

Mathias-Lesczynski Water Quality Award

The Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association welcomes you to this year's Breakfast on the Farm. Our conservation Award is named after 2 long time conservationists in the Land Conservation Office and Natural Resource Conservation Service, Lynn Mathias and ErvLesczynski.

I would like to start with 2 quotes from former United States presidents on farmers.

From George Washington: Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man.

And Thomas Jefferson: Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals and happiness.

Look around at those involved in agriculture and you will see a lot of smiles.

This year the Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association is proud to present our conservation award to Dave and Joan Schultz and their son, Dusty and daughter-in-law Allison and family from Schultz Legacy Farm in Van Dyne. Their farm is on the Van Dyne Creek which drains directly into Lake Winnebago.

Their farm operation includes 2000 acres of No-till crops split evenly with corn and soybeans with a little wheat, and rye for cover crop seed. They also do about 1000 acres of custom planting and spraying.

Dave started no-till about 20 years ago when equipment for no-till planting was in its infancy.

Dave went to no-till conferences and decided the biggest mistake would be to quit. The first year Dave found it very difficult not to go out to the field on a beautiful fall day and not plow the corn stalks under. During the winter he kept an eye on the field and saw how the snow stayed in the field and the moisture would be there for the next crop. The question he always asked was "What did I do wrong.?" Not, this didn't go right so I'll quit. Keep going and give the practice

at least 3 years to prove itself. Dave and Dusty have done many trials and not all have been successful. The newest venture is cover crops and planting green.

They are participating as a demonstration farm in a project of the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance to help discover the total benefits of cover crops. Questions to answer are how much nutrient value is in the residue of cover crops, how fast is it released and what cover mixes work best following the different crops.

We look forward to following their progress and the results of the studies to help all farmers in the area.

As Andy Warhol said: I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want to own.

Dave and Dusty, congratulations on being our 2022 Conservation award winners.