

Written Testimony from mark Moenning, November 13, 2023.

I am Mark Moenning, a lifelong Dodge County farmer involved with many agricultural issues during my career.

As I listened to the allegations leveled against agriculture during the October meeting it appeared that they were rooted in the clouded perception that massive new regulation would cure the issue, yet denying the fact that most agricultural practices have been rapidly changing. Virtually all livestock facilities have been sited with environmental considerations and nutrient management plans in place for at least the last 30 years. Our farms first containment project dates back to 1972 with conservation tillage and other waterway improvements over the years.

My observation from attending meetings concerning best management practices is that water quality can be impacted by various sources and not just an agricultural issue. Most references to the age of our water supply is from 7 to 40 or more years old so not reflective of today's practices like strip tillage and targeted placement of nutrients through out the growing season. It is my understanding that the vast majority of the Dodge County wells participating in the voluntary testing program are under 3 when tested yearly.

Many of the activist groups oppose facilities regardless of depth to bedrock or environmental engineering. In the late eighties I attended many of the hearings for the first groundwater bill and some of that funding went to DNR for mapping etc. I feel there has perhaps been a lack of focus and opting instead for blanket regulation. Our family has experience with the cover crop program with the Dodge Swcd and there are 3 aspects, proper seed type, weather parameters effecting germination and stand, but also followup with the producer for proper termination in the spring so the primary crop is not impacted.

I would suggest that future action should not be with a heavy hand but with a desire to seek solutions and continue to support the many practices already being implemented.

Appreciate the chance for input,  
Mark Moenning