WI Land + Water Conservation Farm Family of the Year Nomination for Scott Schultz

Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department

Nominee:
Scott Schultz; N8077 County Road Q, Watertown, WI 53094; 920-988-2864;
snacschultz@gmail.com

Nominator:
All LWCD staff, contact: Patricia Cicero, 311 S Center Ave, Room C1050, Jefferson, WI 53549; 920-674-7121

1. Biographical Sketch

Scott Schultz is the definition of a conservation farmer in Jefferson County. Scott operates 174 acres of farmland primarily in Jefferson County, with some acres in Dodge County. Scott and his wife Nancy raised a son and daughter on the farm. Their daughter now has a career in agriculture. Scott's operation includes cash crops and raising beef cattle. He has been committed to conservation for over 20 years when he started no-till farming. His long list of conservation practices includes multi-species cover crops, interseeding cover crops via drone, rotationally grazing cattle, grazing cover crops with cattle, and edge-of-field buffers.

In addition to his conservation practices, he serves on the Jefferson County Land Conservation Committee as an appointed member representing agriculture. On this committee, he has played a crucial role by providing the agricultural perspective to the other mostly non-farmer committee members.

Conservation is a priority for Scott. He has maintained compliance with the Farmland Preservation Program for a long time. He also writes his own nutrient management plan.

Scott is active in 3 producer-led groups. He is a founding member and board member of the Jefferson County Soil Builders. For this group, he has hosted 5 field days to share his insight on cover crops, field borders, pasture management, and grazing cover crops. He is on the Board of the Rock River Regenerative Graziers and eagerly brings farmers converting to rotational grazing to the monthly board meetings and pasture walks. He participates in events of the Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil and Healthy Water.

Scott is a mentor extraordinaire! Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department has a mentorship program for new cover crop adopters and Scott is a mentor who meets with farmers to give input on cover crop seeds, planting, and termination. When new farmers apply for cover crop cost-sharing, Scott is often their referral. Glacierland

RC&D has a mentorship program pairing experienced graziers with beginning farmers and graziers. Scott is helping to build more capacity and expand the acres of grazing within Southeastern Wisconsin through his mentorship.

Other community involvement includes his work with the Lake Mills FFA Alumni where he actively fundraises to support the Lake Mills FFA Chapter.

2. Projects and Approaches to Land and Resource Management

Scott is an avid learner and innovator who is always looking for the next agricultural practice to help improve conservation on his farm. He was an early adopter of cover crops, drone seeding his cover crops, and having his beef cows graze the cover crops. Scott attends many pasture walks and field days in the area to learn from others. He is always open and eager to experiment and adopt practices on his farm that could improve soil health and conservation.

3. Other Factors

Scott has been a key contact and collaborator for the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department. Not only is he an innovator and open to try new things, he also gives us a great perspective from the “average” farmer. If questions arise about how the agriculture community thinks about something, Scott often provides great insight and ideas. When developing cost-share opportunities or amounts, he is happy to help determine if they make sense. He has quickly become our “go-to” guy when it comes to expanding conservation in Jefferson County.

Scott giving a talk at his farm to other interested farmers.

Scott on his farm during a field day.

Beef grazing cover crops on Scott’s farm.

Scott explaining the benefits of cover crops before the rainfall simulator is used.

Showing off a tillage radish.