

SAMPLE INNOVATION PROJECT REGISTRATION



Field to Market's Continuous Improvement Accelerator harnesses the power of collaboration across the agriculture value chain to implement locally-led conservation solutions to deliver sustainable outcomes for agriculture.

Each project in the Accelerator seeks to support farmers in advancing their journey of continuous improvement and addressing pressing local natural resource concerns, while also contributing to global sustainable development priorities.

By registering continuous improvement projects and publicly reporting progress against achieving continuous improvement goals and objectives, the Accelerator creates a standardized and validated approach to recognize and reward the contributions of Field to Market members in advancing sustainable agriculture.

Effective August 2019, all Projects must be registered with Field to Market, providing a Continuous Improvement Plan no later than October 31, 2019 to be listed on the public-facing project directory. Projects will be required to report publicly on an annual basis on progress achieved against this plan by April 30 each year.

PROJECT REGISTRATION

COMPLETE TO REGISTER PROSPECTIVE PROJECT

PROJECT INTENT & SCOPE

The following information is required to register the project on Field to Market's public facing project directory. Project names will be autogenerated based on information supplied.

1. Project Pathway

Please select the pathway that best describes the intent of your project.

☐ Incubation ☐ Insight ☒ **Innovation**

2. Project Boundaries

Provide the state of the project (required) and whichever categories of more localized geography most accurately define the project.

State(s): Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri

County/District(s) (optional): Click here to enter text.

Watershed (optional): Click here to enter text.

Supply Shed (optional): Click here to enter text.

3. Primary Crop(s)

Please list the primary crop(s) the project will address.

☐ Alfalfa

☐ Barley

☐ Corn, grain

☐ Corn, silage

☐ Cotton

☐ Peanuts

- ☐ Potatoes
☒ **Rice**
☐ Sorghum

- ☐ Soybeans
☐ Sugar Beets
☐ Wheat

4. Rotational Crops (optional)

If applicable, please list any additional crop(s) in rotation that will be engaged by the Project.

- ☐ Alfalfa
☐ Barley
☐ Corn, grain
☐ Corn, silage
☐ Cotton
☐ Peanuts
☐ Other:

- ☐ Potatoes
☐ Rice
☐ Sorghum
☒ **Soybeans**
☐ Sugar Beets
☐ Wheat

5. Key Natural Resource Concerns and Target Sustainability Metrics

Please select at least one primary natural resource concern and associated target metric(s) critical to the region where the project is operating:

- ☒ **Climate change**
☒ **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
☐ Energy Use
☐ Soil Carbon
☐ Ecosystem conservation
☐ Land Use
☐ Biodiversity

- ☐ Soil health/quality
☒ Soil Carbon
☐ Soil Conservation
☒ **Water scarcity**
☒ **Irrigation Water Use**
☐ Water quality
☐ Water Quality
☐ Soil Conservation

- ☐ Other, please specify: [Click here to enter text.](#)

6. Local Relevance

Please describe how the local relevance of these natural resource concerns was identified and prioritized. For guidance on available resources to identify and prioritize natural resource concerns, please download Field to Market's quick reference guide to Addressing Key Natural Resource Concerns.

NRCS

*Please Describe: The selected states fall within **NRCS's Mississippi River Basin Critical Conservation Area, which identifies water quality, inefficient irrigation water use and habitat degradation as key natural resource concerns. For that reason, our project will focus on supporting farmers in improving irrigation water use efficiency.***

7. Related Programs (optional)

Please indicate if this project is communicated about by any other names or as part of a larger corporate or organizational program.

Mid-South Graduated Water Stewardship RCPP

8. Contact Information

Please provide the name, organization, and email address of the lead contacts responsible for this project.

Primary Contact: Joshua Riceman, Acme Rice, Joshua@acmerice.com

Secondary Contact: Jack Marsh, CCA, jack@marshconsulting.com

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVES

The following components must be completed and on file with Field to Market before a project can be considered an active project in the Continuous Improvement Accelerator and listed on the public-facing Project Directory.

1. Project Summary

Provide a brief (3-5 sentence) overview of the project's continuous improvement goal(s) to appear on the Field to Market Project Directory.

