

Bill Vogel Honored as 2025 Outstanding Conservationist

The Brown Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recognizes Bill Vogel as the Outstanding Conservationist for 2025 in Brown County.



Bill and his wife Melanie live south of Springfield in Stately Township with their children Lydia, Will, and June. He is a third-generation farmer who believes he should be taking the next step in conservation and has found his own way to do so over the years.

In 2012, Bill started farming with a small group of steers, and over time, the operation has grown to several hundred head of cattle and cropland acres. From the beginning of his farming career, he has chosen to implement conservation-minded practices working in cooperation with the local SWCD and NRCS offices for technical guidance and funding assistance. He currently utilizes no-till and strip-till practices on almost all acres annually, doing only minimal tillage when needed for manure management. Bill plants cover crops on all of his tillable acres and grows some of his own small grains

for cover crop use. On the highly erodible acres he plants alfalfa. He also manages acreage that is enrolled in the CRP and RIM conservation easement programs.

Bill is a Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certified Producer, with endorsements in Wildlife, Climate Smart, and Soil Health. Through the process of becoming certified, he installed a grassed waterway on one field to mitigate soil erosion concerns. He maintains buffer strips and has adapted management practices to protect his land from erosion and nutrient loss.

By utilizing all of these conservation practices and making good management choices, he has seen a positive impact in the soil structure over time, along with the added benefit of knowing his soil is protected from wind and water erosion. Additionally, he has been able to implement all of these practices and management techniques without seeing any yield loss. Bill believes that no-till and cover crops together just make sense and plans to continue implementing conservation practices as needed within his operation.

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

