



Shiawassee Conservation District

Your Land, Your Water ~ Your Michigan

1900 S. Morrice Road • Owosso, MI 48867 • (989) 723-8263, Ext. 3

Summer 2014

Feature Stories

- 2014 Agricultural Tour
- Septic System Assistance Program
- Jason Eicher Explains Why MAEAP Is Important
- Waste Storage Facility
- BMP Auction—A New Approach to Conservation
- Man's Best Friend Helps Local Water Quality
- Conservation Education at Camp Shiawassee
- Berry Bush Sale
- District Helps to Protect Great Lakes
- Nutrient Management
- E-waste Recycling Collection

Important Dates

- August 27 - RSVP for Agricultural Tour
- September 1 - Labor Day, office closed
- September 5 - Final day to order Berry Bushes
- September 6 - SCD Agricultural Tour
- September 18 & 19 - Berry Bush Pickup days
- September 30 - Last day BMP Auction bids accepted
- October - E-waste Recycling Collection

2014 AGRICULTURAL TOUR

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY

Saturday, September 6, 2014

Shiawassee County Fairgrounds
Black Pavilion, 2900 E Hibbard Road, Corunna

8:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Busses leave promptly at 9:00 AM

This event is free and includes lunch

RUP, CCA/CEU and MAEAP Phase 1 Credits Pending

RSVP by August 27, 2014

Shiawassee Conservation District

(989) 723-8263, ext. 3

Join us on our annual tour of Shiawassee County farms that have implemented conservation practices/management systems designed to improve their production while protecting our environment.

**Grazing System • Waste Storage Facility
Forest Management • Fueling Facility • MAEAP
Equipment Demonstration • Cover Crop Test Plot**



If you need accommodations to participate in this event, please contact the Shiawassee Conservation District at (989) 723-8263, ext. 3 by August 27, 2014.

Septic System Assistance Program Available to Portions of Shiawassee County

Water backing up into sinks and toilets, foul odors, mushy ground with lush growth in your yard, these are signs you can't ignore. If you are experiencing these signs of septic system failure, the Shiawassee Conservation District can help through a cost-share program to cover 75% of the cost to pump your septic tank or replace your septic system.

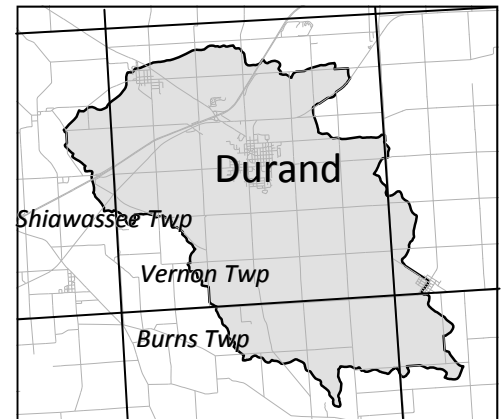
Robert Elder, a homeowner located south of Durand, recently reached out to the District because his lawn was backing up with foul smelling water, even during dry times. Through the District's Septic System Assistance Program, the Conservation District was able to provide 75% cost-share to assist him in replacing his failing traditional septic system with a mound septic system. "We have known for a while that something was wrong with our septic system," stated

Robert. "We just kept putting it off because of the tremendous cost of having it replaced. We are grateful for the Conservation District and the grant provided to defer most of the cost. I'm not sure how we would have done it by ourselves."

The most common reason for early failure of a septic system is improper maintenance. When a septic tank is not pumped out on a regular basis, sludge (solid material) builds up inside the septic tank, which then flows into the absorption drain field, clogging it beyond repair. The best way to ensure your home septic system functions properly is to pump the septic tank every 3-5 years. Soil type may also cause a system to fail sooner than it should and an alternative type of septic system might be better suited as it was in the Elder's case.

To qualify for the program, the home septic system must be located within the Holly Drain Watershed. If you would like to receive cost share to pump your septic tank or you believe your home septic system is in a state of failure, contact the Shiawassee Conservation District for information on the Septic System Assistance Program.

