



## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Jerry Hagenmiller, Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District (320) 763-3191

### **DENNIS AND JENELL WEEK NAMED MINNESOTA'S 2007 OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONISTS**

ST. PAUL, MINN. — Dennis and Jenell Week, of Evansville, were named the 2007 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' (MASWCD) Outstanding Conservationists. The award was announced at the 71<sup>st</sup> MASWCD Annual Meeting, which was held Dec. 2-4 in Rochester, Minn.

This award recognizes farm families, individuals, conservation organizations, and other groups for outstanding accomplishments with implementing conservation practices and improving Minnesota's natural resources. MASWCD, with support from The Farmer magazine, sponsors the award. Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District nominated the Weeks for the award.

The Weeks farm 480 acres as a cash grain and cow-calf operation. They began in 1980 with dairy and more recently established an Angus herd. In his youth, Dennis planted 12 acres of wildlife habitat and continues to plant windbreaks and shelterbelts using his self-built tree planter. The Weeks have installed 1400 feet of terraces and 6 water & sediment control blocks on their erodible land. They also utilize reduced tillage and no-till cropping methods to help control erosion. In 1982, Dennis was the first farmer to rent the Douglas SWCD's No-Till Drill.

The Weeks' recently converted to organic farming, including diversification with a grape arbor. They delay mowing until after July 1, and if a nest is destroyed, they salvage it, incubate the eggs, raise and release the young to the wild. Their cattle are fenced out of wetland areas with 1 rod of vegetation buffers surrounding those areas.

In the nomination materials submitted for this award, the Douglas SWCD wrote: "Dennis and Jenell are excellent stewards of the land and operate their resources as though they 'belong to future generations.'"

MASWCD, The Farmer magazine, and the Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District, congratulate Dennis and Jenell Week and wish them well in their future conservation efforts.

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