

The latest news from Minnesota Milk Producers Association

Farmer-led conservation initiatives expand across Minnesota

Farmers in Minnesota are driving sustainable farming initiatives by collaborating together and forming farmer-led conservation groups. These groups have been essential to fostering connections, sharing knowledge and creating positive impact. By working together with other sustainability-focused farmers, county offices and various other organizations, they are creating long-term sustainable solutions and achieving positive outcomes for the environment and the community.



Recently, new farmer-led conservation groups have begun to form in both Stearns and Becker counties. The enthusiasm for sustainable farming and conservation practices in this area is clear.

A Conservation Conversation event was held with Stearns Conservation District on July 29 at Scheifels Farm in Cold Spring. More than a dozen farmers, supporters and community members attended to learn about planting no-till soybeans and other conservation technologies, followed by a field walk.

During the event, Jake Schreifel shared his experience, noting that soybeans can handle a little more heat stress than corn during this season of warmer, drier weather. The farm

manages more than 400 acres and implements conservation practices to reduce soil erosion and help retain nutrients in the soil.

The Driftless Area Ag Alliance is a nonprofit farmer-led conservation group in southeast Minnesota. Founded in 2023, this group consists of local farmers dedicated to maintaining the health of their water, soil and air while embracing innovative technologies. Their vision is to ensure a healthy environment and community for generations to come. The group hosts regular field events to share their stories and participates in an annual member survey to understand which conservation practices are being implemented on the land and to track the group's overall progress.

Farmers for Sustainable Food provides a variety of support and services to the DAAA, including administration, event planning, communication and project management, as well as a growing network of groups in Minnesota and Wisconsin. These groups are using science and data to validate the role that expanding innovative farming practices are playing in reducing environmental impacts.

To learn more about the development of Minnesota farmer-led watershed conservation groups, visit farmersforsustainablefood.com.



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