



December 2017



Mathias/Lesczynski Water Quality Award Winners

The Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association announced the winners of the 1st Annual Mathias / Lesczynski Water Quality Awards at the Fond du Lac County Fair.

The Mathias/Lesczynski Water Quality Award recognizes farm management practices that help protect surface water from runoff of sediments, nutrients and chemicals into rivers, streams and especially Lake Winnebago. Good farm management practices are an important and effective way of improving surface and ground water quality.

The David Burbach Farm is located on Highway B near Oakfield, Wisconsin, was the First Place winner and received \$1,000.

The farm was acquired in 1968 by David Burbach and in 1972 he began construction of the farm's first grassed waterway. Conservation management practices continue on his farm, which now has 7,800 linear feet of grassed waterways and 3,300 linear feet of diversion structures.



Park Ridge Organics was the Second Place award winner and received \$250. The farm is located northeast of Fond du Lac on Highway 151.

Park Ridge Organics is owned and operated by Robyn Calvey as a USDA Certified Organic Vegetable Farm. Conservation responsibilities are shared by the farm's field production Manager Jeff Faust. Each year, Park Ridge Organics control sediment erosion and chemical runoff by leaving crop residue on the soil. This practice also involves a tilling schedule that matches the decomposition rate of plant types.

Next LWQIA Meeting:
Wed., January 3, 2018
7 p.m.
FDL City/County Building
160 S. Macy St.

"The public is welcome"

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Special equipment for cultivating their own compost mix reduces soil compaction in the fields. Compost is made from horse manure, bedding / shavings, leaves and vegetable waste. The compost is longer lasting and cuts losses of nutrients from wind and rain. Vegetable planting is done in contour strips to combat soil washout on sloping beds. Cover crops of oats and hairy vetch are used after field sections are harvested. Grasses and natural ground cover protect a creek on the farm. All cover crops aid in preventing leaching through the soil and also reduce fertilizer needs. Park Ridge Organics does not use any surface or injection of herbicides or pesticides into the soil. In 2016, a sloping waterway was seeded down with white Dutch clover. Contour strips are planted with oats and inoculated with hairy vetch.



The Ketter family owns and operates the Milbridge Dairy on Elm Road in the Township of Marshfield and tied for the Third Place award and received \$100.

Conservation management on the farm includes planting winter rye as a cover crop to prevent soil erosion, followed in spring with no-till practices for planting corn. As good stewards of the land, the Kettlers maintain a nutrient management program with County Vision Co-Operative.

A state of the industry robotic dairy barn, a lined 18 month capacity manure storage pit, plus a storm water retention pond were recently constructed. All area wetlands on the farm were retained and protected from runoff that previously caused erosion of the hill that was leveled to construct the new robotic dairy barn. Removing and hauling manure from the



new pit is now done at appropriate times of the year and spread on the correct fields.

Milbridge Dairy's pit and barn site were designed by engineering professional and the Kettlers worked closely with Ryan Rice from the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Fond du Lac.

Lori and Gary Kraus operate their dairy and cash crop farm, K-Boss Farms, near St. Cloud in Forest Township and tied for Third Place and also received \$100.

K-Boss Farms continues to use minimum tillage practices since 2008 with many positive results, including an increase in soil organic matter, which helps hold in moisture and has reduced the need to pick stones after planting. In addition, soil compaction is reduced, along with fuel consumption, due to fewer trips across the fields.

In 2016 the Krauses installed a two million gallon manure storage facility, which now provides more efficient use of the nutrients by spreading during the non-growing season. Elimination of winter manure hauling reduces nutrient runoff from hills when the snow melts and the ground is still frozen.

K-Boss Farms was assisted in the design and construction of the facility by Ryan Rice with Fond du Lac County Natural Resources Conservation Service, as well as Dave Brown and Brian Schuch, both with Sheboygan County Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For additional information visit the Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association's web site lwqia.org.