

Working Together to Protect Water Resources

If Minnesota agriculture had a mission statement, it would probably look something like this:

"Making a living by helping feed others while preserving the next generation's ability to do the same."

Good stewardship practices that protect soil and water resources play a big part in achieving this mission now and into the future, for farms of all types.

Farmers, agricultural professionals and researchers are working to increase food production, to help improve global food security, while reducing inputs per unit of production, to reduce our industry's environmental footprint. Improving efficiency also reduces development pressure on wildlife habitat around the world.

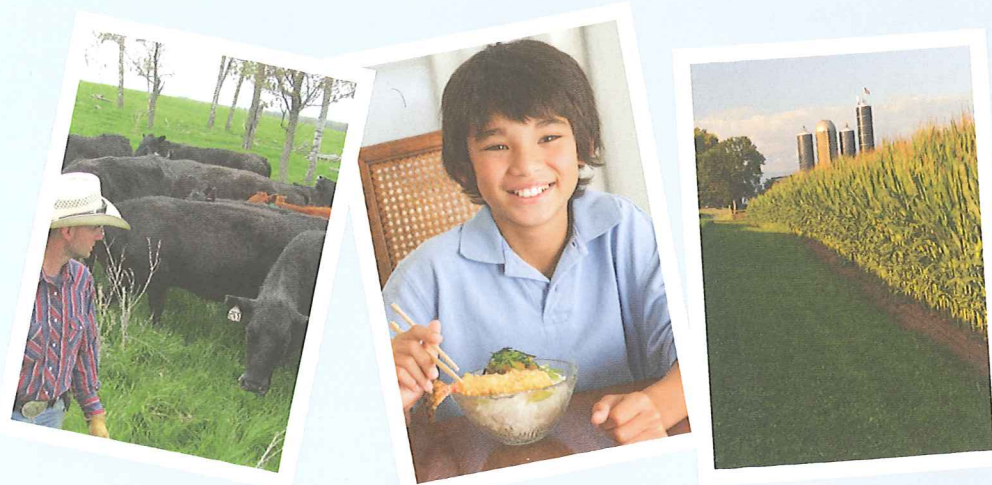
- Since 1980, farmers have reduced land use per bushel of grain produced by 50%
- Since 1980, farmers have reduced soil loss per bushel of grain produced by 70%
- Since 1980, farmers have reduced fertilizer applications per bushel of grain produced by 40%
- Since 1980, farmers have reduced pesticide use per bushel of grain produced by 60%

Thanks to a combination of modern and traditional practices, the generation of farmers working in agriculture today are the best ever. And the young men and women following them are positioned to be even better as they incorporate the latest advances in information technology into future farming systems.

Our Challenge

Our challenge is to continue identifying environmental risks on each farm, because even though great progress has been made, there is still room for improvement. There are still a few farm fields tilled excessively. There are still places in need of a waterway or buffer. There are opportunities to fine-tune nitrogen application rates or improve application timing.

Addressing these challenges aggressively will demonstrate our commitment to making life better for people all around the world, including in our own backyards.



Members

Area II Potato Research & Promotion Council
Chicken & Egg Association of Minnesota
Irrigators Association of Minnesota
Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers
Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council
Minnesota Crop Production Retailers
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Minnesota Farmers Union
Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association
Minnesota Milk Producers Association
Minnesota Pork Board
Minnesota Pork Producers Association
Minnesota Soybean Growers Association
Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council
Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association
Minnesota Turkey Growers Association
Minnesota Turkey Research & Promotion Council
Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association
Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative



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Primary funding for MAWRC programs is provided by Minnesota farmers through the Minnesota Corn Research and Promotion Council and the Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council- your check-off program at work!

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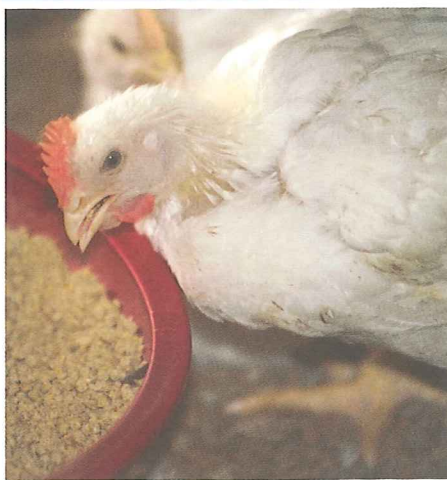
MINNESOTA FARMERS
working together... to improve farm productivity
while **PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES**



Our Mission

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center is a research and education organization comprised of the primary agricultural organizations in Minnesota, **working together to identify and address water issues**. While our programs have evolved in response to changing water concerns, our commitment to helping farmers achieve their goals of producing food for a growing population while protecting soil and water resources remains constant.

