



# Dodge County Healthy Soils Healthy Water Cover Crops And Soil Health Workshop

## What Was It About?

The Dodge County Farmer Led Healthy Soil-Healthy Water Group put on their second annual February workshop promoting various topics within Soil Health.

Producers from across the county shared their experiences with using cover crops in interseeding and no-till systems, as well as with manure applications to a group of approximately 200 of their fellow producers. The workshop was visited by Ray Archuleta and Justin Morris to provide background information as to why the efforts of the local producers is so important to providing a sustainable relationship with the land and maintaining or increasing profit margins.



## Speakers Who Presented At the Conference

### Local Producers

- *Jeff Gaska* – Discussed Frost Seeding Clover into Winter Wheat on a total 450 acres to limit his N use and to use as its use as a forage.
- *Dale Macheel* – Discussed Cover Crop Mixes after Wheat and the Nitrogen Use Efficiency Project with Discovery Farms.
- *Marty Weiss* – Discussed how Cover Crops help to reduce his erosion, increase aggregation, stability, Organic Matter, & Biological activity.
- *David Roche* – Discussed Summer Interseeding and side-dressing Nitrogen with the goal of having cover crops on all of his acres.
- *Jordan Crave* – Discussed minimal tilling and incorporating manure into cover crops as well as his other on-farm advancements.
- *Tony Peirick* – Discussed his successes planting green with cover crops in a no-till system.
- *Charlie Hammer* – Discussed his early adoption of minimal tilling and manure applications and his continuing successes.
- *Brendon Blank* – Promoted Cover Crop varieties and mixes and discussed his own successes on his farm.
- *Ricky Kratz* – Discussed Strip tilling simultaneously while applying fertilizer and talks about his cover crop usage.

### Key Note Speakers

- *Ray Archuleta* – Former NRCS Soil Scientist from Missouri discussing the importance of overall soil health and some of the intricacies of the topic.
- *Justin Morris* – NRCS Soil Health Specialist working in Minnesota and Wisconsin discussing Soil Health in the Midwest.

## Day 1: February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Juneau Community Center

The first day was held at the Juneau Community Center. This day saw the most participants from across county and beyond. This event saw talks given by Jeff Gaska, Dale Macheel, Marty Weiss (HSHW Co-Chair), David Roche, Jordan Crave, Tony Peirick (HSHW Chair), and Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing, from UW-Extensions all given after Ray Archuleta and Justin Morris spoke on the topic of Soil Health.

The total number of people who attended this day was just shy of 200. Aside from farmers in attendance, Land Conservation Employees from Dodge and Fond Du Lac County attended as well as several sponsors of the event and additional HSHW members.



## Day 1: February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – Juneau Administration Building

Later that evening in Juneau, The Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association, Fox Lake Inland Protection & Rehabilitation District, and Lake Sinissippi Improvement District put on the second annual, “Save Our Lakes,” program. This event saw members of the lakefront community gather and hear how local producers are making efforts to not only protect the soils on their farms but also help to protect the quality of the surrounding bodies of water.

The producers who made appearances at this event were Tony Peirick, Dale Macheel, Marty Weiss, and Jordan Crave. The session also saw talks from Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing from UW- Extensions, Mike Sorge, and Mark Riedel from the WDNR, Dave Miller and Tim Holland from Ballweg Implements in Beaver Dam, and Bill Boettge from the Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association. Additionally, Ray Archuleta and Justin Morris made an appearance, talking about soil health and how such a complex topic can help to improve water quality of the various bodies of water the attendees live on or around.



## Day 2: February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Condon's Farm Shop

The second day was hosted by the Condon's farm in Burnett. This day saw approximately 90 of the individuals who attended on the first day come and join the discussion on the on the second day. This event saw talks from Charlie Hammer, Bill Stangel, Ricky Kratz, and Brendon Blank. Tony Peirick, Jordan Crave, and Loretta Ortiz- Ribbing gave continuations of their talks from the previous day, focusing on manure applications and cover crop species and mixtures.

Ray and Justin came back to provide more of a Q&A session with the attendees in addition to bringing a rainfall simulator to demonstrate the advantages of maintaining low tillage and high levels of cover and residue in crop fields.

