

Kentucky Commercial Rye Cover Crop Initiative Executive Summary

Initiative Highlights:

- Strengthens agricultural resilience
- Positively impacts 20 farm families
- 3,000 acres by 2023. 10,000 acres by 2030.
- Increases farm productivity
- Statewide reach (20 counties)
- \$1.5M revenue by 2023. \$5M revenue by 2030.

Initiative Background

Commercial-quality rye was once widely cultivated in Kentucky. Over the past several decades, however, production has almost entirely ceased in favor of row-crop production of corn and soybeans. Recent research, funding, and interest for this new cover crop, however, have given farmers and distillers the ability to grow and use rye in their farming and production systems. Farmers who grow cereal rye add additional revenue streams to their operations, promote on-farm soil health, and improve water quality in their counties. The distilling industry already has strong ties to Kentucky agriculture, purchasing much of the corn needed for their products directly from Kentucky farmers. While there is a growing global market for bourbon, the industry is mindful of keeping the supply chain local to the state. The industry is responding by sourcing more of their ingredients locally, such as cereal rye grown by Kentucky farmers.

Our goals for this project are two-fold. First, we will determine how best to grow cereal rye as a high-quality grain crop in Kentucky. Second, we will develop a network of farmers and buyers of cereal rye. American Farmland Trust is honored to be a partner in the Kentucky Commercial Rye Cover Crop Initiative with the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund, the University of Kentucky, the Kentucky Small Grain Growers Association, and DendriFund. In the 2019-2020 season, four farmers participated, growing 100-acres of rye. For the 2020-2021 season, our goal is to enroll 20 farmers, who will grow over 500-acres of rye. In addition, American Farmland Trust and its partners have raised cash and in-kind of \$450,429 to support the ongoing success of this project.

Committed funding as of 9.17.20

American Farmland Trust (cash)	\$139,647
KY Small Grain Growers (in-kind)	\$65,000
DendriFund (cash; multi-year commitment)	\$180,100
Woodford Reserve (in-kind)	\$14,352
Brown-Forman (in-kind)	\$10,380
Hartwick College (in-kind)	\$2,500
Dace & King Stubbs (in-kind)	\$13,750
Austin Musselman (in-kind)	\$8,250
Augusta Brown Holland (in-kind)	\$2,700
<u>Dace Polk Brown (in-kind)</u>	<u>\$13,750</u>
Total	\$450,429

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