

Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District 2018 Outstanding Conservationist



John, Gerald and Kevin Connelly
Terra McCree Farms
Byron, Minnesota
Olmsted County

The Olmsted District presents Kevin Connelly of Terra McCree Farms in Byron, MN. The farm, established in the 1930s, run by Kevin, his father John, and uncle Gerald, produce no-till corn and soybeans, hay and other crops to feed their herd of 95 milk cows. Connelly added cover crops in 2012 with just 10 acres and now covers 80% of the 650 acres they farm. Kevin says, "Had I known the benefit of covers 25 years ago, it would have changed how we've done business".

A leading member of the Byron Peer to Peer soil health group, Kevin encourages other farmers to adopt soil health practices. Whether hosting demonstrations or speaking to a hundred producers at a local event, Kevin proclaims, "try it" regarding cover crops and demonstrates this by coordinating a group cover crop seed order to cover 5000 acres in 2018. He often shares that, "successes don't come without failures" but realizing multiple benefits like increased organic matter, sequestering nitrogen, reducing compaction, erosion, and fertilizer inputs while improving his forage production is success despite past challenges. Kevin's principles make him a great role model for his family and fellow producers. Olmsted County is honored to call Kevin Connelly its 2018 Outstanding Conservationist.