

## LEROY AND DEBBY BUSE 2009 DOUGLAS COUNTY OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONISTS

The Douglas Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors selected Leroy and Debby Buse of Brandon, as the 2009 Outstanding Conservationists for Douglas County. Leroy and Debby own a diversified hog and grain farm in the rolling hills of Brandon Township. Some of the reasons they were selected for this award are as follows: They have planted shelterbelts, a Critical Area Planting, CRP Riparian Forest Buffer on County Ditch #22; are working on a Forest Improvement Stand and planning a shelterbelt east of their farmstead. They use an annual rotation of corn-soybeans-wheat and installed their first sediment block in 1983, also they have recently added 800' of terrace and a water/sediment control structure through the EQIP and Chippewa River Watershed Project. Leroy and Debby are enrolled in the EQIP Pest Management Program. In 1983, Leroy installed an earthen manure pit with lot runoff control for his beef and hog operation. After selling the beef, he expanded to finishing an additional 1200 hogs by constructing a total confinement hog operation with an underbarn concrete pit. He is in the EQIP Nutrient management Program and uses no commercial fertilizer. Leroy is working with the MN DNR Forestry on a Forest Management Stand Improvement. This practice on steep soil will serve as a Buffer area and Critical Stabilization. Leroy has enrolled 10.8 acres in a CRP Buffer Practice.

Leroy and Debby are also active in the community. Leroy was a member of the Brandon FFA and went on to receive the "Star State Farmer" Award. He has served 9 years on the Pro-Ag Board. Deb is active on and off the farm and is in charge of the "other livestock". Those operations include Registered American Quarter Horses, Border Collies and Russian Tsvetnay Bolonka dogs. Leroy and Debby also own and operate "Odyssey Steel and Trim" as well.

Leroy and Debby's farmstead is striking and well manicured. Their beautiful shelterbelts add a peaceful quality to the rolling hillsides. Their crops are outstanding and reflect hard work and dedication. They have diversified along with their conservation farming techniques by establishing Odyssey Steel and Trim (sale of steel buildings), raising American Quarter Horses and raising and selling two different breeds of dogs. Leroy and Debby are super examples of Agricultural Entrepreneurs and deserved their award as the 2009 Outstanding Conservationists for Douglas County

**(Right) Leroy and Debby Buse of Brandon, MN pictured on their farmstead and business, Odyssey Steel. Also visible in the background is their farmstead shelterbelt. Debby is holding a rare Russian Tsvetnay Bolonka dog.**

