

The Goldsmith Brothers, Ross and Steven, of Chatfield, have been named the 2015 Fillmore County Outstanding Conservationists. The Goldsmith Brothers and their families will be honored at a luncheon at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' (MASWCD) Annual Convention which will be held December 7th and 8th at the Double Tree by Hilton, Bloomington-Minneapolis South.



Ross and Steven own about 800 acres of cropland and rent another 300 acres of which about 660 acres is corn, 140 acres is beans and 300 acres is hay. They use minimum tillage on their crop acres making two passes with a cultivator in the spring to work only the top 3"-4" of soil and no fall tillage. They grid sample one-third of their acres each year so that all their acres are grid sampled in three years. They have utilized cover crops on their corn silage acres for approximately ten years and a portion of those acres are enrolled in a five year EQIP soil health practice using winter rye and winter wheat. Erosion has been almost totally eliminated plus weed control is excellent and organic matter has increase from their use of cover crops and manure.

They also own 800 acres of pasture and rent an additional 300 acres. Their pastures are fertilized for forage production and lime is applied as needed.

The Goldsmiths have 370-400 beef cows, have 100 ewes, farrow 100 sows and have two finishing barns for the pigs. They built one of the first mono slope buildings in the area with technical and financial assistance from the SWCD. Their daily management has increased the efficiency of the building. They estimate that it has helped them reduce feed costs, reduced the number of days to market, and decreased their labor significantly.

The Goldsmith families are active with the Pork Producers, Cattlemen's' Association and Farm Bureau. Both Ross and Steve were active leaders with the County 4-H groups. Now their kids are leaders and their grandkids are 4-H members. Ross and Steve are both Vietnam vets and are dedicated Red Cross blood donors. Visitors are welcomed to their farm to talk about their mono slope building. They have hosted U of M vet students to help them gain field experience and had local school children visit to see their baby animals.

Goldsmith Farms has been in operation for 153 years and the next generation is ready to keep the conservation tradition going. **The Fillmore SWCD congratulates the Goldsmith Brothers for leading by**

Oct. 20, 2015 - We have just learned that the Goldsmith Brothers have been named **Area 7 winners** and will now compete with the other area winners for the title of Minnesota Outstanding Conservationists. Congratulations Ross, Steven and families!

Dec. 9, 2015 - We are proud to announce that the Goldsmith Brothers, Ross and Steven, of Chatfield, have been named **Minnesota's Outstanding Conservationists for 2015**. The award was presented to them on Tuesday, December 8th at the MASWCD Annual Convention in Minneapolis.

