

Outstanding Conservationist – 2008 Arlo and Mary Helen Schmitt

The Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has announced the selection of **Arlo and Mary Helen Schmitt** of Mabel as the District's **2008 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year**.



The Schmitt's have maintained and improved their conservation practices for over 30 years, often without cost-share assistance. They own 356 acres and rent another 440 acres on which they raise corn, soybeans, and hay and have 60 acres enrolled in CRP. They raise 550 Holstein steers per year and utilize the manure efficiently to reduce input costs. The Schmitt's have five farm ponds, 240 buffer strips, three miles of terraces, and 100 foot wide waterways which qualified them for Tier III CSP. Pest scouting, utilizing cover crops, leaving corn residue, conservation tillage practices, providing wildlife habitat with CRP, delayed haying, and raising fruit tree without any chemicals are why the Schmitt's were chosen as the Outstanding Conservationists for 2008. Their operation is a model for farming the landscape of southeastern Minnesota.

As outstanding Conservationists, the Schmitt's will be eligible to compete for Minnesota's Outstanding Conservationist Award, which will be announced at the 2008 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual meeting set for December 7-9, 2008 in St. Paul.

Congratulations to Arlo and Mary Helen on their conservation achievements!