



# SIEMER-STAR PRODUCER REWARD PAYMENT PROGRAM



Siemer Milling Company is committed to connecting growers with opportunities to help preserve their land and legacy. Siemer is working with STAR (Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources) to identify eligible fields and compensate growers who are implementing conservation practices that result in improved or outstanding (5-STAR Rating) environmental outcomes.

## What is STAR?



Steve Stierwalt and Joe Rothermel, farmers in Champaign County, Ill., developed the STAR tool in 2017.

## STAR was developed by farmers, for farmers

Farmers deserve recognition for their commitment to land stewardship and soil health. STAR allows farmers to evaluate their current production system, identify areas for improved management, document their progress and share their successes.

STAR was created by two farmer board members from the Champaign County Soil & Water Conservation District. STAR is now a national non-profit with programs in 7 states. Farmers get their confidential STAR Ratings through the STAR Web Tool. STAR Staff and STAR Navigators also direct farmers to expert technical conservation assistance that can help them adopt new practices that may raise their STAR Ratings.

## Eligibility and how it works:

Siemer customers' corn, soybean and wheat fields are eligible to participate.

To be eligible, a grower has to both submit a Grower Agreement with Siemer Milling Company AND use the STAR Tool to get a STAR Rating for the fields listed on the Grower Agreement. STAR provides each field a confidential rating of 1 to 5 STARs. Growers receive a payment for:

1. Receiving and maintaining a 5-STAR Rating (the highest rating), OR
2. Demonstrating improvement in their initial STAR rating over a two-year period.

### Example:

Year 1: A field's STAR rating is a 1

Year 2: A field's STAR rating is a 2

Because of the STAR rating improvement from one year to the next, the farmer will collect \$10/acre up to the acreage cap (400 acres/grower/year). Compensation is tied to acres, not bushels.

## STAR rating scale and compensation levels:



The fine print:

- 1. Siemer customers' corn, soybean and wheat fields are eligible to participate (must have been a Siemer Milling Company customer (delivered wheat) within the last 5 years or in 2025). There is a 400 acres/grower/year cap.
- 2. Prioritization (if needed) will be first come, first served, using the date the signed Grower Agreement is received.
- 3. STAR encourages stackability of payment programs to fully cover producers' cost of practice implementation. Other private carbon market programs may have restrictions that prohibit additional producer payments for fields that are enrolled. Producers should check the rules of any other program they are participating in before committing to this program. Fields enrolled in publicly eligible programs, like USDA- or state-based conservation programs, are eligible.
- 4. A small subset of STAR fields is randomly selected each year for verification and quality control. Verification will occur in late 2025. If a field that is participating in this program is randomly selected, the grower will be notified by a STAR representative.
- 5. No backsliding: In subsequent years of STAR's Producer Reward Payment Program, fields will not be eligible for a payment if they were previously rewarded for a certain STAR Rating Improvement. For example, in the image below, Field A received a payment for achieving an improvement from 2 to 3 STARs; this same field would NOT be eligible to receive a payment if the field went back down to a 2-STAR rating and went back up to a 3-STAR rating. It would only be eligible for another incentive payment when it achieved a 4-STAR rating, or the flat payment for a 5-STAR rating.



What does STAR do with farmers' data?

Personal information, email addresses, management plans, operational details and results are for growers' use only. STAR will not share this information with any third party unless growers specifically agree to a data-sharing option. Aggregate information may be used and shared by STAR and authorized third parties to improve conservation management services and tools, and to promote the understanding and adoption of sustainable agriculture practices.

Refer to STAR's full Terms of Use and Privacy Policy on their website: [www.STARtool.ag](http://www.STARtool.ag)

If a field is accepted in STAR's Producer Reward Payment Program, STAR will share aggregated, NOT field-level, data with Siemer Milling Company.

When:

**Deadline for signing up for the program is August 31, 2025.** Growers will be notified if they are approved for payment by mid-October, and payment will be processed (from Siemer Milling Company) in late 2025 after all verification has taken place.

How to sign up:

- 1. Get STAR Ratings for your fields by using the STAR Tool: [www.STARtool.ag](http://www.STARtool.ag)
- AND
- 2. Submit a Grower Agreement to Siemer Milling Company. Contact your representative or:

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T: 217-857-2247  
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Scan the QR Code to learn more.

