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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## University of Missouri's Center for Regenerative Agriculture Hosts Under Secretary Robert Bonnie on Tour of Climate-Smart Project

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**St. Louis, Mo., July 2, 2024** – The Center for Regenerative Agriculture at the University of Missouri recently hosted U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Robert Bonnie on a tour of a local farm enrolled in the center's Missouri Climate-Resilient Corp and Livestock Project.

As one of approximately 140 grant projects being funded by the [USDA's Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#), the University of Missouri hopes to assist state producers in adopting a wide range of climate-smart practices to create more resilient crop and livestock systems over the course of five years, as well as develop and expand markets for the resulting commodities.

"It's exciting to see the benefits of Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities across the country, including here in Missouri," Bonnie said. "Our partners, including the University of Missouri, are doing an excellent job in getting producers motivated to adopt innovative practices on their farms, or expanding efforts already being implemented."

"The Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding has made it possible for Missouri farmers to install practices such as cover crops, regenerative grazing, agroforestry and climate-smart fieldscapes that will help producers overcome climaterelated challenges," Rob Myers, Director, Center for Regenerative Agriculture, University of Missouri said. "We are grateful for this opportunity to build climate resiliency and create additional market opportunities for the state's farmers."

The Center for Regenerative Agriculture has already enrolled over 600 Missouri farmers in their climate-smart project, called the [Missouri CRCL Project](#), with conservation practices being implemented on nearly 100,000 acres. Additional farmers and acres will continue to be enrolled in the project going forward; enrollment for cover crop financial assistance is currently open for interested

Missouri producers.

USDA is investing \$3 billion in Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities to build and expand markets for commodities made with climate-smart practices. The department hopes to increase the competitive advantage of U.S. agriculture both domestically and internationally, positioning American agriculture as a leader in delivering climate solutions through voluntary, incentive-based, market-driven approaches.

Under Secretary Bonnie visited Daniel and Jeff Bonacker of Big River Grain and Cattle, LLC in Cedar Hill, Mo., on June 26, 2024, touring a number of climate-smart practices that the Bonacker's have incorporated into their operation with support from the University of Missouri's Center for Regenerative Agriculture. Missouri Farm Service Agency Director Joe Aull also participated in the farm tour.

"The project's cost share programs have given our operation a little more flexibility to try new things and manage any potential risk," Daniel Bonacker said. "We're seeing a lot of benefits from incorporating cover crops into our operation, with increased soil health, water management and weed control benefits."

Producers enrolled in the project are already seeing benefits by increasing operational resilience to climate and weather events and improving bottom lines through increased yields and lower input costs. Additionally, the University of Missouri's Center for Regenerative Agriculture plans to develop and expand markets for the resulting project commodities, with a focus on biofuels, beef, specialty crop markets and ecosystem markets. There is a strong and growing interest in the private sector and among consumers for food that is grown in a climate-friendly way, creating a major market opportunity for climate-smart agriculture.

## **About Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities**

By supporting a diverse range of producers and operation types, USDA and its partners are innovating a number of climate-smart solutions that impact numerous natural resource concerns while also strengthening rural economies by diversifying revenue streams. To learn more about Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities projects, visit the [project dashboard](#). Interested producers can learn more about projects in their state by commodity type and climate-smart practice implementation and can access project sign-ups via the site.

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