

## 2016 Outstanding Conservationist

Dan and Crystal Ley, of Richmond, own and operate a dairy farm consisting of 54 cows, 48 heifers and calves, and 20 beef cows. They grow corn, soybeans, and alfalfa on 257 acres that have been continuously no-tilled since 2007. Every acre in corn or soybeans is followed with a drilled or aerially seeded cover crop. Dan and Crystal are recipients of MDAs Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant where they are comparing four different forage cover crops following corn silage. The Leys have hosted numerous field days on their farm highlighting the benefits of no-tilling and cover crops. Other conservation practices implemented over the years include: field borders, grassed waterways, nutrient and integrated pest management, rotational grazing, buffer strips, and becoming a certified farm through the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program. Congratulations to Dan and Crystal, and a big “thank you” for being outstanding stewards!

