

# SUCCESS in MINNESOTA

## Carbon Farming Planning Cohorts-Establishing a Peer Education and Planning Process for Carbon Farming Implementation

Project Director: Amanda Kik - Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology, Minnesota



*"D.H. received and is implementing \$15,795.92 in grants for Conservation Cover, and Native Pollinator Habitat Mix Establishment as well as High Tunnel system from the USDA/ NRCS. Honestly, we were not going to apply for these grants again this year, we have applied every year for the last 5 years. The opportunity to be part of the Carbon Farming Cohort presented itself, and so we applied for the grants again."*

**Situation:** With agriculture facing immense environmental and weather-related risks, access to reliable information is more valuable than ever. Carbon farming practices play a crucial role in mitigating these challenges by actively removing carbon from the atmosphere. This cohort program was designed to bring producers together, fostering collaboration and critical discussions on diverse farming operations. Through this process, participants explored climate-smart and conservation agriculture practices, identified challenges and opportunities, developed strategic plans, and accessed funding resources to support sustainable farming efforts.

**Outcomes:** Producers gained valuable insights through peer learning, recognizing both the tangible and intangible benefits of the program. They applied their knowledge to analyze fellow farm operations, tackled the challenges of stress management, and adapted their production methods to meet evolving demands. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to develop personalized carbon farming plans, allowing them to seek funding and implement sustainable practices within their own operations.

**Impacts:** The Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology empowered 53 participants through its Carbon Farming Planning Cohorts Program. Two of the cohorts directly educated 19 farmers and farm educators, leading to the development of a cohort facilitation toolkit. This initiative has laid the foundation for what will now become an ongoing, institutionalized program at Crosshatch. Additionally, 23 more participants benefited from a one-time workshop, expanding the program's reach. To further engage a wider audience, Crosshatch generated 104 unique video views and distributed a dedicated newsletter focused on carbon farming and forestry planning cohort concepts.

*It was a little bit of a last hope in being able to learn more, better work with, have a better understanding, and be successful with the USDA/NRCS process and learning more about the organization and what is available. It has also helped to create a better working relationship with our local USDA-NRCS district conservationist Monica. Not to mention we are always excited for an opportunity to meet other like-minded farmers and learn from them as well as take the time to see other farms and setups.”*  
 - Producer

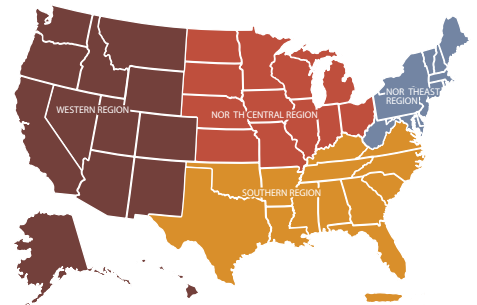
# SUCCESS in EVERY STATE

## Extension Risk Management Education

Extension Risk Management Education is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, outcomes-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted outcomes that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those outcomes.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative programs that have generated tangible outcomes for producers in every state. Commitment to funding outcomes, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration allow you to view the accomplishments of all funded projects on our website: [ExtensionRME.org](http://ExtensionRME.org)



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