Holly Drain Watershed



Jason Eicher Explains Why MAEAP Is So Important

Jason Eicher recently sat down with SCD Agricultural Technician Jay Korson to talk about his farming operation, and the reasons he thought it was important to pursue MAEAP verification.

What is your agricultural background?



Jason Eicher and Mike Kingsbury are proud to be MAEAP verified in the cropping and farmstead systems.

My Ag Background started at an early age with my grandfather, LaVere Kingsbury. I lived next door and was there most of my free time. I learned as I grew from watching and then doing the tasks all farm kids do. I was very active in my FFA chapter during my time at Corunna High School. I

was a top three finalist for Star Agribusinessman, and served as chapter Reporter, President and Regional Treasurer. I also worked on the farm with my Uncle Mike Kingsbury and farmed a small amount on my own when I started High school in 1994. I went to MSU to study Crop and Soil Science with a specialization in Agribusiness Management and

graduated in 2002 with a BS. I currently farm 900 acres and run my own Custom application business working with our local retailer 3D Agronomy.

What made you want to become MAEAP verified?

I wanted to become MAEAP verified because I believe farmers should be ahead of regulation not being pushed by it. Being MAEAP verified means we have the forethought to voluntarily be environmentally friendly. To show as farmers we care and want to leave as small of a lasting footprint as we can and still affordably feed the worlds growing population.

How did you first hear about MAEAP?

I heard about MAEAP from a sprayer clinic I attend at Aldermans.

(Continued on page 9)

Waste Storage Facility

Managing waste products is a necessary activity. How well we manage waste is reflected in the quality of the surroundings in which we live. Water, soil, plants, air, animals, and humans all need to be considered when deciding what to do with all wastes.

The agricultural industry, livestock in particular, is a producer of waste materials that need management. These wastes include manure, wastewater from sanitizing operations, unused pesticide mixes and pesticide containers, and residue from food processing operations. The Shiawassee Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can provide technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers to address their waste concerns by implementing practices such as compost facilities, roof runoff management, heavy use area protection, and waste storage facilities.



Dry Stack Manure Storage installed by Nathan Allen.

The waste storage facility that is pictured was designed by NRCS and cost shared through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The NRCS and Shiawassee Conservation District staff worked closely with the producer to determine the operations specific needs and resource concerns. The covered facility can store a volume of 11,842 cubic feet of dry stack manure

for 5 months. It will primarily be used throughout the winter months when the operation's 80 cows are not in pasture.

For more information on agricultural waste management and conservation farm bill program opportunities, contact the Shiawassee Conservation District.

BMP Auction – A New Approach to Conservation

The adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs) is the most effective and practical means of preventing or minimizing pollution on the farm. A BMP Auction is a new and innovative method of getting BMPs on the ground with flexible and simplified enrollment options and straightforward, uncomplicated procedures. It is a market-based approach for supporting BMPs to improve water quality.

The Shiawassee Conservation District is accepting bids for their second round of the BMP Auction through September, 2014. Through this program, farmers can submit bids on a price per acre to adopt Cover Crops, a Residue Management System, or Filter Strips. The bids that provide the most cost-effective water

quality improvement will receive funding from the Shiawassee Conservation District to implement the BMP. This process allows the farmer to decide what amount of money they are willing to accept to install a BMP.

The Conservation District's first round of BMP Auction concluded in December 2013 and resulted in 13 contracts totaling \$37,176 in obligated funds. Cover crops will be planted on 406.5 acres in 2014, saving an estimated 24 tons of sediment loss yearly. In the first round, bids were only accepted for fields located within Mickels Creek, Sawyer Drain and Osburn Drain watersheds. The bidding process proved to be simple, making it a desirable option for farmers who would like to take

advantage of the technical and financial assistance available through the Conservation District.

