

2016 Outstanding Conservationist



SWCD Board Chair Emily Javens and SWCD Staff Tina Warta present Jim and Mary Krahling with their MAWQCP field sign

Lake Crystal, MN – Blue Earth County Farmer, Jim Krahling is making sure clean water is part of his legacy. Krahling was recently recognized by the Blue Earth County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board as their 2016 Outstanding Conservationist. Krahling was also recognized for being one of the first farmers in Blue Earth County to certify his land through the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP).

The MAWQCP is a voluntary program that recognizes farmers and

agricultural landowners for adopting or implementing conservation practices that protect Minnesota's waters. Once certification is in place, farmers or landowners are deemed in compliance with any water quality rules and regulations for 10 years. Farmers who also participate in the program receive priority for technical and/or financial assistance to install conservation practices. In turn, the public can be confident that every certified farmer is doing their part to protect water quality.

"Jim was implementing conservation in many areas of his operation before we started the certification process, which is one of the reasons he is our conservationist of the year" said SWCD staff Tina Warta. "We just needed to fine tune a few conservation practices and Jim was able to get certified."

A few of the many conservation features in Krahling's operation include a strip till-ridge till system, split applying nitrogen applications, and cover crops. All of these practices help to keep pollutants from leaving Krahling's farm fields and entering Minneopa Creek.

“After reading an article about the program it sounded like a great way to see if the farming changes were putting us on the right path and to get ahead of fertilizer regulations,” said Krahling regarding MAWQCP. “You look at your farms in a different way after the assessment and see how they affect everything around them.”

Krahling has also been nominated to receive the South Central Area Outstanding Conservationist Award which will be awarded in December by the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

Farmers and landowners interested in learning more about the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program or the Outstanding Conservationist Award Program should contact the Blue Earth County SWCD or visit www.blueearthswcd.org.