IL STAR – 2026 Wheat and Double Cropped Wheat Field Form

Please review the IL STAR – 2026 Wheat and DC Wheat Field Form Instructions on Page 3 before completing

Farmer/Owner Information

Name:_____

Email: _____Phone: (_____) _____-_____

Street/City/Zip_____/_____/_____

Field name:_____

2026 crop: _____ Acres:_____

County where field is located:_____ Lat/Long coordinates (optional): _____

FSA Farm #:_____

FSA Tract #(s):_____

FSA Field #(s):_____

Do you own or rent this field? ☐ Own ☐ Rent Is this field irrigated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are livestock and crops (i.e., cover crops and/or crop residue) integrated on this field? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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

Signature: _____ **Date**: _____

1. Crop Rotation: ***Use an "X" to indicate the 5-year crop history on this field.***

Crop	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
Corn					
Soybean					
Small Grain: _____					
Hay/Forage: _____					
Other: _____					

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

Conservation Practices

- ☐ Constructed Wetland
- ☐ Terraces/Contours/WASCOBs
- ☐ Grass Filter Strip/Riparian Buffer
- ☐ Grassed Waterway
- ☐ Pollinator Planting (1⁄2 acre minimum)
- ☐ Windbreak
- ☐ Conservation Plan that reduces sheet/rill erosion to "T"

Management Practices

- ☐ Conducted nitrogen rate study
- ☐ Collected tile drainage water and sampled for water quality
- ☐ Attended a soil health or nutrient management meeting or field day within the last year
- ☐ Nutrient management plan and/or field is under CCA advisement
- ☐ Enrolled in Partners for Conservation OR
- ☐ Enrolled in another Federal/State/Local conservation program [Please provide name of program:] _____
- ☐ Completed the 2025 STAR evaluation for this field

For TILE DRAINED fields only, indicate the type of tile and any additional conservation practices that apply:

☐ Pattern tiles ☐ Random tiles ☐ Saturated Buffer ☐ Bioreactor

3. Cover Crops (Summer 2025-Fall 2026). ***Check all that apply. Cover crops must be established according to NRCS guidelines and must have some growth. Note: Wheat is not considered a cover crop.***

- ☐ Winter hardy - single species
- ☐ Winter hardy - 2 or more species
- ☐ Cover crop was terminated AFTER spring cash crop planting
- ☐ Winter kill - single species
- ☐ Winter kill - 2 or more species

4. 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/Summer (March-July) for the following crop year
- ☐ Sampled every 4 years or less in the Fall/Winter (August-February)
- ☐ GPS sampled (by grid or zone)

5. Fall/Winter Tillage (After harvest of the 2025 crop-February). ***Check all that apply.***

- ☐ 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

6. Spring/Summer Tillage (March-July 2026). ***Check all that apply.***

- ☐ 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/Summer tillage
- ☐ Any full width operation, limited to a single pass, where **no** Fall/Winter tillage was performed
- ☐ Any full width operation, two or more passes, where **no** Fall/Winter tillage was performed
- ☐ Any full width operation, one or more passes, where Fall/Winter tillage **was** performed

7. Fall/Winter Nutrient Management (August 2025– February 2026)

- ☐ No nitrogen was applied in this time frame
- ☐ No nitrogen was applied in this time frame other than MAP or DAP
- ☐ MAP or DAP was applied before December 1st
- ☐ Total nitrogen applied for wheat before Dec 1 did not exceed 40 lbs/acre
- ☐ 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 was applied, but not incorporated

8. Spring/Summer Nutrient Management (March 1st – July 2026)

- ☐ No nitrogen was applied in this time frame and no prior Fall-February nitrogen
- ☐ No nitrogen was applied in this time frame and no prior Fall-February nitrogen other than MAP or DAP
- ☐ Wheat topdress was applied as a single application after ground thaw
- ☐ Wheat topdress was applied as split applications after ground thaw
- ☐ 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)
- ☐ Manure/biosolid was injected or applied and incorporated
- ☐ Manure was applied, but not incorporated

9. Additional Nutrient Activities

- ☐ Total nitrogen applied on corn that followed a different crop was 180lbs or LESS/acre, OR corn-on-corn was less than 200 lbs/acre
- ☐ Total nitrogen applied on corn that followed a different crop was 181 to 205 lbs/acre, OR corn-on-corn was 200 to 220 lbs/acre
- ☐ Total nitrogen applied on corn that followed a different crop was more than 205 lbs/acre, OR corn-on-corn was more than 220 lbs/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

IL STAR – 2026 Wheat and Double-Cropped Wheat Field Form Instructions

"If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." - Peter Drucker

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

General Guidance

- Crop year: This form documents field activities beginning immediately after harvest in 2025 and concluding with 2026 harvest. Cover crops interseeded prior to the 2025 harvest should be included.
- Read every item under each section. More than one selection may be possible, but sometimes no items will be selected depending on your specific field management.
  - *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. Some have more than one qualifier to be met (ie. *Spring/Summer Tillage - Any full width operation, limited to a single pass, where no Fall/Winter tillage was performed)*

Section Guidance

- **Section 1. Crop Rotation**
  - **Example:** A field has been in corn/soybean/wheat rotation for over a decade. In 2026, it was planted to wheat. Place an "X" adjacent to Small Grains for the years 2026 and 2023. Corn would have an "X" for 2024, and Soybean an "X" for 2022 and 2025. 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.**
- **Section 2. Program Enrollment.** If you are enrolled in another state, federal, or local conservation program besides Partners For Conservation, be sure to write the program name on the line provided. Common options include: FLASH Group, FS Cover Crop Assurance Program, Lake Decatur RCPP, NRCS (CSP, EQIP, Other), Precision Conservation Management (PCM), Siemer Producer Reward Payment Program, Soil & Water Outcomes Fund (SWOF), Sustainability certifications (i.e., USDA Organic, Grassfed, etc.), IDOA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG), or Delta Institute Project
- **Section 3. Cover Crops.** The time period varies slightly here. Any cover crops established in 2025 either prior to harvest or after a summer crop was harvested should be included. Examples: Aerial application into standing corn or drilling after wheat harvest. **Wheat is not considered a cover crop.**
- **Section 4. Soil Sampling.** This section is a good example of why you should read through each item and check all that apply where noted. If a respondent simply marked "Sampled every 4 years or less in the Fall/Winter (August-February)", they may have missed points if they didn't indicate if GPS was used.
- **Section 5. Fall /Winter Tillage.** 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/winter, focus on the depth of machine operation and also note if soybean residue was tilled. In the spring/summer, how many passes were made and was fall/winter tillage performed?
- **Section 7 and 8. Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer Nutrient Management.** If you are growing soybeans on this field this year and did not apply nitrogen, be sure to select "No nitrogen was applied in this time frame" in both the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer Nutrient Management sections.