



# Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements

## Program overview

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The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) protects the agricultural viability and related conservation values of eligible land by limiting nonagricultural uses through conservation easements.

Landowners interested in enrolling their working farms into this program must find a cooperating entity to partner with on their application. Eligible landowners include Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations that have farmland or grassland. The eligible cooperating partner will work with the landowner to complete the application process and if accepted into the ALE program will assist in the long-term monitoring and stewardship of the easement. NRCS does not hold the easement deeds with individuals.

NRCS provides financial assistance to eligible partners for purchasing Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of eligible land. The easements can also protect grazing uses and related conservation values by conserving grassland, including rangeland, pastureland and shrubland.

Search for an Eligible Partner

[Land Trust Alliance](#)

[Farmland Protection Directory](#)

Land trusts operating in Iowa that may act as a Eligible Partner:

Four Mounds Foundation	Jill Courtney Jay Potter	<a href="mailto:info@fourmounds.org">info@fourmounds.org</a> <a href="mailto:jay@fourmounds.org">jay@fourmounds.org</a>
Whiterock Conservancy	Barbra Jusker-Torrier	<a href="mailto:info@whiterockconservancy.org">info@whiterockconservancy.org</a> <a href="mailto:barbra@whiterockconservancy.org">barbra@whiterockconservancy.org</a>
Bur Oak Land Trust		<a href="mailto:info@buroaklandtrust.org">info@buroaklandtrust.org</a>
Dubuque County Conservation Society	Pat Hayes Paul Kaufman	<a href="mailto:dbqcass01@gmail.com">dbqcass01@gmail.com</a>
Sustainable Iowa Land Trust	Suzan Erem	<a href="mailto:suzan@silt.org">suzan@silt.org</a>
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation	Joe McGovern Lisa Hein Erin Van Waus	<a href="mailto:jmcgovern@inhf.org">jmcgovern@inhf.org</a> <a href="mailto:lhein@inhf.org">lhein@inhf.org</a> <a href="mailto:evanwaus@inhf.org">evanwaus@inhf.org</a>
The Nature Conservancy	Graham McGaffin	<a href="mailto:gmcgaffin@tnc.org">gmcgaffin@tnc.org</a>

ACEP-ALE preserves the agricultural use of the land enrolled. Existing agricultural operations will have a baseline survey completed at the time of enrollment to document the current uses and farming infrastructure on site. The ALE easement restricts converting the land to a non-agricultural use. If the easement purpose is to protect grasslands, then the easement may also restrict the transition to crop production or other type of agricultural production.

## **NEXT STEP – Landowner needs to make contact with an Eligible Partner**

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