Partnering together to deliver sustainability solutions to the Mississippi River Basin, Acme Rice has convened supply chain partners and trusted advisers to support farmers in optimizing their irrigation water use efficiency in rice production. By combining principles that address insufficient water and water quality concerns, optimal flooding conditions and management solutions to reduce rice methane, this project will amplify the conservation efforts of participating farmers and contribute to the goals of the Mid-South Graduated Water Stewardship Program RCPP. Our partnership seeks to accelerate conservation practice adoption by providing both technical and financial assistance through multiple sources including the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program and Ecosystem Services Market Consortium.

2. Multi-Stakeholder Participation

Sponsors

Provide a list of Field to Market Full Members investing in the project (financially or in-kind) *Acme Rice; USA Rice; NRCS- Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri; local SWCDs; Riceland Foods; Corteva; Ducks Unlimited*

Partners

If applicable, please provide a list of Associate Members and/or Non-Members that contribute to the project. Please note that any entity wishing to make public communications about their involvement in the project must meet Field to Market's licensing requirements before they can be affiliated with your project.

Delta Plastics, Marsh Consulting, RiceTec

3. Continuous Improvement Objectives

Please list three or more time-bound, measurable continuous improvement objectives that define the near-term scope and achieve the project's continuous improvement goal(s) summarized above.

Objective 1: Support 20% of farmers in adopting irrigation efficiency practices such as tailwater recovery and multi-inlet irrigation by Year Five (2025)

Objective 2: Provide dedicated technical assistance to 100% of eligible participating farmers to complete RCPP applications to defray the costs of adopting irrigation efficiency practices by Year Two (2022).

Objective 3: By Year Seven (2027), reduce aggregate greenhouse gas emissions by 10% and support farmers in building soil organic matter consistently (Soil Carbon scores of 0.5 or greater) in rice production through adoption conservation practices such as incorporating cover crops in rotation, alternate wetting and drying, etc.

Objective 4 (optional): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Objective 5 (optional): [Click here to enter text.](#)

4. Mechanisms for Evaluating Progress

Please provide a baseline against which progress and success will be evaluated for each continuous improvement objective (i.e., baseline of 15% of enrolled growers have nutrient management plans; to meet the project objective, nutrient management plans will be

developed for 100% of enrolled growers by the end of Year 2). Please note that baselines may either be established prior to project implementation or updated from the status of “In Process of Drafting” to actual baseline during Year One of project implementation.

Objective 1: In progress of drafting baseline based on Year One data collection to determine percentage of participating farmers currently implementing tailwater recovery and/or multi-inlet irrigation.

Objective 2: Currently, only 30% of participating farmers utilize federal financial assistance programs – 70% eligible for RCPP applications.

Objective 3: In progress of drafting baseline based on Year One data collection.

Objective 4 (optional): Click here to enter text.

Objective 5 (optional): Click here to enter text.

5. Other Sustainability Initiatives or Equivalencies (optional)

Field to Market seeks to harmonize our approach with other sustainability initiatives. Please indicate other sustainability initiatives or equivalencies which you are utilizing in your project.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SAI Platform | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Health Partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Sustainability Consortium | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton Trust Protocol | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midwest Row Crop Collaborative | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

6. Level of Verification (optional)

How do you plan to verify Project results? *This can be altered during annual reporting. For more information about the Verification process and requirements for each level, please review Field to Market’s Assurance Principles which outline criteria for verifying claims.*

- ☐ I plan to self-report progress achieved
- ☐ I plan to have a partner to support progress reporting
- ☒ I plan to have an independent, third-party validate progress reporting

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Field to Market®

COMPLETE TO REGISTER ACTIVE PROJECT

GROWER ENGAGEMENT

The development of a grower engagement plan which identifies methods in which the project will engage growers and specifies qualitative and quantitative engagement goals for the project is an essential element of a successful project. Each project is required to provide a feedback mechanism that enables farmers to identify and pursue opportunities for continuous improvement. The plan must also include a strategy for using grower engagement to advance Field to Market's overall goal of continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes.

1. Planned Outreach/Recruitment Mechanisms

Identify the methods your project will utilize to reach, recruit, engage and retain growers. Examples include, but are not limited to, community outreach mailers, targeted outreach (calls or email) and/or in-person events.

