

IL STAR – 2024 Field Form

“If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it.” - Peter Drucker



Farmer/Owner Information

1. Name: _____
 Email: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____
 Street/City/Zip _____ / _____ / _____
2. Field name: _____ 3. 2024 crop: _____
4. Acres: _____ 5. County where field is located: _____
6. Field ID: FSA Farm #: _____ FSA Tract #: _____
 FSA Field #: _____ Lat/Lon coordinates (optional): _____
7. Is this field owned or rented by you? Owned Rented
8. Is this field tile-drained? Yes - pattern tiles Yes - random tiles No

I understand this field may be randomly selected for verification. To the best of my knowledge, this information is correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IMPORTANT! Before proceeding, please review these instructions. Accurate responses will help ensure your field is awarded the correct point total and STAR rating.

- This form documents field activities beginning immediately after harvest in 2023 and concluding with 2024 harvest. Cover crops interseeded prior to the 2023 harvest should be included in this timeframe.
- Read every item under each category. More than one selection is possible, but sometimes no items will be selected.
 - For example, if you planted a cover crop mix of cereal rye and tillage radish, you would select “Winter hardy - single species” and “Winter kill - single species” in the Cover Crops section.
- Completely read each statement. Several have more than one qualifier that needs to be met. For example: Spring Tillage section- “Any full width operation, limited to a single pass, where no fall tillage was performed.”

9. Crop Rotation. Use an “X” to indicate the 5-year crop history on this field.

| Crop | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Corn | | | | | |
| Soybean | | | | | |
| Small Grain: _____ | | | | | |
| Hay/Forage: _____ | | | | | |
| Other: _____ | | | | | |

Example: A field has been in corn/soybean rotation for over a decade. In 2024 it was planted to corn. Place an “X” adjacent to corn for the years 2024, 2022, and 2020. Soybean would have an “X” for ‘23 and ‘21. If your crop is not listed, i.e., Grain Sorghum, write your crop on the Other line and mark “X” in the year(s) planted. **Do not record cover crops here.**

10. Conservation and Management Practices. Check all that apply on this individual field.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturated Buffer | <input type="checkbox"/> Constructed Wetland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bioreactor | <input type="checkbox"/> Collected tile drainage water and sampled for water quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Terraces/Contours/WASCOBs | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Plan that reduces sheet/rill erosion to “T” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grass Filter Strip/Riparian Buffer | <input type="checkbox"/> Conducted nitrogen rate study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grassed Waterway | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient management plan and/or field is under CCA advisement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pollinator Planting (1/2 acre minimum) | <input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled in Federal/State/Local conservation program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windbreak | <input type="checkbox"/> Completed the 2023 STAR evaluation for this field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a soil health or nutrient management meeting or field day within the last year | |

11. Cover Crops (Summer 2023-2024). Check all that apply. Cover crops must be established according to NRCS guidelines and must have some growth.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter hardy - single species | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter kill - single species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter hardy - 2 or more species | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter kill - 2 or more species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover crop was terminated AFTER spring 2024 cash crop planting | |

Note: The time period varies slightly here. Any cover crops established in 2023 either prior to harvest or after a summer crop was harvested count. Examples: aerial application into standing corn or drilling after wheat harvest. Wheat is not considered to be a cover crop.

12. Soil Sampling for Nutrient Management. Check all that apply. Use the previous 4-year field history.

- Not sampled in the last 4 years
- Sampled every 4 years or less in Spring or Summer for the following crop year
- Sampled every 4 years or less in the Fall
- GPS sampled (by grid or zone)

Note: Here is a great example of why you should read every item in each category. If a respondent simply marked "Sampled every 4 years or less in the Fall" they may have missed points if they didn't indicate if GPS was used.

13. Fall Tillage - Starting after harvest of the 2023 crop

- No tillage or low disturbance fertilizer toolbar
- Strip tillage on field classified as non-HEL
- Shank type fertilizer bar and no other tillage performed
- Any full width operation not exceeding a 3" depth
- Any full width operation exceeding a 3" depth
- Any full width operation on soybean stubble

Note: With numerous possibilities for soil preparation, we elected to keep the options fairly simple. No tillage and strip tillage are easily definable. Full-width tillage can be tricky. In the fall, focus on the depth of machine operation and also note if soybean residue was tilled. In the spring, how many passes were made and was fall tillage performed?

14. Spring Tillage - 2024 field operations

- No tillage or low disturbance fertilizer toolbar
- Strip tillage or strip freshener on non-HEL field, or shank type fertilizer bar and no other Spring tillage
- Any full width operation, limited to a single pass, where no Fall tillage was performed
- Any full width operation, two or more passes, where no Fall tillage was performed
- Any full width operation, one or more passes, where Fall tillage was performed

15. Fall Nutrient Management (Fall 2023 – February 2024)

- No Nitrogen was applied in this time frame other than MAP or DAP
- Wheat topdress
- MAP or DAP was applied before December 1st
- No more than 50% of the total nitrogen program (from all sources) was applied as NH₃ with an inhibitor when the soil temperature was below 50 degrees
- More than 50% of the nitrogen program was applied during this time frame
- Manure/biosolid was injected or applied and incorporated when soil temperature was below 50 degrees
- Manure applied, but not incorporated

16. Spring/Summer Nutrient Management (March 1st – Summer 2024)

- No nitrogen was applied in this time frame and no prior Fall 2023-February 2024 nitrogen other than MAP or DAP
- Spring/Summer nitrogen application(s) amounted to 50-74% of the total nitrogen program (from all sources)
- Spring/Summer nitrogen application(s) amounted to at least 75% of the total nitrogen program (from all sources)
- In-season nitrogen application (top or sidedress) was at least 25% of the total nitrogen program (from all sources)
- Manure/biosolid was injected or applied and incorporated
- Manure applied, but not incorporated

Note: If you are growing soybeans on this field this year and did not apply nitrogen, be sure to select No nitrogen in both the Fall and Spring Nutrient Management sections.

17. Additional Nutrient Activities

- Total nitrogen applied on corn that followed a different crop was 181 to 200 lbs./acre, OR corn-on-corn was 201 to 220 lbs./acre
- Total nitrogen applied on corn that followed a different crop was 180 lbs. or LESS/acre, OR corn-on-corn was 200 lbs. or LESS/acre
- Phosphorus and/or Potassium application was based on removal rates and/or soil samples **WHENEVER** applied (Note: this may mean that zero P or K was applied)
- At least 50% of total applied phosphorus was banded subsurface
- Used Triple Super Phosphate (0-45-0)
- Used Variable Rate Technology and did not exceed application rates recommended in the Illinois Agronomy Handbook
- Any fertilizer source containing Nitrogen or Phosphorus was broadcast on **frozen** or **snow-covered** ground