

Douglas SWCD 2020 Outstanding Conservationist



The Douglas SWCD nominated Lakeside Jerseys - Kevin and Steph Krohnfeldt, along with their children Kelsey and Cole as this year's Outstanding Conservation Farmer. They farm 350 acres and milk 75 Jersey cows on the southwest side of Lake Miltona in Miltona and Leaf Valley Townships. Kevin started farming in 2009 but quit his full-time job and started full time farming in 2015 when he took over the farm from his parents Burnell and Loretta Krohnfeldt. The Krohnfeldt's switched to 100% no-till in 2019/2020 to cut down on expenses and conserve moisture on the sandy soils they farm. They use a variable rate planter on the corn and soybeans to optimize yields, and plant a rotation of corn, soybeans, small grain and alfalfa on their farm.

A manure storage facility was installed on the farm in 2013 to control runoff from the feedlot area and eliminate daily hauling of manure from the dairy cows. Manure is tested annually as well as soil testing on the fields to ensure manure is applied for the crops need. A manure management plan is followed to apply manure at agronomic rates and to avoid spreading near sensitive areas. Manure is typically applied to the small grain acres and cover crops are then planted on these acres. Cover crops of oats, annual rye, and field peas are planted on the acres where the manure is spread, to tie up the nutrients in the manure to ensure they will be available for the next year's crops. Some years depending on the growth of the cover crops they are harvested in the spring for livestock feed. In 2020 a water and sediment control basin was installed with the assistance of

State Cost Share and EQIP funding to solve an erosion problem on one of the fields they farm. Pollinator Habitat and field border has been established with the assistance of the EQIP program.

The Krohnfeldt's annually host Zion School kindergarten class and parents to visit the farm to educate students on soil conservation, dairy farming, crop farming and preservation of the land. They see this to keep family's informed on how milk and food are produced and what farmers are doing to protect the soil and natural resources.

Kevin is always open to new ideas and willing to make changes to his farming operations which may include no-till modifications, refining cover crop mixes, and seeding rates. The Krohnfeldt's attend conservation tillage conferences, cover crop seminars, and field days always trying to gain new information to improve yields and reduce input costs.

As quoted by Kevin and Steph. "I'd like to say that people like Benet Glanzer (our Agronomist), Stu Olson (our Ag Zyme Rep), our extended Krohnfeldt family who lend a hand with the field planting and harvesting, Mark Boesl (our excavator for the terraces and buffer strips), Mark Koep (our Feedlot Rep), the folks at NRCS office, Jerry Haggemiller (our Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator), and Brian Zimmermann at Ag Country, plus the many holistic farm classes and conservation classes we go to play a huge part in our efforts to keep our footprint small on the earth!! These people deserve a ton of credit as well, for helping us with the right resources and tools to make it possible to keep our environment and waters clean and keep our soil healthy in a more natural way!!"

On behalf of the Douglas SWCD Staff, Supervisors and NRCS Staff, we want to congratulate the Krohnfeldt family on being the Douglas County 2020 Conservation farmer (s).

Congratulations Krohnfeldt family!

