ILLINOIS
SUSTAINABLE
AG PARTNERSHIP

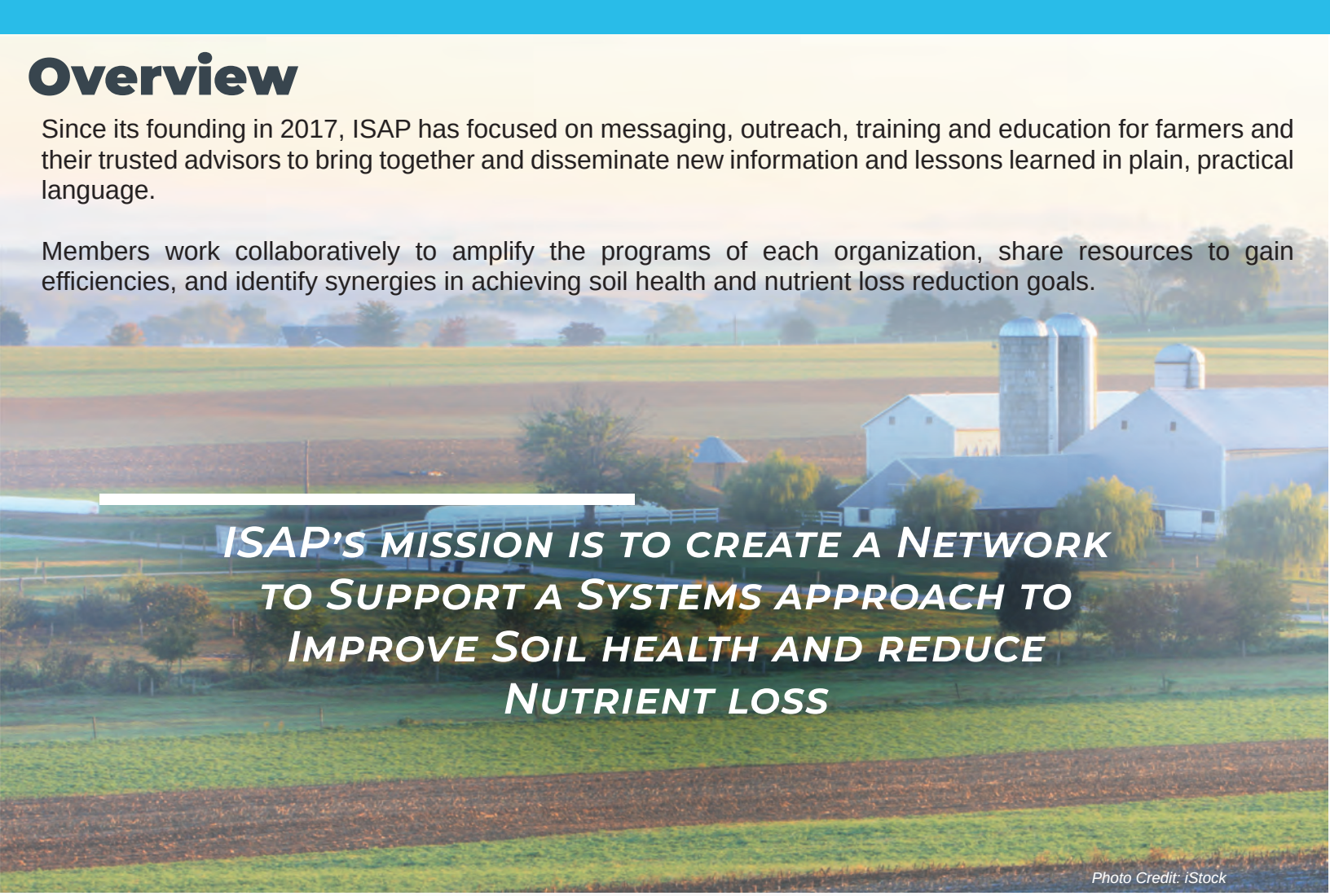
2020 Annual Report

A look inside...

Overview

Since its founding in 2017, ISAP has focused on messaging, outreach, training and education for farmers and their trusted advisors to bring together and disseminate new information and lessons learned in plain, practical language.

Members work collaboratively to amplify the programs of each organization, share resources to gain efficiencies, and identify synergies in achieving soil health and nutrient loss reduction goals.



