



News Release

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Kimber Contours Receives Outstanding Conservationist Award

Dakota County, MN – The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) is proud to announce Kimber Contours located in Castle Rock, MN as the 2020 Dakota County Outstanding Conservationist.

The DCSWCD staff and supervisors selected Kimber Contours as this year's Outstanding Conservationist for their commitment to conservation. Kurt Kimber, Chris Kimber and Carol Lowry own and operate the Kimber Contours family farm. The sibling's mission for the farm is to grow food for local consumption. The farm totals 240 acres of contoured land in Castle Rock Township. Crops grown include food-grade soybeans, wheat and other small grains, sweet corn, dry peas, and the new perennial grain, Kernza[□] (intermediate wheatgrass).

They implemented several conservation practices over the past seven years. These include becoming organic certified in 2017, contour farming, reduced tillage, mowing as a partial substitute for tillage, and the use of cover crops. The farm became a certified participant in the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) in 2017. With guidance from the DCSWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, they planted 15 acres of native prairie STRIPS (Science-based Trials of Rowcrops Integrated with Prairie Strips) last year to reduce soil and water runoff. In collaboration with the Cannon River Watershed Partnership and the University of Minnesota Forever Green Initiative, they planted five acres of Kernza[□] in 2019 and added another five acres in 2020. Investigating in agroforestry, they partnered with agriculture specialists last year to plant chestnut trees on some well-drained hilltops. They are excited about the prospects of perennial grain and woody agriculture as additional food sources that aid in soil building and water retention.

Kurt, Chris and Carol strive to farm more sustainably and be good stewards of the land. They partner and network with area growers, processors and researchers to implement and expand our local food web and the associated supply chain. This work is motivated as a response to the many challenges facing human civilization.

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Every year, the DCSWCD honors a landowner, business, or organization for their contributions to conserve or restore natural resources in Dakota County. The DCSWCD commends Kimber Contours for being leaders in conservation and supporting clean water practices.

If you would like more information on this award program or other DCSWCD programs and activities, you may visit www.dakotaswcd.org or contact their office at 651-480-7777.

(Photo below attached as separate file)



From Left: Kurt Kimber, Carol Lowry, Chris Kimber