The Shiawassee Conservation District has expanded the eligible area for the current round of the BMP Auction to include fields located within the entire Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed. The BMP Auction is conducted through a three stage process:

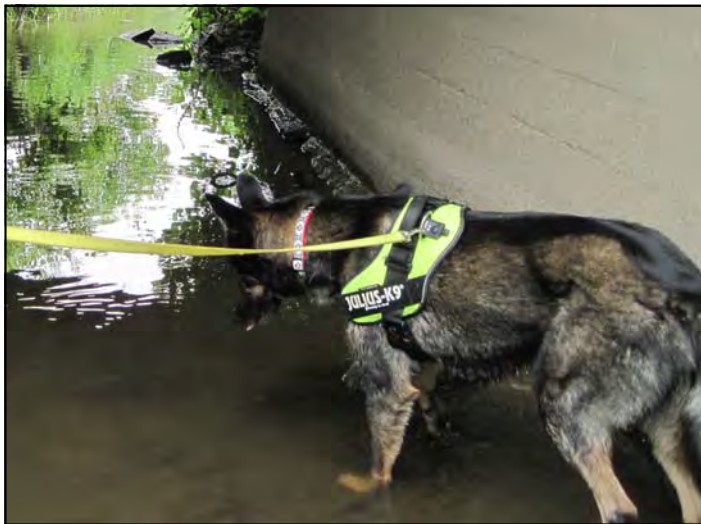
- 1) Farmers submit bids to the District for desired practices that include amount of area covered and expected cost to implement the BMP. Bid sheets can be obtained from the District office or on-line at www.shiawasseeccd.org.
 - 2) Bids are ranked by amount of water quality improvement generated per
- (Continued on page 8)*

Man's Best Friend Helps with Local Water Quality

Dogs provide us with many things including loyalty, devotion, protection and unconditional love, but many dogs also provide us with a service. Working dogs come in many forms, including guide dogs, hearing dogs, mobility dogs and therapy service dogs. Search and rescue dogs are smart, agile and well-trained sniffers who do the important job of finding a person or scent. The reason why dogs excel at these endeavors stems from their amazing noses.

A dogs' sense of smell is up to 100,000 times more acute than humans. Dogs are amazing at differentiating scents. For instance, when we smell beef stew cooking, we smell the mixture while a dog smells each of the different components in the stew.

The amazing scent skills of dogs have come to areas of Shiawassee County to help address an important issue. Household wastewater is a significant threat to water quality. The bacteria that live in household and public wastewater can



Sable is among the first dogs in the world that have been scent trained to identify human E.coli by using his incredible sense of smell.

5th Year of Conservation Education at Camp Shiawassee

The Shiawassee Conservation District has again teamed up with the Shiawassee Family YMCA to provide conservation education to kids attending the YMCA Camp Shiawassee summer program. This season, campers planted vegetables in gardens established at the camp by the Conservation District and installed a native wildflower garden. To complement the gardens, the District holds weekly educational sessions teaching about natural resource conservation through a variety of fun and exciting activities including a nature scavenger hunt, rock painting, soil erosion stations, forestry fun, and watershed and water cycle games. This is the fifth year that the Conservation District has brought a conservation education program to Camp Shiawassee.

The Conservation District offers a variety of educational programs that



Campers planted their gardens in June and will be maintaining them throughout the summer.

can be tailored to audiences of any age or size. Contact the Conservation District for more information about the educational programs available for your group.

cause serious infections and illnesses. Failing septic systems are a source of these bacteria. To address this hazard, the Shiawassee Conservation

District has teamed up with Environmental Canine Services, LLC to locate sources of human waste in surface water in an effort to assist homeowners.

In working with scent-trained canines, the Conservation District hopes to raise awareness of the importance of septic system

maintenance, to focus education and assistance to areas that need it, and to identify sources of human waste in surface water. The Shiawassee Conservation District currently has cost share programs available to limited areas of Shiawassee County, which provide qualifying homeowners with assistance in replacing failing home septic systems or aid with septic tank pumping. By working with the first ever scent-trained canines who can sniff out human waste, the Conservation District seeks to reach as many homeowners as possible to provide cost share assistance to correct this resource concern.

