

Cover Crops, No-Till & Grazing



LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT

Evaluating the Economics and First Steps to Improving
Soil Health with **Minnesota Farmers**

Date & Time: Friday, Feb. 15th 10 am—3 pm

Farmer-Presenters: Grant & Dawn Breitzkreutz, Tom Cotter, & Myron Sylling

Location: St. Columban Church in Preston (408 Preston St. NW)

Directions: From US 52, turn South onto St. Paul St. NW, after .1 miles turn right to stay on St. Paul St., in .2 miles turn left onto Preston St. NW. The church will be on your left.

- \$20 fee includes lunch—\$10 scholarship rate for students and additional family members
- Registration begins at 9:30 am

Between the testimonies of farmers like Gabe Brown, the media buzz and new research around the benefits of soil health and farm profitability, area farmers are looking to take steps to build soil through different practices like no-till, cover cropping, and rotational grazing. Yet, new practices bring their share of challenges, successes, and even failures. To address this learning curve, the Land Stewardship Project has invited Minnesota farmers, Grant & Dawn Breitzkreutz, Tom Cotter, and Myron Sylling to share their stories on building soil and profitability on their farms.

Workshop Highlights:

- * **Farmer-to-Farmer Learning**
- * **No-Till Cost Savings**

- * **Getting Started with Cover Crops**
- * **Grazing Considerations**
- * **Soil Health Benefits**



In their 20 years of farming in Redwood County, Minnesota, **Grant & Dawn Breitzkreutz** have put forth a massive effort to regenerate their soils by practicing no-till row cropping and intensive rotational grazing as well as diversified cover cropping. The Breitzkreutz family has earned widespread recognition for their on-farm learning and innovation, including:

- ◇ 2010 *Minnesota Outstanding Conservationist Award* from the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- ◇ 2016 *Environmental Stewardship Award* from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

Grant & Dawn believe that soil health and regenerative agriculture should not be considered an expense- everything they do on their land has an economic return plus a soil health benefit.

"The best thing that Grant and Dawn bring to the soil health conversation is their experience with practical implementation of good soil building methods. As a farmer who has read about and studied the principles of soil health, my biggest questions revolve around how to implement those principles in a realistic way on my own farm. That's where Grant and Dawn come in. They've been experimenting with soil health methods for years, and they talk about those experiences in a way that is honest, direct, and relevant to farmers who want to get started down the road to soil health on the right foot."

- Mike Seifert, No-Till Crop Farmer, Jordan, MN

Please RSVP by Feb. 13th, by calling LSP's Alex Romano at 507-523-3366 or email aromano@landstewardshipproject.org

Southeast Minnesota Farmers:

Tom Cotter's family has been farming in Mower County, Minnesota, for 140 years, and they have worked with cover crops for the past 19 years. In 2016, Tom and his late father, Michael, were given the Outstanding Conservationists Award by the Mower County Soil and Water Conservation District. In 2017, Tom was honored as a National Wildlife Federation Cover Crop Champion.

The Cotter Farm is diverse with fields of no-till & strip-till conventional corn and soybeans, sweet corn, and peas as well as some land being transitioned to organic. They raise beef cattle, grow diverse cover crop mixes, graze cover crops and incorporate practices like interseeded corn, and growing a warm season cover crop. Tom's farming practices have led to increased yields and income from the same amount of land while also improving the quality of his soils, livestock & crops.



The traditional way of farming is like playing checkers and when you add cover crops, reduced tillage, & livestock now you are playing chess. To learn the game, you need to talk to people who are playing it with you. - **Tom Cotter, Austin**

**Information for
conventional and
organic farms**



Myron Sylling has been farming with his father and brother in Houston County, Minnesota. Myron is a long-time cash grain farmer who has been no-till for over 20 years and using cover crops intensively for the past six years. When he began transitioning to no-till, Myron originally saw no yield difference compared to his neighbors' conventional tillage programs, but now is seeing up to a 20-bushel yield advantage as a result of his no-till and cover cropping system.

"As you think about the soil health benefits no-till & cover crops provide, you can start to put a value to your cover crop investment on your own farm." - **Myron Sylling, Spring Grove**

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180 East Main Street
Lewiston, MN 55952

Preston Soil Health Workshop
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