ISAP's mission is to create a Network to Support a Systems approach to Improve Soil health and reduce Nutrient loss

Photo Credit: iStock

ISAP Welcomed Two New Members in 2020:

2020 Impacts

Published 10 Blogs and Distributed 12 E-Newsletters

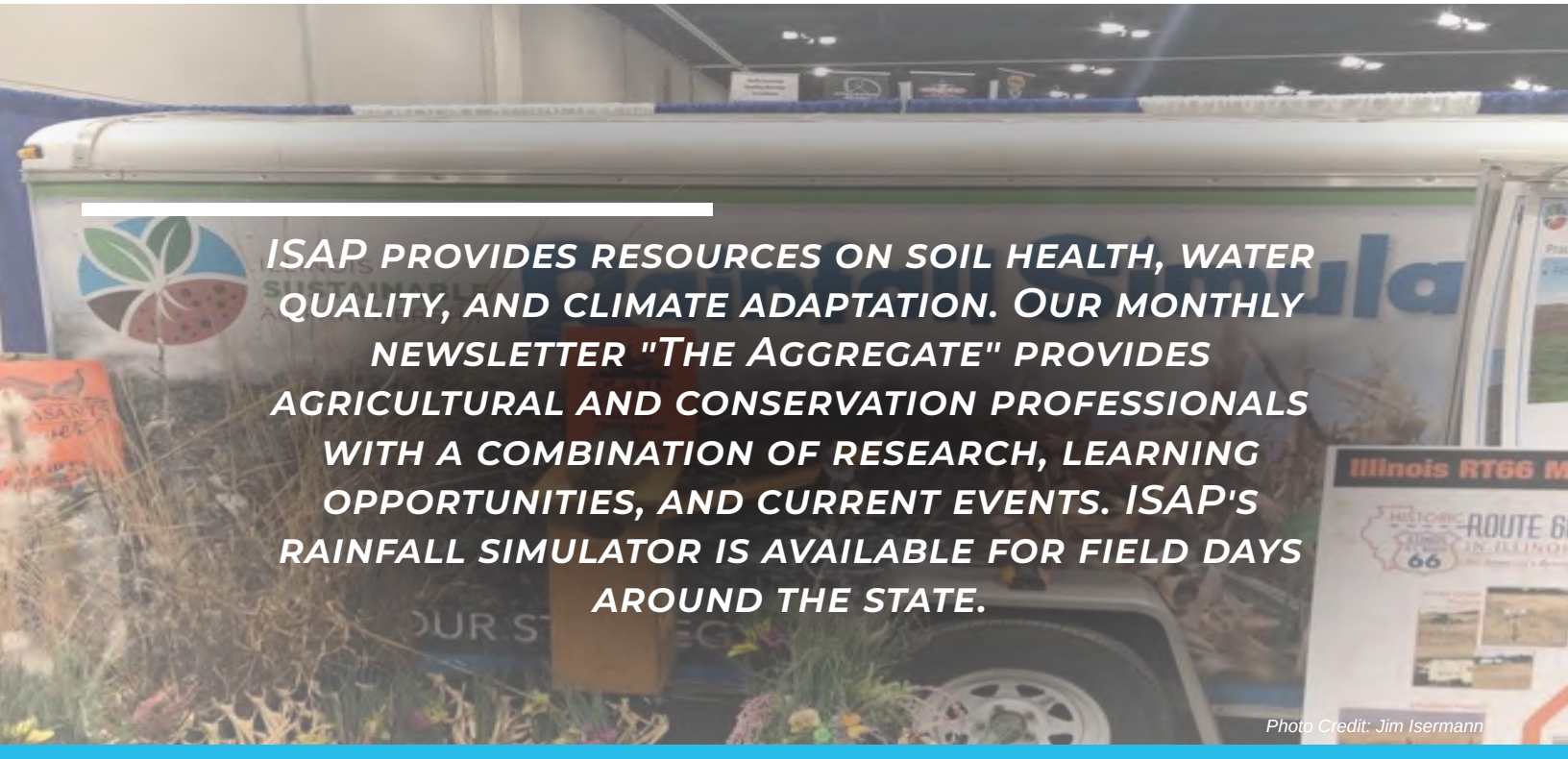
Reached 512 Individuals through Workshops and Field Days

