



Soil Conservation Award

The Final award I would like to mention is the Soil Conservation Award, being given to Dean and Cindi Cramer for the work they have done on their acreage.

The basis of selection of individual awardees will be determined on the following points:

- a. Use of land according to its capabilities.
- b. Completeness of conservation plan.
- c. Balance of farm enterprise.
- d. Quality of conservation work completed and maintenance of practices.
- e. Special Practices: In addition to traditional practices, special practices such as grassland development, forestry, pollution abatement, riparian management, water quality, and residue management should be considered.

According to Dean, their operation south of Healey began doing minimum and no-till when he came back to the farm in 1992 or 1993. Prior to that, there was some minimum tillage, but not much.

Currently, they are using their practices on roughly 1,800 acres, with the minimum till on grain sorghum stalks after grazing, and in areas where weed pressure has become a problem. Their wheat acres are typically no-till unless Kochia becomes a problem.

Dean mentioned that he is 3rd generation and his grandpa tilled everything, but dryland grain sorghum was tough to raise, and therefore they couldn't run cattle on the stalks. When he came back to the farm he noticed the neighbors were having success with their no-till practices and thought he'd put his college education to work and gave it a shot.

Currently they are using their soil conservation practices on wheat, grain sorghum, some corn under irrigation, while also including oats, triticale, and feed silage on occasion.

The biggest benefits they have seen from these practices has been of course moisture conservation, soil protection from wind and water erosion, as well as shading of soil to restrict weeds, and wear and tear on equipment.

Dean added that living the farming lifestyle is a great way to raise a family and that if you can survive the tough times, it can't get any better.

Will you please welcome Dean and Cindi Cramer to accept their award.