Minnesota is a great place to grow crops and livestock, and our diverse network of farms and ranches ranks among the **best in the nation** in the production of corn, soybeans, wheat, sugarbeets, sweet corn, peas, potatoes, poultry, hogs, beef cattle and dairy products. As diverse as Minnesota agriculture is, all farmers have one thing in common no matter what they grow or how they grow it—they all have the potential to impact water and the **opportunity to minimize environmental risks through the farming practices** they choose



Backed by sound scientific research, Minnesota farmers and those who provide inputs and services to them have long demonstrated their **commitment to sustainable farming practices**. Industry funded **check-off programs provide more than \$3 million annually toward research** on nutrient management, tillage systems, water quality and related projects. The MAWRC and all of its members organizations work with University of Minnesota Extension and other resource experts to get this research out to farmers and anyone who provides management information to farmers, assuring that a **high level of knowledge and water quality awareness goes into farm management decisions**.

The MAWRC is here to help farmers identify and address environmental risks, and to help others understand the things that are really happening on Minnesota farms. For more information go to www.mawrc.org

On the cover- A family of swans make their home on one of the many wetlands nestled among the farm fields of west central Minnesota.

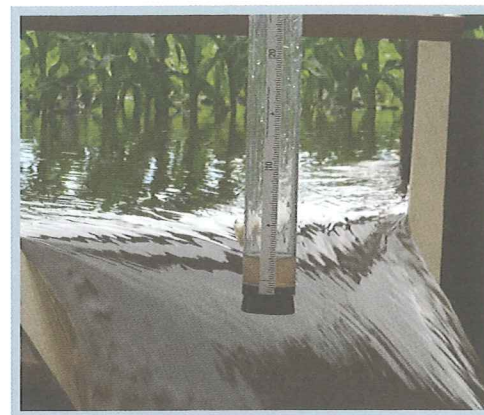
Discovery Farms Minnesota

Farmer - Led Solutions™



Discovery Farms Minnesota is a farmer-led effort to gather field scale water quality information from different types of farming systems, in landscapes all across Minnesota. The goal is to provide practical, credible, site-specific information to enable better farm management.

Discovery Farms Minnesota emphasizes **farmer input and direction**. A Steering Committee comprised of representatives from Minnesota farm, agribusiness and conservation organizations guides the overall direction of the program, assists in the **identification of research priorities** and helps in the selection of cooperators and projects. The program is coordinated by the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

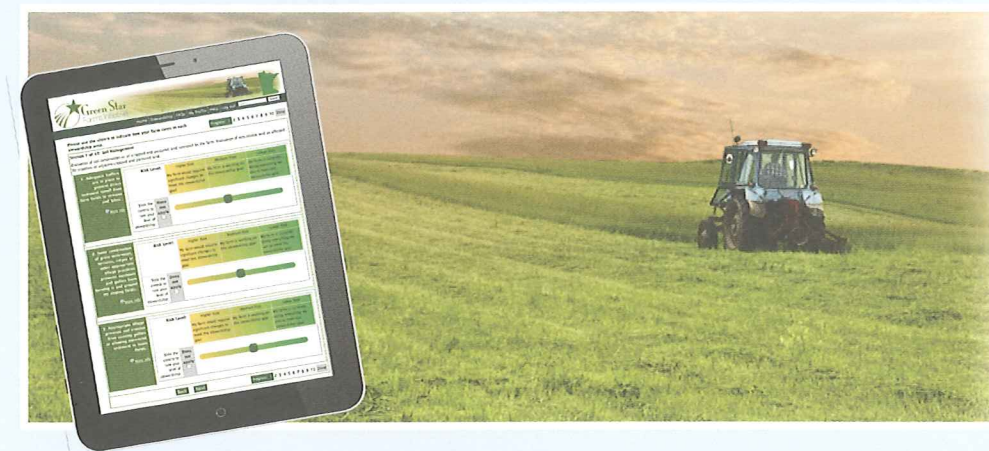


The Discovery Farms Minnesota network includes farms located throughout the state **representing the diversity of agricultural enterprises and conditions**. **Data collected allows analysis** of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus movement over the soil surface and through subsurface drainage tiles.



Green Star Farms Initiative

Advancing Stewardship Through Education™



The Green Star Farms Initiative™ is a farmer-driven program that helps **evaluate management practices** relative to water quality:

- Totally voluntary
- Completely confidential
- No government involvement required
- Practical and easy to use

The Green Star Farms Initiative begins with an **environmental assessment process** that farmers can use as a simple self-evaluation and management tool. The results of the **self-assessment guide** farmers to sources of additional **information and resources** to address environmental concerns

Aggregated environmental assessment information provides valuable information for farm organizations, researchers, USDA-NRCS and others in identification of topical areas for research, education and conservation programs.