For more information on programs available to assist homeowners with septic system replacement or maintenance, contact the Conservation District.

2014 BERRY BUSH SALE ORDER FORM

SHIAWASSEE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Office Use Only
Order Number
Date Received
Processor's Initials

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone-Day _____ Evening _____

Email _____

BERRY BUSH	Size	Price per 1	Price per 5	Price per 10		QUANTITY	TOTAL
Anne Raspberry	2.5" container	\$4.50	\$17.50	\$32.00			
Heritage Raspberry	2.5" container	\$4.50	\$17.50	\$32.00			
Jewell Black Raspberry	2.5" container	\$4.50	\$17.50	\$32.00			
Triple Crown Blackberry	2.5" container	\$4.50	\$17.50	\$32.00			
Blue Crop Blueberry	12-18" tall	\$7.00	\$30.00	\$50.00			
Blue Jay Blueberry	12-18" tall	\$7.00	\$30.00	\$50.00			
MISCELLANEOUS					Each		
Plantskydd 1 qt Pre-Mixed Spray - protects 80-100 plants 1' high					\$22.00		
Plantskydd 1 lb Soluble Powder Package - protects 200-400 plants 1' high					\$28.00		
Plantskydd 1 lb Granular - protects 600 sq ft					\$15.00		
Plantskydd 3 lb Granular Shaker Bag - protects 1,800 sq ft					\$25.00		
Plantskydd 5 qt Pre-Mixed Spray - protects 400-800 plants 1' high					\$60.00		
Tree Flag					\$0.25		

Payments can be made in cash,
Check, or credit card (VISA/Mastercard)

Send order form & full payment to:
Shiawassee Conservation District
1900 S. Morrice Road, Owosso, MI 48867
Phone: (989) 723-8263, ext. 3

FINAL DATE TO ORDER:
SEPTEMBER 5, 2014

Plants can be picked up
at the District office on:
September 18, 9 AM - 6 PM
September 19, 9 AM - 4 PM

Subtotal	
6% Tax	
Handling Fee	\$2.00
Donation	
Total	
Enclosed	
Check No.	

For use with credit card payment		
Card Number - Visa or Mastercard	Exp. Date	Security Code
Name as it appears on Credit Card	Authorization Signature	
Address - Street / City / State / Zip		

It is unlawful for these plants to be resold with the roots attached in accordance with the Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act. PA 189 of 1931 as amended.

Berry Bush Descriptions	
Variety	Description
Anne Raspberry	Fruit: Large size, golden color, excellent firmness, flavorful, mostly sweet with a hint of acidity. Plants: Highly vigorous producing a large amount of sucker stems, highly resistant to common fungal diseases. Ripens: Fall
Heritage Raspberry	Fruit: Medium in size, red, very firm, very good flavor, excellent quality. Plant: Canes of this red everbearer are 5' - 6' tall, very vigorous, hardy, erect, sturdy and suckers prolifically. Ripens: Fall
Jewell Black Raspberry	Fruit: Large size, glossy-black, high quality, early ripening. Plant: Somewhat resistant to most raspberry diseases. Ripens: Summer
Triple Crown Blackberry	Fruit: Medium size, firm quality. Plant: Trailing, vigorous, thornless, consistently high yields, dense foliage-ripe fruit does not suffer from sun scald like other cultivars. Ripens: Summer
Blue Crop Blueberry	Fruit: Large size, bright blue, firm, picking scar is small. Plant: Highbush type cultivar, height is 4-6' at maturity and upright in stature, yield is consistent-ranging from 10-20 pounds per plant at maturity. Ripens: Mid-July.
Blue Jay Blueberry	Fruit: Medium-large size, light blue, firm, little to no picking scars, pleasant mild slightly tart flavor. Plant: Highbush type cultivar, height is 5-7' and upright in stature. Ripens: Mid-July.



