

Cover crop champions –request for applications/nominations

Deadline: Dec 6, 2013

The National Wildlife Federation is accepting applications for farmers and conservation professionals, i.e. “champions”, to conduct outreach to promote cover crops and provide region-specific information and farming knowledge to farmers and crop advisors. **Selected applicants will receive benefits in the form of financial support for time and travel and access to an elite network of other cover crop champions.** Due to our funder’s priorities in the Mississippi River Basin, applicants are sought for champions from the following states: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, Indiana, and Ohio. **Priority will be given to applicants from Wisconsin and Illinois.**

Applicants can apply as individuals or in pairs/groups. Priority will be given to pairs of farmer champions and outreach champions who plan to work together in the same geographic region. Outreach champions may work with more than one farmer champion.

Responsibilities and qualifications of a farmer champion: farmers who use cover crops and have soil health as a primary mission. The farmer champion’s role includes traveling around the region and delivering presentations about cover crops and soil health. It could also include hosting a field day, attending field days and other public forums to promote cover crops, and writing articles or giving radio/video interviews. The farmer champion will also work with the outreach champion to answer follow-up questions by phone and email from interested farmers and organizations.

Responsibilities and qualification for an outreach cover crop champions: agricultural professionals who are full time employees of a farm-related organization (for example, a non-profit organization or an educational institution). The role of the outreach champion is to support farmer champions by assisting with presentations, outreach for field days, and media work. The outreach champion can provide information and data that farmer champions may use on the farm or in outreach efforts. The outreach champion can also identify key opportunities for farmer champions to share their expertise.

Cover crop champions will be selected by an advisory committee of diverse stakeholders from organizations in the Mississippi River Basin. The committee will also oversee champions’ efforts and offer advice and support on an ongoing basis.

What are the expectations of cover crop champions?

- Champions will conduct outreach activities, including field days, meetings with agricultural advisors, speaking engagements to farmer audiences, media interviews, etc. Each Champion pair is responsible for reaching 150 farmers and 10 crop advisors with messages on cover cropping as a practice.
- Champions will customize demonstration kits, PowerPoint presentations, and 2-4 educational handouts. Template kits, presentations, and handouts will be provided.
- Champions will be expected to stay in contact with each other and the advisory committee through a listserv and regularly scheduled phone calls coordinated by National Wildlife Federation.
- **All activities must be completed by the end of November 2014.**
- Champions will be required to complete a final report by November 1, 2014.

What resources will be available to the cover crop champions?

- A stipend will be provided to help champions undertake outreach activities.
- Champions will receive compensation for their time, travel, expenses, and materials.
- Cover Crop Champions throughout the Midwest and Great Plains will have an effective network in which they can interact in order to learn from and support each other, and keep abreast of latest research from academics and government agencies.

How to apply:

- Fill out the attached form and send to Lara Bryant: bryantl@nwf.org by Dec 6, 2013.
- Questions? Contact Lara Bryant at: bryantl@nwf.org or 202-797-6649

Cover Crop Champion Application Form

1. Applicant name; indicate outreach or farmer champion by each applicant/s name
2. Applicant/s contact information (address, phone, email):
3. Explain your qualifications and/or experience (less than 300 words, in paragraph form or bullet points):
4. Explain your plan for reaching at least 150 farmers and 10 crop advisors each year with messages on cover crops as a practice. Your plan can include media outreach to newspapers, trade publications, and TV or radio interviews, as well as field days, meetings with agricultural advisors, and speaking engagements to farmer audiences.
5. Estimate your budget, using the chart on the following page as an example. There is a limit of \$10,000 in total expenditures for a champion/farmer pair.

Suggested compensation for time spent:

Activity	Available compensation for time
Hosted half day field day (farmer)	\$500
Speaking engagement/in-person interview (farmer or outreach champion)	\$100
Phone interview (farmer or outreach champion)	\$50
Time spent on preparing presentations, writing articles or letters, advising other farmers, etc, attending or assisting with field days (outreach or farmer champion)	\$200/8-hour day, \$100/ 4-hour half-day

Sample budget for farmer applicant

Project Expenditures	Time/Deliverables	Budgeted amount
Compensation to farmer for contributed time	2 days (16 total hours over grant year) of total time spent for communications with outreach champion and preparing presentations and educational materials	\$400
	2 phone interviews	\$100
	4 speaking engagements	\$400
	1 hosted field day (half day)	\$500
Travel expenses (estimated)	Travel to 5 speaking engagements	\$1500
Other expenses	Supplies for field day	\$100
Total		\$3000

Sample budget for outreach partner

Project Expenditures	Time/Deliverables	Budgeted amount
Compensation to outreach partner for contributed time	4 days (32 total hours over grant year) for communications with advisees/farmer champions and preparing presentations and educational materials	\$800
Travel expenses (estimated)	Travel to 2 speaking engagements	\$600
Other expenses (printing, supply costs, etc)	Printing materials, supplies for educational materials	\$500
Total		\$2000