

PROJECT NEWSLETTER



Allamakee County
Soil & Water
Conservation District



LEOPOLD CENTER

January 2019

Funded through a grant from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture

Leopold Center Grant Ends—RCPP Continues

Outreach and research efforts for this project have been funded for the past 3 years from a grant from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. That grant ends in January, 2019. It has funded several field days/workshops, speakers, newsletters, mailings, demonstration sites, displays, and salary for the project coordinator. Funds for SWCDs tend to be limited and this Leopold Center grant has provided vital funding for the coordinator and all outreach and education efforts.

The project will continue with funds from a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project. Conservation practice cost-share and coordinator salary will be provided by this RCPP funding. Additional funding sources will be sought for future field days and outreach events.

Small Grains and Cover Crops Help Improve Soil Health

A Wisconsin farmer is improving soil health and fertility on cropland he farms across the state border near Waukon, Iowa. He added winter wheat to his rotation, followed by a diverse cover crop.

Adam Kramer, who owns and operates Black Sand Granary in Prairie du Chien, said he hopes to break up pest cycles, improve soil health, and reduce input costs by adding a small grain to his corn-soybean rotation.

In October 2017, Kramer planted about 110 pounds per acre of soft red winter wheat on 70 acres following soybean harvest. Soil tests he conducted in 2015 when he started farming the property indicated the farm was deficient in many categories, including a compaction layer at six inches.



Photo credit: Adam Kramer

“The yields on the farm weren’t very good, certainly not profitable,” said Kramer. “I had an idea that farming in these conditions would require something different than the common rotation and practices. There is more work to do, but we are on track to build something sustainable.”