PLANTSKYDD REPELLENT - Plantskydd Deer Repellent works by emitting an odor that animals associate with predator activity, repelling the animal before it nibbles on plants. The District offers Plantskydd in pre-mixed spray, granular or powder. See the tree sale order form for pricing details.

2014 Berry Bush Ordering Information & Guidelines

- Return the completed order form with full payment to:
Shiawassee Conservation District
1900 S. Morrice Rd; Owosso, MI 48867
(989) 723-8263, ext. 3
 - The final date to order is **September 5, 2014**.
 - All returned checks will be subject to a \$35 fee.
 - After orders are placed, there will be a \$25 service charge for any substitutions or cancellations. There will be no charge when only additions are made to an existing order.
 - We do not guarantee survival. Our liability ceases when seedlings are picked up. It is unlawful for these trees, shrubs and other plants to be resold with the roots attached in accordance with the Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act. PA 189 of 1931 as amended.
 - All plant material has been found to be in compliance with the National Plant Board standards of pest freedom. MDA Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division, License/Certificate NCI000670.
 - Orders not picked up will not be refunded.
 - No refunds on orders canceled after September 5, 2014.
 - The Shiawassee Conservation District reserves the right to cancel orders and refund payments due to reasons beyond their control.
 - Substitutions made by the nurseries are beyond the District's control.
 - Add orders carefully. Any errors \$10 and under will be considered a donation to the District.
 - All donations will be deposited into the Shiawassee Conservation District general fund.
 - Pictures and descriptions of all plants are available in the District office.
- Shiawassee Conservation District office**
1900 S. Morrice Road, Owosso
Thursday September 18th; 9 AM to 6 PM
Friday September 19th; 9 AM to 4 PM

The Shiawassee Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service Work Together to Protect the Great Lakes

America's Great Lakes— Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario— hold 21 percent of the world's surface fresh water, host habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife species of concern, and provide drinking water for more than 40 million people. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) aims to protect these important lakes by working to restore priority watersheds within this region.

The Shiawassee Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are working together to promote sound environmental practices. Practices including no-till, nutrient management, filter strips and cover crops planted on farms within the GLRI phosphorus priority area in the Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed help achieve this goal. All of these practices help protect water quality and improve soil health. Benefits include soil erosion prevention, reduced compaction, increased soil organic matter, the capture and recycle or redistribution of nutrients in the soil profile, weed suppression and soil moisture management.

Since 2010, the Conservation District and NRCS have hosted three workshops and three on-farm agricultural tours focusing on the benefits, management, and types of

cover crops. Approximately 450 people have participated in these events, including 195 high school students who study agriculture. As a direct result of these outreach efforts, conservation plans have been developed that include cover crops on a total of 5,172.5 acres within the GLRI phosphorus priority area in the Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed. These conservation plans also include no-till on 2,492 acres and nutrient management on 4,104 acres planned within the GLRI phosphorus priority area. In addition, there are many farmers currently working with the Conservation District to develop conservation plans that incorporate cover crops into their operation along with needed conservation practices that address their natural resource concerns.

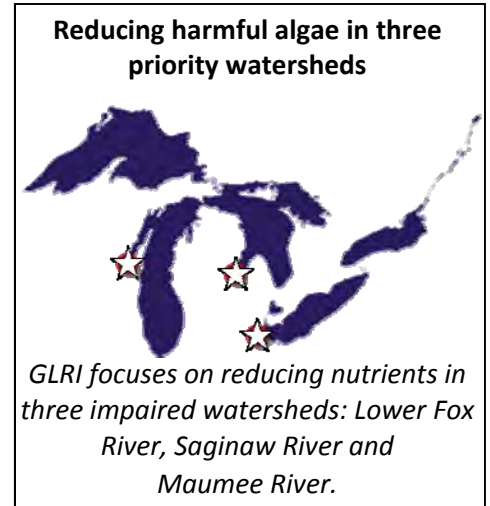
From 2010 through 2013, 43 new contracts totaling \$946,845 have been funded within the GLRI phosphorus priority area in the Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed. The Conservation District and NRCS continue to work with landowners and land users to provide technical and financial assistance to protect our natural resources.

