

# Regional BMP's for Cover Crops in Row Crops



NFREC-Suwanee Valley-Live Oak

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*Gainesville Florida, 2/25/26*

*SCCC COVER CROP CONFERENCE*

# NITROGEN TARGETS AND BMP'S

- NITROGEN IN GROUNDWATER/SPRINGS
- NITROGEN TARGETS /TMDL'S- .22 TO .35 MG/LITER AT SPRING VENTS- WACISSA, SUWANNEE, SANTA FE RIVERS
- BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTIONS PLANS (BMAPS)-20 YEAR TIMELINES
- FARMERS ROLE-ENROLL IN/IMPLEMENT ADOPTED BMP'S/FDACS VERFICATION VISITS (BMP REPORT CARD/TURN IN NITROGEN/PHOSPHOROUS RECORDS)
- NEXT 5 YEAR BENCHMARK 2028

# SUWANNEE RIVER PARTNERSHIP-Voluntary, Incentive Based Programs

- FDACS/OFFICE OF AG WATER POLICY-BMP TOOLS COST SHARE/MOBILE IRRIGATION LABS
- SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SRWMD)-IRRIGATION UPGRADES RELATED COST SHARE
- SRWMD/FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION- PRECISION NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT COST SHARE
- USDA/NRCS- EQIP/CSP COST SHARE PROGRAMS

# UF/IFAS ROLE WITH AGRICULTURE

## BMPS

- UPDATE/REVISE FERTILIZER RECOMMENDATIONS (FDACS ADOPTS BY RULE)
  - RESEARCH
  - ON FARM DEMONSTRATIONS
  - FIELD DAYS
  - OUTREACH AND EDUCATION
  - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
  - STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEES
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- A man wearing a blue polo shirt, blue jeans, a yellow baseball cap, and sunglasses stands in a grassy field. He is holding a piece of wood or a stick. In the background, there is a large herd of black cows, a metal irrigation structure, and a small wooden structure. The sky is clear and blue.

# ROW CROP/VEGETABLE BMP'S

- 4 R + NUTRIENT STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES (5<sup>th</sup> R-optimum irrigation)
- SIDE DRESSING OF NUTREINTS FOR WIDE SPACED ROW CROPS
- IRRIGATION SYSTEM EVALUATION/RETROFITS
- MOISTURE PROBES
- PRECISION AG -GRID SOIL SAMPLING/VARIABLE RATE NUTRIENT APPLICATION/TISSUE SAMPLING
- CONSERVATION TILLAGE
- COVER CROPS-MULTISPECIES BLENDS/LEGUMES
- LIVESTOCK/ROW CROP INTEGRATION-PERENNIAL GRASS/COVER CROPS









# BMP SUCCESSES/PROJECTED N SAVINGS 4 R PRINCIPLES

- MADISON COUNTY 4 R DEMO FARM EXAMPLE
- 6,000 ACRES OF CORN USING 4 R'S AND SOIL MOISTURE PROBES
- 50 LBS NITROGEN N REDUCTION
- **PROJECTED 300,000 N saved**
- ASSUMPTION 4 R PRINCIPLES ADOPTED ON ALL CORN ACRES (50,000 +/-)
- 50 LB N REDUCTION USING 5 R'S/COVER CROPS/SOIL HEALTH
- **PROJECTED 2,500,000 MILLION LBS OF N SAVED**

# BMP SUCCESSES/PROJECTED N SAVINGS

## Post Corn Harvest Cover crop

- MADISON COUNTY COVER CROP DEMO FARM EXAMPLE
- 3,500 ACRES OF COVER CROP POST HARVEST CORN
- PROJECTED NITROGEN RECOVERY/RECYCLED- 30 lbs N/acre
- **105,000 LBS N SEQUESTERED**
- COVER CROP ADOPTION/NON-DOUBLE CROPPED SUWANNEE VALLEY CORN ACRES (30,000 +/-)
- **PROJECTED 900,000 LBS NITROGEN SEQUESTERED**

# CHALLENGES

- LONG GROWING SEASON- DOUBLE/TRIPLE CROPPING CASH CROPS
- LABOR AVAILABILITY DURING CROP HARVEST
- LEASED LAND VS OWNED LAND
- LONG TERM RESEARCH/ON FARM DEMONSTRATIONS NEEDED
- RELUCTANCE TO DO RESEARCH ON COVER CROP BLENDS
- COVER CROP INFORMATION/ONE ON ONE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
- EQUIPMENT NEEDED/EQUIPMENT COST/LABOR

# OPPORTUNITIES

- DEVELOP LOCAL COVER CROP SEED INDUSTRY
- COVER CROP RESEEDING
- MORE INDUSTRY/VENDOR INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT
- COVER CROP GRAZING ON FALLOW PERIODS
- INTEGRATING PERENNIAL GRASS AND LIVESTOCK GRAZING
- ADDING ADAPTED COVER CROP LEGUMES TO THE SYSTEM
- THE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION/SUPPORT OF SOIL HEALTH
- PAYMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

# QUESTIONS?

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- <https://www.mysuwanneeriver.com/366/Agricultural-Cost-Share-Program>
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