

CONSERVATION FOR PRODUCERS, BY PRODUCERS



Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources (STAR) is a national, non-profit organization leading work with state level Affiliates and conservation partners to empower farmers and ranchers to choose conservation as the standard on all agricultural lands to ensure a legacy of economic sustainability and clean, abundant water and healthy soils for future generations. Designed and led by producers, the STAR tool utilizes science and experience to target local solutions for local natural resource concerns, and to support farmers and ranchers on their conservation journey – wherever they are. The STAR framework inspires, guides, and standardizes conservation practice adoption and implementation across a variety of agricultural production systems at scale through state level STAR Affiliates.



WHAT WE DO

We provide STAR Affiliates with a comprehensive toolkit and tailored guidance to create a state specific STAR framework for enabling producer success through connections to technical, economic, and financial resources and programs. By creating a standardized approach for evaluating conservation progress across regions and production systems, STAR bridges the gap between producers' perceptions of sustainability and outcomes-based supply chain sustainability programs.

HOW STAR WORKS

The STAR Tool evaluation system assigns points for management activities at a field level on an annual basis. Participants answer a series of simple questions about their management and conservation practices, including crop rotation, tillage and nutrient applications in cropland systems and their grazing plan, drought management and active monitoring in rangeland systems to generate their overall field score. STAR relies on the expertise of a local science committee to assign the highest point values to practices identified to address local resource concerns.

STAR tools consist of region and production system specific field forms with questions to assess producer management practices and principles, a scoring system for the field forms to prioritize management activities with the greatest impact, and a STAR Web Tool that automates the field form questions, field scoring, and identification of applicable resources and programs to support producers through a Conservation Innovation Plan (CIP). It is available at www.STARtool.ag.

The STAR Tool can be used as a stand-alone evaluation tool, an on-ramp or screening tool for new programs, including rewards programs, and an evaluation tool to complement existing programs.



Scores are converted to a STAR rating of 1-5 STARS, with ratings indicating commitment to a suite of practices proven to improve soil health and water quality.

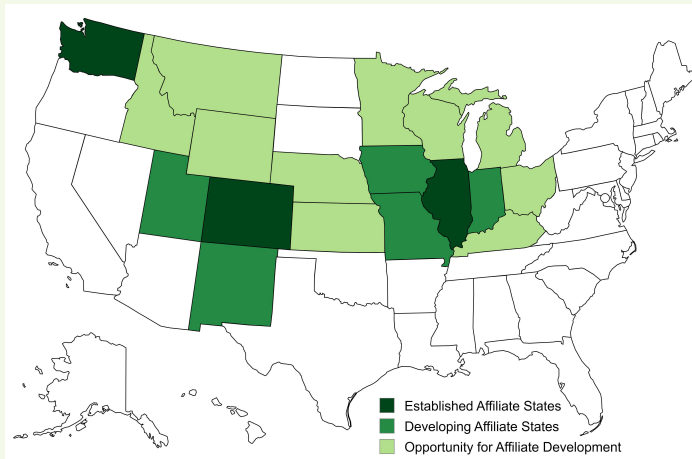
HOW STAR WORKS (CONT.) ★

Along with a STAR score, producers are provided with a tailored **Conservation Innovation Plan (CIP)** that identifies next steps for practice adoption, available educational and technical support resources, and options for programs that can help support implementation. Resources may include incentive and cost-share programs, market opportunities, equipment programs, certification programs, and mechanisms for improving landowner and lender relationships to better support conservation implementation. STAR views conservation holistically and includes many pathways for continuous improvement in the CIP, encouraging experimentation and continual innovation. This gives producers the flexibility to choose the practices and principles that work best for their production systems and accommodates incremental changes as they learn.

STAR is an adaptable framework that seamlessly integrates with local and regional needs, capacity, and conservation priorities and allows producers to choose from a variety of technical resources and financial incentive programs. The STAR tool can be used alone or as a complementary evaluation tool or as an easy on ramp for other programs.

STAR Expansion

The grassroots, locally-led, and science-based approach of STAR has resonated with producers and partners. STAR has expanded from one soil and water conservation district across eight states – IL, IA, IN, MO, CO, UT, NM, and WA to focus on specific state resource concerns and priorities.



STAR SUPPORT FOR STATE LEVEL AFFILIATES ★

New funding for STAR has created the opportunity for additional Western and Midwestern states to establish state level Affiliates with the support of national STAR in building state partnerships, facilitating state-specific STAR Steering and Science Committees, developing field forms and scoring systems, investing in automation of the STAR Tool, and developing methodologies for outcomes estimation. This funding will help increase and amplify conservation efforts across the country.

STAR BELIEVES IN

SIMPLICITY

Conservation guidance and evaluation should be clear and uncomplicated for producers and supply chain partners.



CONSISTENCY

Progress should be measured using a standardized scale across regions and production systems.



SUPPORT

Producers should have access to technical support and financial resources.



RECOGNITION

Producers should be recognized for conservation progress and incentivized to continue.



LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Conservation should be producer-led and driven by local resource needs.



STREAMLINED INVESTMENT

Investors and supply chain partners should have a clear roadmap for scaling conservation.



**HOW CAN I GET
STAR STARTED IN
MY STATE?**

STARconservation.org

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