



## Reducing Input Costs with Cover Crops

### Virginia Farmers Talk about Benefits of Cover Cropping Systems

**Richmond, Virginia, August 22, 2022.** Sustainable Chesapeake and Virginia Soil Health Coalition Partners are pleased to announce the release of four videos focused on how cover crops (a high priority conservation practice for Chesapeake Bay restoration) can save farmers money by improving yields, reducing input costs, improving drought resilience, and preventing weeds. The videos feature Paul Davis (Davis Produce), Jamie Shenk (Beauregard Farms), and Clay Lowe (Cedar Point Farms).

“When it comes to a drought, you want as much cover as you can get on the soil. And you know what you don’t see? A lot of weeds, because there is no room for them.” (Clay Lowe, Cedar Point Farms)

“Our yields have gone up in corn probably 5 or 6 bushels a year, and to get that we have been cutting back on our fertilizer.” (Paul Davis, Davis Produce)

“Being able to reduce our sidedress nitrogen rates by 100 pounds this year is going to make huge economic benefits for our farm.” (Jamie Shenk, Beauregard Farms).

Funded by the sale of “Friend of the Bay” license plates, the videos are available on YouTube:

- Cover Crops for Boosting Yields: <https://youtu.be/66Cl7exYjPU>
- Cover Crops for Fighting Drought and Weeds: <https://youtu.be/rMeZGOQmBqg>
- Cover Crops for Growing Nutrients and Cutting Costs: <https://youtu.be/4kjxkJLvMM8>
- Cover Crops for Future Generations: <https://youtu.be/moA9-qA4nU8>

Cover crops are an integral approach for improved soil health and water quality. Soil health is defined as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Key concepts of soil health include protecting soil habitat; managing more by disturbing less; keeping soil covered, diversifying food and carbon sources for soil microorganisms; diversifying plant and animal communities; and growing living roots throughout the year. In addition, cover crops can trap and fix nitrogen (if using legumes) and they prevent soil erosion, which is good for both farmers and the Bay.

For more information about the videos, contact Kristen Hughes Evans by email at [kristen@susches.org](mailto:kristen@susches.org) or by phone at 804-554-3457.