



## Project Facts

### TIMELINE



Status: **COMPLETE**

### COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

Cargill	Unilever
Environmental	Walmart
Defense Fund	World
Kellogg	Wildlife
Company	Fund
The Nature	
Conservancy	

### FUNDED PARTNERS

Field to Market

### OTHER PARTNERS

National Association of  
Agricultural Educators (NAAE)

## PROJECT SUMMARY

### SYSTEMS CHANGE PATHWAY(S)

#### + Engaging Agricultural Retailers

### GOALS

- + Work with the agricultural retail and Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) community to identify gaps in training and awareness on conservation and sustainable farming practices.
- + Help these trusted advisers to farmers better understand why a dynamic shift in consumer interest will impact their business and service offerings.
- + Help trusted advisers continue to embrace a business philosophy that relies on knowledge and service more than just price of product.

### APPROACH

Create training modules that agricultural retail cooperatives can distribute for training and host link on ARA and ASA website for advisers to use for linking to educational materials and modules.

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## ACTIVITIES

- + Created educational resources to empower advisors to support farmers in sustainable practices
- + Used classrooms to provide continuing education units for CCAs, offering trackable hours of continuing education
- + Classes include: Sustainability 101, Environmental Metrics, Practices that Support Sustainable Agronomy, Measuring Success, The Farmer Business Case, and Developing a Sustainability Program
- + Developed 8 factsheets

## KEY OUTCOMES

- + Created farmer-facing toolkit & Resource Guide
- + "Know the Issues" Guides
- + 8 environmental indicators measured by Fieldprint Calculator
- + Companion manual to online modules for "Developing a Sustainability Program"
- + Learning exchange microsite developed
- + Launched at 2018 Sustainable Agronomy Conference
- + Online modules for CCAs and Agricultural Retailers
- + Created two Economic Case Studies

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### Project Insights

- + A large opportunity still exists to bridge the gap in communications from food and agriculture companies to trusted advisers to farmers.
- + Many retailers feel they are left out of sustainability conversations at the corporate level and are not engaged in implementing programs on farm.
- + Engaging with trusted advisers in a way that respects their agronomic knowledge is key and starting with a science-based conversation that ties into consumer expectations and trends is helpful to bridge the business and understanding gap.
- + The majority of trusted advisers are not comfortable talking about practice change outside of seed hybrid selection and chemical use. They feel their business and trusted relationship could be harmed if the farmer has a negative experience.
- + Bridging these gaps and continuing to influence large agricultural retail locations and CCAs will help to keep them connected to the consumer and ultimately benefit all in the supply chain.

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## ABOUT THE MIDWEST ROW CROP COLLABORATIVE

The Midwest Row Crop Collaborative is an innovative partnership aligned to drive positive environmental change in the upper Mississippi River Basin. It is comprised of leading businesses and nonprofits that span the full food and agriculture value chain, working together to catalyze and implement joint, systemic projects and initiatives that accelerate sustainable agricultural solutions.

## ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE

Environmental Initiative is a nonprofit organization that works with business, nonprofit and government leaders to develop collaborative solutions to environmental problems. In 2019, Environmental Initiative became the administrator of the Midwest Row Crop Collaborative.