



## **PAT & DEANNA MOHR SELECTED AS 2016 OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST**

The Brown Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is pleased to announce it has named Pat and Deanna Mohr of rural Hanska as its 2016 Outstanding Conservationist in Brown County.

The Mohr's live in Lake Hanska Township and have been farming since the 1970's when Pat entered into the family business of farming with his father. The couple eventually expanded their operation with the inclusion of Deanna's family land. Deanna is a Childcare Specialist in the Family Services department with Brown County where she has worked for 43 years in addition to helping with the farming activities. Pat and Deanna raised four children, Jared, Aaron, Michael and Carrie, on the family farm and now also have three grandchildren, Carlila, Caeli, and Elliott (Leo) to keep them busy.

Brown SWCD chose to honor Pat & Deanna with the Outstanding Conservationist award as over the years they have implemented several soil and water conservation practices and techniques into their operations and within the past two years have stepped up their use of cover crops. Their operation consists of 750 or so tillable acres with a corn, soybean, and canning crop rotation and hog barns with about 8,000 head annually produced. About 6 years ago Pat started planting a cover crop of oats on the canning crop acreage in August as he realized the value to soil quality when there was roots in the ground year round. That decision led him to start working with the NRCS office on cover crop best practices. He now plants a cover crop mix of oats, wheat, radishes and turnips on approximately 300 acres of canning crop ground each year.

Other conservation practices that the Mohr's have implemented over the years include tree shelterbelts and windbreaks around the hog barns and in their groves to prevent wind soil erosion, constructed a NRCS approved animal mortality facility, practice minimum tillage on lighter soil grounds, practice low flow irrigation on sandier ground, and installed a controlled drainage structure for patterned tiled fields. They have applied to become a water quality certified farm through the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and are in the process of being certified to this program.

When the Mohr's were asked why they chose to implement these soil and water conservation practices over the years, Pat replied "to change the perception of agriculture by doing some of these things". Upon receiving this honor, Pat wished to convey to others that there are plenty of land stewards doing the same types of activities as his operation and that activities he adopted just make sense for his set-up. It is clear that Pat and Deanna value and respect the land they farm and will continue to do their part in soil and water conservation for them as well as the next generation.

*Along with other Outstanding Conservationists from across the entire state, Pat and Deanna will be recognized at the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts Annual Convention in Bloomington this December.*

