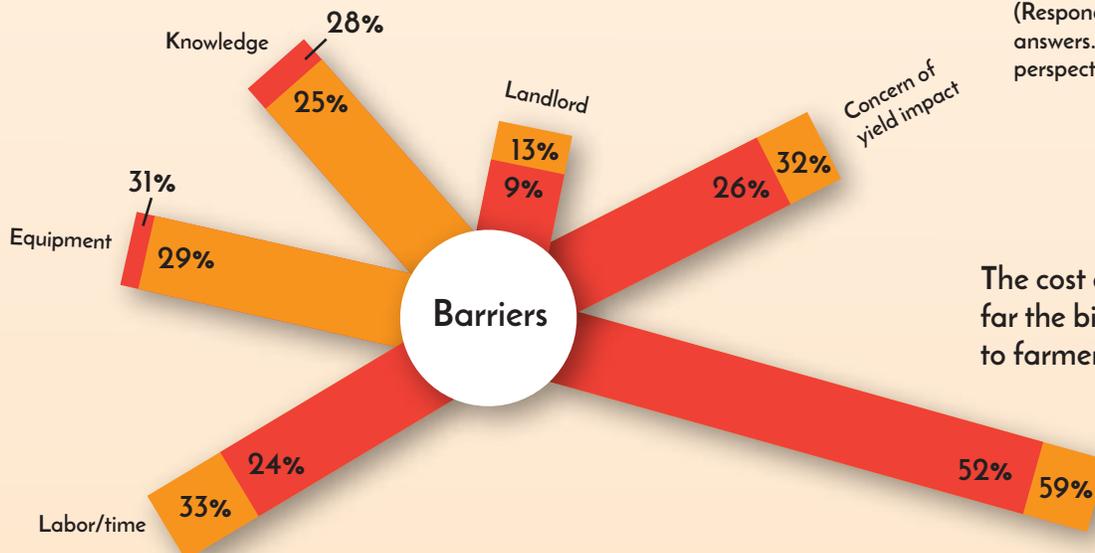
52% of the ILF Group thought the goal was achievable vs. 38% of the Control Group.

30% of the ILF Group did not think the goal was achievable vs. 34% of the Control Group.

There is a definite need for continuing education. Many farmers still do not know of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy or do not understand it.



## Barriers to Implementing More Practices



(Respondents could choose multiple answers. These numbers represent only perspective of farmers/landowners.)

The cost of implementation is by far the biggest barrier according to farmers from both groups.

# Building a Culture of Conservation... Does it work?

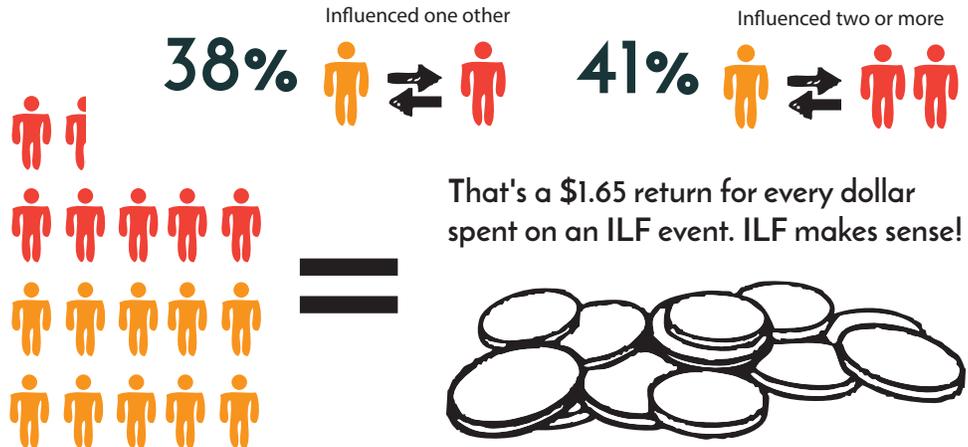
## Farmer-to-Farmer Outreach

Field days are not only a means of getting support and reassurance in what farmers are doing or planning to do, but giving them the confidence to discuss conservation with their neighbors. As a result, field day attendees are networking with their peers, influencing farmers who did not attend the field day, thus creating a multiplier effect. In other words, we preach it to the choir and they sing it in the coffee shops.

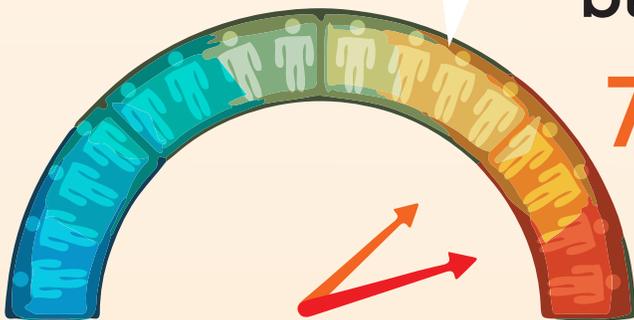
ILF farmers are extending ILF's influence to

# 65%

more farmers than attended the event, while the Control Group reported influencing only 24% more farmers.



## but wait... there's more!



# 75%

Farmers with 6+ conservation practices extend influence to 75% more.

# 85%

Farmers who planted a cover crop extend influence to 85% more.

## Key to Conservation



Attending field days is the key to implementation. With any new practice there is risk and field days provide the confidence to overcome the new challenges.