Acme Rice will provide financial support for a dedicated trusted adviser to both recruit and support participating farmers. This individual will also collaborate with other local trusted advisers including NRCS, SWCDs, and ag retailers. Acme Rice will also provide additional resources such as a project overview, step-by-step guide, and turn-key presentations for larger audiences, as needed. We anticipate the majority of recruitment to take place as one-on-one conversations and will have multiple briefings with participating advisors to ensure the program goals and opportunities are fully understood.

We will have a kick-off event at each cooperative and mill with annual follow-up meetings each winter.

2. Engagement Goals & Timeline

Identify timebound targets for the number of growers and collective acreage under management that your project will engage during the lifespan of the project. Progress against these targets will be reported on annually.

Growers: 700

Acres: 70,000

Target Year: 2030

3. Grower Support

All projects are required to help participating growers advance their continuous improvement journey through providing a feedback mechanism and/or tangible support.

What are the tangible outcomes that participating growers receive as a result of their involvement in the project? (Some examples include, but are not limited to, Incubation: written conservation plan, nutrient management plan; Insight: actionable feedback on their Fieldprint Analysis and peer-to-peer comparison at annual grower meetings; or Innovation: cost-share on practice adoption.)

Designated conservation staff from Project Sponsor and Partner organizations, will support data entry into the Fieldprint Platform and development of RCPP applications for federal financial assistance. Fieldprint Results will be used by this project to determine a baseline in Year One prior to practice adoption and track sustainability performance changes over time.

We will hold annual grower workshops for farmers to share aggregate results and discuss learnings in January. These workshops will allow Project Sponsors and Partners to provide updates on technologies and conservation programs.

How is the project's strategy for supporting farmers tied to improvements in environmental outcomes?

Provide actionable feedback and education around best management practices to improve irrigation efficiency and soil carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project will utilize results from Fieldprint Platform to track aggregate progress annually to support quantification of impact in Year Seven.

4. Enrollment Methodology (Required for Insight and Innovation Projects)

What is the percentage of enrolled acres for which you intend to collect data? Please note that Field to Market requires participating growers to enter data for a minimum of 10% of the total acreage they wish to enroll for the project, ensuring that the fields selected are representative of their overall operations.

70% of Each Farmers' Total Acreage

How are you ensuring that the fields that are selected are a representative of the farmers' total acreage enrolled?

Farmers are selecting fields with soil characteristics that are most prevalent on their operations and that have common management characteristics: rice, tillage type and irrigation types.

INVESTING IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (Required for Innovation Projects)

Please document the strategies the project will employ to advance the continuous improvement objectives previously identified and highlight what direct investments the project will make to support farmers in adopting conservation practices.

1. Practices

- a. *What practices are you promoting with the farmers in the project to address the identified natural resource concerns?*

Irrigation efficiency practices such as tailwater recovery and/or multi-inlet irrigation. Cover crops and alternate wetting and drying to deliver soil carbon improvements and greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

- b. *Select, from the list below, what guidance you utilized to determine the applicable practices for this region.*

Natural Resource Conservation Service

2. Value-Added Incentives

What value-added incentive strategies do you plan to incorporate into your project to help participating farmers pursue opportunities for continuous improvement and de-risk adoption of new practices? For examples, please reference the Value-Added Case Studies White Paper.

☒ **Financial Assistance**

☒ **Practice Incentive Payments**

- ☐ Per Unit Premium for Data
- ☐ Per Acre Premium for Data
- ☐ Reduced Crop Insurance Premiums
- ☐ Tax Credits of Conservation Equipment
- ☐ Payment for Ecosystem Services / Pay for Performance
- ☐ Equipment Rental Availability
- ☐ Extended Lease Terms
- ☐ Other – Please Describe: _____

☒ **Technical Assistance**

☒ **Dedicated trusted adviser**

- ☐ Grower training on effective practice implementation
- ☐ Other – Please Describe: _____

☐ **Market Access**

- ☐ Long-Term Contracts
- ☐ International Market Access
- ☐ Other – Please Describe: _____

Please provide a written description of the value-added incentives available to farmers in your project.

Dedicated technical assistance through the form of a certified crop adviser to support implementation of selected practices and completion of RCPP application to access federal financial assistance.

Date submitted: [Click here to enter a date.](#)