Developed a 3-year Action plan

43 Soil Health & Conservation Drainage Specialists Advised on 66,000 Acres

Engaged 1,190 Individuals through Conferences and Presentations

Published 1 Fact sheet on Carbon Farming

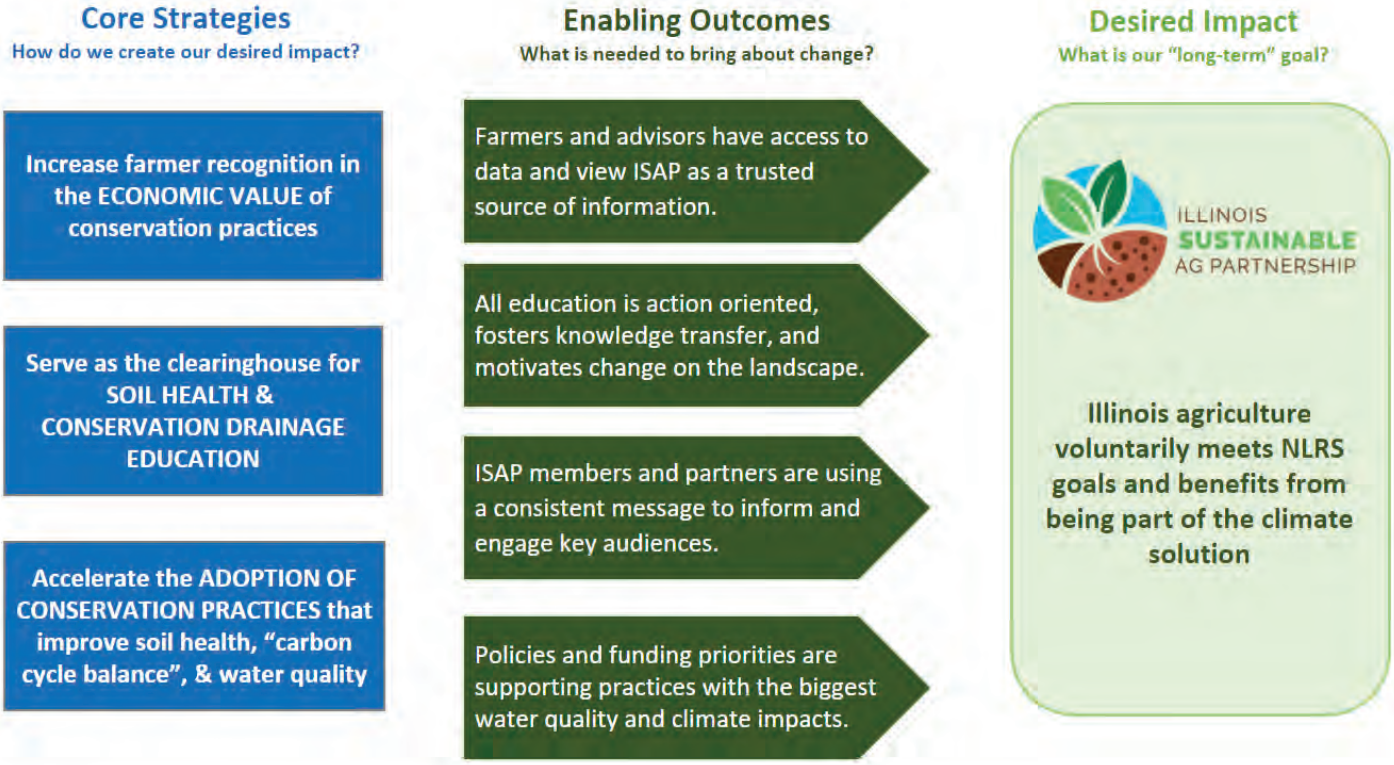


ISAP provides resources on soil health, water quality, and climate adaptation. Our monthly newsletter "The Aggregate" provides agricultural and conservation professionals with a combination of research, learning opportunities, and current events. ISAP's rainfall simulator is available for field days around the state.

Photo Credit: Jim Isermann

Theory of Change

In 2020, members of ISAP participated in a series of discussions to refine the Partnership's purpose and priorities. The resulting "Theory of Change" ensures our work will be effective toward meeting the goals of the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS) and achieving environmental outcomes.



ISAP's success relies on a purpose-driven foundation and commitment of individual members to the Partnership's mission.

Note from ISAP Chair

In an already taxing year, ISAP partners were challenged to think about **"what do we wish to create for the future of Illinois agriculture."** Members drew upon diverse expertise to envision a landscape with a combination of practices that build upon soil health and reduce nutrient loss. To achieve this shared vision, we must deliver a consistent message, share the latest research and economic findings, and encourage policies and funding opportunities that result in benefits to both farmers and the environment. More pragmatically, it requires collaboration, commitment, and trust.