The **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative** is the largest investment in the Great Lakes in two decades. A



task force of 11 federal agencies developed an action plan to implement the initiative. The 2010-2014 action plan addresses the urgent issues of cleaning up toxics and

areas of concern, combating invasive species, promoting nearshore health by protecting watersheds from polluted run off, restoring wetlands and other habitats, and tracking progress and working with strategic partners.



Scientists have traced high levels of harmful algae that choke aquatic life, create "dead zones" devoid of oxygen in the Lakes, harm coastal economies and threaten human health back largely to phosphorus runoff. While most of the Great Lakes are cold and deep, thereby providing a natural buffer against the effects of harmful algae, warmer and shallower embayments may be hit harder. The Task Force announced special efforts to protect three such "priority watersheds" from phosphorus runoff:

- Lower Fox River, Wisconsin
- Saginaw River, Michigan
- Maumee River, Ohio

Become a part of the bigger picture of water quality improvements in the Great Lakes! Contact the Conservation District office for further information on conservation planning, upcoming workshops and tours, and technical and financial assistance opportunities.

What is Nutrient Management?

Nutrient management is using crop nutrients as efficiently as possible to improve productivity while protecting the environment. Nutrients that are not effectively utilized by crops could leach into groundwater or enter nearby surface waters in water runoff or through agricultural drainage systems. A major principle of crop nutrient management is to prevent the over-application of nutrients to protect water quality and benefit the farm's bottom line.

Why practice nutrient management on your farm?

- Increases profitability
- Protects surface water
- Protects groundwater
- Complies with Michigan Right to Farm
- Improves soil quality and productivity
- Protects public health

The key to effective crop nutrient management is to develop and follow a yearly plan. It is essential to keep good records on the rate, method and timing of all nutrient applications including the source whether it is commercialized fertilizers, manure, or legumes. Keeping good records help farmers to compare expenses and returns from year to year. In addition, record keeping is required to stay in compliance with Michigan Right to Farm guidelines.

A basic nutrient management system includes regular soil testing on all fields, following recommendations and record keeping. Enhanced systems expand on the basic system by including the use of technologies that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of nutrient management.

Applying more nitrogen or phosphorus than the crops can utilize impairs water quality. For water quality purposes, nutrient management is especially important on slopes, soils with high phosphorus levels, and in environmentally sensitive areas such as areas near surface water, wells and where groundwater is close to the surface.

The Shiawassee Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service offers technical and financial assistance for nutrient management planning and the implementation of conservation management systems and practices. Working closely with the farmer, a technician will develop a conservation plan to address any natural resource concerns and comply with Michigan laws and regulations. The plan can then be used to apply for funding through Farm Bill conservation programs to implement the planned practices such as developing a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP), nutrient and pest management and agrichemical handling facilities.

Contact the Shiawassee Conservation District for more information on nutrient management and what technical and financial assistance is available.



Shiawassee Conservation District staff work with farmers and landowners everyday to address their resource concerns.

Pictured: Agricultural Technicians Jay Korson and Tom Wert work with Mike Kingsbury and Jason Eicher to update their conservation plans.

BMP Auction, continued from page 3
dollar and location within the Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed.
3) The farmers who offer water quality improvements at lowest price are contracted first.

The Shiawassee Conservation District BMP Auction encourages a streamlined process for implementing Best Management Practice Systems that will help reduce sedimentation and improve the Shiawassee River Watershed. The auction is made possible through a grant received from the Great Lakes Commission in the amount of \$160,000. Contact the Shiawassee Conservation District for more information on the BMP Auction.

Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed



Highly Successful Electronics Recycling Collection



Shiawassee Conservation District staff are pictured with a small portion of the e-waste collected on the 3rd day.

In May, the Shiawassee Conservation District held an electronics recycling collection taking in 27,297 pounds or almost 14 tons of electronic waste. The collection was held at the USDA Service Center over the course of three days and all

electronics were collected free of charge.

Electronic waste, or e-waste, is the fastest growing stream of waste in America representing 70% of the toxic waste in landfills. Up to 60 elements can be found in e-waste, including lead,

mercury, arsenic, and cadmium as well as flame retardants and other toxic chemicals. The extreme amount of lead in electronics alone can cause severe nervous system damage affecting the blood and kidneys.

Items collected at this event included broken or unwanted TVs, computers, monitors, CDs, VHS tapes, cell phones, and small appliances. These items were recycled by Comprenew[®] based out of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Comprenew's electronic lifecycle management model minimizes environmental impacts by promoting reuse before recycling. All e-waste collected was recycled or destroyed in the U.S.

The Conservation District is excited to be able to offer this service to area residents free of charge and plans for a collection in October are already underway.

Contact the Shiawassee Conservation District for more information about the District's Electronic Recycling Program.

Jason Eicher—MAEAP, continued from page 2

What were some of some of the things you had to do before you could become MAEAP verified?

Before we became MAEAP verified in the Farmstead System we had to create a proper fueling pad with correct size and class tanks, build a new liquid fertilizer containment system, and build a new chemical containment building. As for getting MAEAP verified in the Cropping System, we were already doing many of the practices such as accurate fertilizer and pesticide records. We run a diverse crop rotation and added some cover cropping to help build soil organic matter, stop erosion and nutrient leaching.

What do you perceive are the benefits to MAEAP?

As we move forward into the future, our industry is going to be more heavily regulated either from EPA, DEQ, or other agencies. If we are already going above and beyond what

they require now, maybe we will be able to keep those regulations to a minimum in the future. MAEAP allows us to show that we are protecting our waters and our environment from any traumatic accidents by being proactive in preventing them in the first place. The more farms that participate show that we are true stewards of the land, and we don't need any laws to tell us to do it because we did it on our own.

How did you incorporate cover crops into your system and why?

We have slowly been incorporating cover crops into our rotations for a number of reasons. 1) to prevent wind erosion on our sandy soils, 2) to increase soil organic matter, 3) to scavenge nutrients left by the previous crop, and 4) to help control cyst nematode in sugar beets and possibly in soybeans. It has only been about two years since we started, so our program is in its infancy but is working well. We used air application along with traditional planting methods and both worked extremely well.

Comment on the importance of nutrient management to profitability and environmental quality.

In these days of extreme market volatility, nutrient management is extremely important. Over application should be a thing of the past since prices of commercial fertilizer have reached sustained record levels. It is very simple if the plants don't need it the environment does not need it. Grid or zone soil sampling allows you to pinpoint what you need with what crop you are growing and feeds the plant based on what is available to it. So you become more profitable by dialing back unneeded fertilizer usage and being more environmentally friendly by not adding extra nutrients that could potentially run off into lakes and streams. It is an all-around great plan for everyone. It does take some time to get into place, but once done management becomes much simpler.



Shiawassee Conservation District
 1900 S. Morrice Road
 Owosso, MI 48867

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CURRENT RESIDENT or

2014 SHIAWASSEE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL TOUR DETAILS INSIDE!



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YOUR LAND, YOUR WATER
YOUR MICHIGAN
 MAKE A LONG-LASTING,
 POSITIVE IMPACT ON
 MICHIGAN'S NATURAL RESOURCES.
 NO RESOURCE IS TOO SMALL
 OR TOO LARGE.
conservation

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www.shiawasseed.org

SHIAWASSEE CONSERVATION DISTRICT