



LaSalle County Soil & Water Conservation District  
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The LaSalle County Soil & Water Conservation District is pleased to announce the Isermann Family from Streator is our 2022 Farm Family of the Year.

Dave Isermann is a fifth-generation farmer that began farming in the late 1970's, in Otter Creek Township, near Streator, IL. Dave and his wife, Susan, have three adult children: Dan, Bridget, and Jim. Jim, along with his wife, Lori, have three children that are the seventh generation of Isermann's to live and work on the farm since 1851 when the first 80-acre parcel was purchased. Many changes in technology, agronomic practices, and overall farming techniques have happened since then. Many of the more recent changes have happened when Jim came back to farm with his dad after he graduated from college. Jim is a contractor for Illinois Corn, who partners with the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership, so he knows the importance of healthy soils and clean water.

The Isermann family raises corn, soybeans, hay, and have pasture ground for their herd of crossbred cattle in Livingston and LaSalle counties. The corn is planted by strip-tilling, where you disturb just a narrow strip of soil in the fall (ideally) and then plant into that strip in the Spring. The soybeans are no-till planted right into the prior year's crop residue. They do not apply any fall fertilizers, aside from manure and bedding from their cattle operation. All nutrients are applied in the spring by first broadcasting any dry phosphorus and potassium that is needed. A starter fertilizer is applied when planting, then an in-



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season side dress of either, 28% or 32%, when the timing is right. Depending on timing, cover crops are either drilled, or overseeded after harvest. They have also experimented with aerial seeding and using a highboy to seed while crops are in, but it really depends upon weather and timing. Cover crops are for protection from soil erosion, to absorb nutrients, add to soil health, and to improve water quality.

Preserving the land for the generations to come is of utmost importance for the father-son duo. They have entered into two voluntary conservation-based programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) was able to assist with tissue sampling, cover crops, and pollinator habitat acres. Another voluntary program that they have utilized was the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) that focused mainly on the cattle portion of their operation. With EQIP they were able complete a comprehensive nutrient management plan, do pasture improvements, have a grazing management plan written, and are moving forward with ag waste management program.

Dave and Jim have tried many different types of cover crop mixes and rates throughout the years. They began with putting turnips into standing corn for the cattle to graze on then they progressed to cereal rye for their operation. Cereal rye has the best establishment for them and is their “go-to” cover crop of choice.

The Isermann family has hosted several events at their farm. They have hosted Legislators, County Board members, town officials, and their peers out to their farm to tour and learn about agriculture and the diversity within their farming operation. They have been working with the University of Illinois, Dr. Andrew Margenot, on slow-release phosphorus struvite trials and deep soil sampling studying how nutrients distribute within the deeper soil profile.

In 2017, the Isermann’s were recognized as the Illinois Beef Association’s Environmental Steward of the Year. This award recognizes “a beef producer in Illinois whose natural resource stewardship practices protect the environment and contribute to productivity and profitability.” Dave has served on the LaSalle County Stockman’s Association board, Treasurer with the Streator High School FFA Alumni, and served on the St. Stephen’s School Board. He currently serves as the LaSalle Farm Bureau as the President since 2017 and has been on the Board since 2013. Jim serves as the President of Missal Farmers Grain and is active with the St. Michael’s/Ransom Athletic Club.

Congratulations to the Isermann family for being selected as the 2022 Farm Family of the Year for LaSalle County! We are lucky in LaSalle County to have farm families like yours, who preserve our natural resources for future generations.