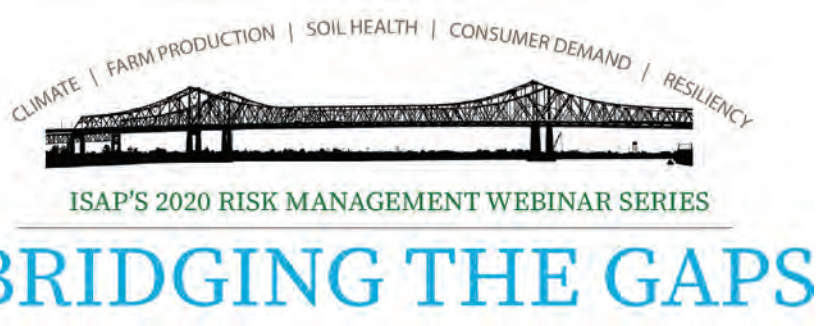
Working collaboratively with partners is our key to success! In this report, you will see where multiple organizations worked together to deliver ISAP programs throughout the state. With our strong foundation, the newly adopted Theory of Change provides a coherent framework that will guide our work in the coming years and ensure that all partners are working toward the collective vision.

I am humbled by the trust partners have placed in me as Chair, and I am proud of ISAP's achievements over the past year.

Jill Kostel

Production Risk Management

ISAP's Risk Management Conference highlights the use of soil health and conservation drainage practices as tools to mitigate production risk.

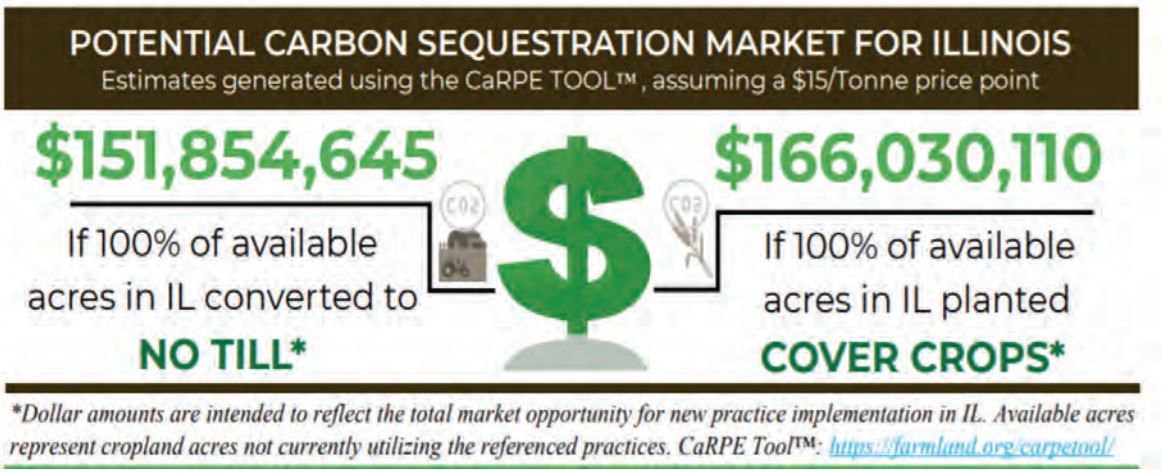


The 2020 conference reached over 200 people through three online webinars highlighting climate adaptations, working capital and consumer demand for sustainably raised crops.

> *The climate session was one of the best I have ever seen in making the point that weather has changed in the Midwest and that farmers need to get better at adapting.*

Leadership For The Risk Management Conference provided by: American Farmland Trust, The Nature Conservancy

Consumer demand and corporate responsibility have motivated many national and international corporations to set voluntary greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets and develop science-based strategies to achieve desirable environmental outcomes. ISAP produced a fact sheet summarizing the total potential market opportunity for Illinois farmers.



Leadership For Producing The Carbon Fact sheet provided by: American Farmland Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Soil Health Partnership

Soil Health & In-Field Management

ISAP developed the Advanced Soil Health Training (ASHT) to increase the number of Illinois farmers, retailers, crop advisors and conservation professionals who understand the science of soil health and related production management changes. The intensive classroom and in-field training model spans 18 months and graduates are encouraged to share what they learn through presentations and field days.

Photo Credit: Jennifer Jones

Congratulations to the Tri-State Cohort, a group of 20 individuals from southeast Illinois, southwest Indiana, and northwest Kentucky, who completed ASHT in June 2020. And welcome to 29 trainees from northwest Illinois and eastern Iowa, the Bi-State Cohort, who started training in 2020.

