



## Agriculture: Crops & Soils Programming Jan. – March 2026



Extension Regional Crops Educator Will Fulwider collaborates with Dodge County row and forage crop farmers as well as agribusiness professionals to create educational programming and research tailored to meet the need for farm economic and environmental sustainability

### Needs Assessment

- Informal, semi-structured interviews with farmers and agribusiness professionals (crop consultants, agronomists, agency staff, ag lenders) about key challenges in their production systems
- Advise and solicit feedback from DATCP Producer-led Watershed Groups as well as other self-organizing farmer groups like the Dodge County Forage Council
- Evaluations from both Extension-hosted and farmer-hosted educational programming events in the county

### Completed Projects

#### Regional manure composting workshop | 2023

- Over 50 attendees to a farmer-asked for comprehensive workshop on manure composting approaches and management and nutrient availability
- Two Dodge County farmer attendees in post-field day conversations noted that the field day was “exactly what they were looking for” and provided the information to allow the farmer to make a decision to compost on their farm

#### Grazing cover crops interseeded in 60” row corn research and field days | 2022 & 2023

- 43 attendees across two years attended a pop up field day in Dodge County showcasing the economics of increasing grazing opportunities by interseeding cover crops
- Attendees rated the field day a 4.7/5 and all noted their knowledge increased at least somewhat, while 59% said theirs increased a great deal

### Ongoing Efforts

#### Estimating nitrogen credits from multi-species cover crops planted after wheat | 2023-2025

- 3 farmers in Dodge County and 3 in Dane County planted multi-species cover crops and no cover

### Quarter Highlight

#### Research plan for the Dodge County Research Farm

- A collaboration with farmers renting Dodge County owned land to conduct research that benefits farmers across Dodge County
- Integrating a farmer constructed research approach with recommendations from UW Madison faculty Extension specialists as well as additional needs assessment determined research needs on the soil benefits of conservation practices over four years

### Outcome

- Over 160 acres of the Dodge County Research Farm will be managed in 80 ft swaths with a low-input, UW recommendations, and performance/yield-chasing approach to evaluate the return on investment
- Soil samples taken this spring will provide a baseline to evaluate nutrient change across the four years
- A soil health demonstration plot on a small field bordering Hwy 26 will compare livestock integration and diversified crop rotation with a corn-soybean rotation

controls overlain with a nitrogen rate trial to determine nitrogen crediting from multi-species cover crops

- Findings can help to guide Dodge County farmers on when they can pull back on nitrogen rates, saving farmers money and reducing nitrate leaching to groundwater in the county
- Helped to secure \$74,000 NOPP and \$49,000 SARE in grant dollars for the project

#### Winter camelina: a new cover crop for Wisconsin? | 2023-2026

- 4 farmers across southern Wisconsin planted winter camelina and rye covers after soybeans to evaluate effects on nitrate leaching and yield drag in corn
- Secured \$39,000 in grant dollars for the project

Field Notes podcast | 10 episodes a year on topics ranging from economics of conservation to frost seeding red clover, with 4 episodes featuring Dodge County guests

- Listenership ranges from 200-700 listens per episode with the vast majority of listens coming from Wisconsin, but includes listeners from 45 countries

Ag Update E-Newsletter | Monthly newsletter sent to more 450+ recipients in Dodge County and 870+ across the region