

INTERVIEWS WITH GROWERS: SUPPORTING REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE TRANSITION

In an effort to continue supporting our growers, the anonymous interviews provide valuable insight into the challenges they face and the type of support they need most.

This session focuses on the research and support needed to successfully transition to regenerative agriculture. In this interview, topics like better data on water use, as well as managing cover crop residue and understanding soil health impacts were talked about. The idea of more hands-on learning through on-farm trials and demos also came up.

WATER USAGE

There is concern and misinformation over how cover crops affect water use in regenerative agriculture. Research suggests 30% less water is used but there is still need for water budget research.

COVER CROP MANAGEMENT

Cover crops are important for soil health but concerns over management is still active. More research needs to be done on the right species for land and how to best manage the left-over plant material.

CONSUMER DEMAND

An additional incentive to transition to regenerative agriculture is the consumer demand for nutrient-dense food. More data is needed to back up claims about regenerative agriculture foods being more nutritious.

HOW WE CAN TAKE ACTION

To address the issues that the interview covered, some steps taken could include:

- Conduct more research on water usage, focusing on what management practices drive less water use. Trials comparing conventional vs regenerative farms could also help understand water usage.
- Research different cover crop species and their effect on residue management and develop transition guides for handling cover crop biomass.
- Increase on-farm experiments and field demonstrations to show real-world results that support grower-to-grower learning opportunities.
- Collect data on nutrient levels in food grown using regenerative practices and tie the finding to consumer education and demand-building efforts.