Leadership For Advanced Soil Health Training provided by: Illinois Extension, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; IL Corn; The Nature Conservancy

A phosphorus management workshop held in September highlighted current research on phosphorus placement and phosphorus runoff with cover crops. The event was supported by the Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed partnership and reached producers and farm advisors from across Illinois and the upper Midwest.

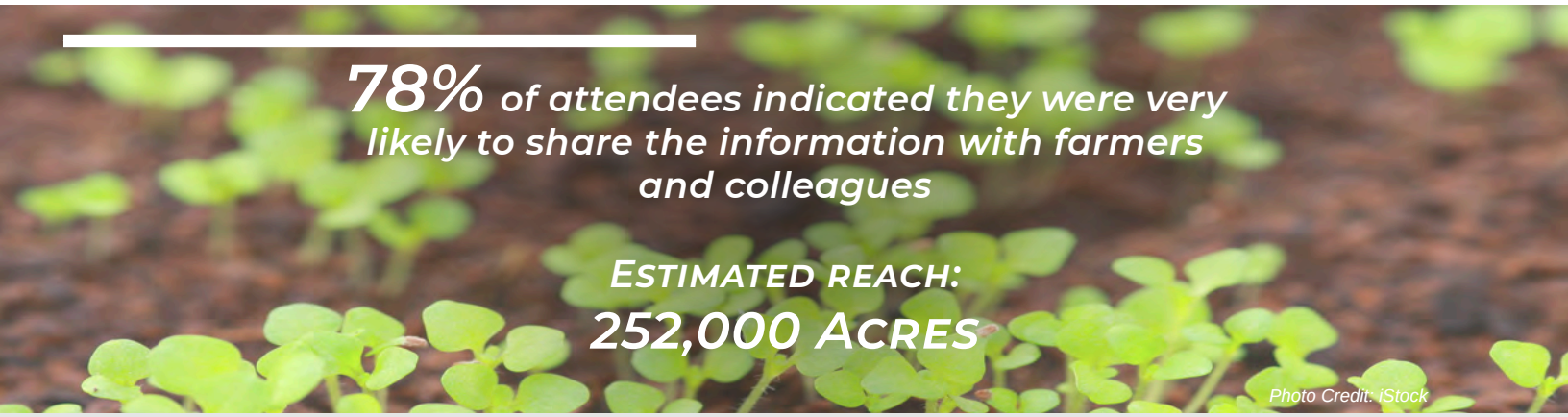


Photo Credit: iStock

Leadership For The Phosphorus Management Workshop provided by: American Farmland Trust

ISAP's Advanced Conservation Drainage Training program highlights practices like saturated buffers, constructed wetlands, controlled drainage and bioreactors, which are designed to capture and treat high levels of nitrate-nitrogen from tile flow. Workshops provide participants with knowledge and tools to make conservation drainage practices a standard part of tile installation and farm management through intensive classroom and hands-on training.

Photo Credit: Jill Kostel

The 2020 conservation drainage training was comprised of a three-part webinar series titled "On the Leading Edge." The first session provided an overview of hydrology, water quality and conservation drainage, and the second and third sessions examined conservation drainage at the practice and watershed scales.

Photo Credit: Jill Kostel

LEADERSHIP FOR THE CONSERVATION DRAINAGE TRAINING PROVIDED BY:

The Nature Conservancy

ADMC Agricultural Drainage Management Coalition

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THE WETLANDS INITIATIVE

Network of Practitioners

ISAP is cultivating a network of practitioners to support a systems approach to improve soil health and reduce nutrient loss.

Photo Credit: Jean Brokish

Alphabet Soup is an informal group of agriculture professionals, conservation practitioners, farmer advisors, and industry partners. Discussions explore issues, strategies, programs and resources to encourage farmers to implement nutrient reduction and conservation practices.

Leadership For Alphabet Soup provided by: American Farmland Trust, The Nature Conservancy, IL Corn, Illinois Soybean Association

More than 40 Individuals, including Crop Consultants, Farmers, SWCD employees, & other Professionals are listed as Specialists

Convened 8 Cover Crop Calls with Field Staff & Researchers across Illinois

Specialists are Available to Assist Farmers & others looking to learn more about Conservation Cropping Systems and Edge-of-Field practices

Photo Credit: April Opatik

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Photo Credit: Frank Rademacher

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