

## 2021 Outstanding Conservationist – KD2 Farms



Mapleton, MN – The Blue Earth County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board recently recognized Karson and Kameron Duncanson of KD2 Farms as their 2021 Outstanding Conservationist. They're in the family business of farming and outstanding members of their community. As 4<sup>th</sup> generation farmers, they took over the family farm five years ago. They continued their father's conservation efforts by planting over 1,000 acres of cover crops with the help of Blue Earth County SWCD's cost share programs. On top of using cover crops, they also switched to strip-till practices on their corn fields and plan to move their bean fields to 100 percent no-till. By only disturbing where they're planting, they are leaving the past residue on the surface covering the soil. This allows the residue to hold the soil in place and not move into the waterways, ditches and neighboring fields. They enjoy not having conventional tillage operations on their farm, as it saves them labor costs, fuel and less maintenance on machinery. Every three years they implement a complete soil sample on their fields as well as summer nitrate testing annually.

Before Minnesota's Buffer Law was written into law, KD2 Farms had enrolled 20 acres of their land into CRP for filter strips and grassed waterways, making them compliant before most. They are proponents of keeping their sediment in place and not allowing it to degrade the water resources on their land. With the deeply rooted native vegetation, this stabilizes the banks, increases water infiltration rates and stops any sediment from running off into the nearest water source. An extra benefit of their CRP acres is the amount of wildlife habitat it creates. Deer, turkeys, pheasants, songbirds and a variety of insects thrive in these areas.



Beyond farming, Kameron and Karson have also followed in their father's footsteps when it comes to submersing themselves in their community. Karson is a school board member for the local Maple River School District and a member of the Blue Earth County Corn and Soybean Growers Association Board. Kameron is a part of the University of Minnesota Southern Research & Outreach Center Advisory Committee which conducts

innovative basic and applied research in the areas of agricultural production, human health, renewable energy and the environment.

They have been instrumental and a wonderful example to others in the area on the right way to implement these BMP's and continuing a successful farming operation. They know using BMP's can be difficult to transition to, but once you make the move, you'll be glad you did. KD2 Farms will continue to be trail blazers and set a prime example in the area of how farming and conservation goes hand in hand and that it can be done successfully.