



**“Growing food is really easy. So, let’s just grow it and give it to people.”**

Tyler Gough, Farm Manager  
Indy Urban Acres, Indianapolis

# Soil Health Hero



Indy Urban Acres has been working with the Marion County SWCD for two years, planting a variety of cover crops to overcome crusted, hard soil, and to maintain soil health. The soil enhanced through cover crops is much easier to work -- a “night and day difference”, says Tyler. He also reports a 50% weed reduction with the use of cover crops, and a decrease in soil erosion. “By putting in roots, it is building up the soil,”



*Left: Tyler uses a broad fork to loosen the soil in preparation for planting; Center: Cover crops are mowed and left in place as mulch to retain moisture in the soil; Right: Oats are also left to overwinter, keeping roots in the soil.*

## Indy Urban Acres

**Size:** 4 acres row crops, 6 acres orchard, raised beds and flower gardens, 4,000 s.f. greenhouse

**Type:** Urban garden

**Operations:** 6 full-time employees, 2,000 volunteers

**Practices:** Cover crops, mulch, reduced-tillage

**Benefits:** Overcome soil crusting, reduced weeds and erosion



*Indy Urban Acres uses a creative method of spreading a mix of cover crop seeds.*

Indy Urban Acres is an urban farm that supplies low-income Hoosiers with healthy fruits and vegetables. The site also serves as an educational resource for user groups, community organizations and IndyParks youth programming to learn the value of the urban gardens.



[www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)