

## **Creekland Farms**

### **South Bend Township, Armstrong County**

**June 29, 2012**

Andrew Kimmel of Creekland Farms has come from four generations of farming in South Bend Township, Armstrong County. Creekland Farms is a very successful grain operation that no-tills approximately 1,800 acres to corn and soybeans in Armstrong and Indiana counties.

Creekland Farms began their relationship with NRCS many years ago. Andrew, his father Chris, and his grandfather Willard all served, and Andrew continues to serve, on the Armstrong Conservation District Board. The Kimmel family have been stewards of the land for over 100 years, and Creekland Farms has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture as a Century Farm.

The Kimmel's have also been recognized by organizations over the decades. Andrew, his father Chris, his grandfather Willard, and his great-grandfather, Howard have all been awarded the Master Farmer designation, Andrew in 2012, Chris in 1992, Willard in 1962, and Howard in 1940. Andrew, in 2007 was one of four farmers nationwide to be recognized as Outstanding Young Farmer by the Outstanding Farmers of America and the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. In 2012, Andrew earned the prestigious Master Farmer Award in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Creekland Farms enrolled in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program in the late 90's. Through the program they installed Filter Strips, Grassed Waterways and began to implement No Till farming.

In 2007, Creekland Farms enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, installing two CP-8A, or Grassed Waterway practices.

Creekland Farms enrolled over 900 acres in the Conservation Stewardship Program during the first sign up in 2010 and is a model farm utilizing many conservation measures. The operation reduces soil compaction and excessive fertilizer/ pesticide application by controlling their field traffic through GPS technology. They actively maintain contour strips, diversions, grassed waterways and wildlife habitat consisting of nearly all native vegetation on nearly every farm to help promote ground nesting bird and pollinator habitat. To improve upon their existing conservation practices Creekland Farms chose an Air Quality Enhancement Activity –the use of drift reducing nozzles, low pressures, lower boom height, and adjuvants to reduce pesticide drift.

While the farm utilizes GPS technology to reduce pesticide drift, the drift reducing technology enhancement expands upon this current practice and helps improve air quality and wildlife habitat. By converting to drift reducing nozzles at low pressures with decreased boom height the farm can more efficiently apply pesticide reducing overlap and drift. This enhancement allows better control on

field edges protecting valuable wildlife and pollinator habitat; it also improves application coverage which in turn, reduces follow up applications and plant resistance due to over application.

In addition to the benefits Creekland has implemented utilizing USDA NRCS programs; they have put into place multiple technological innovations. They consistently utilize GPS technology, they have installed a 5,000 gallon tank fed from a spring development as a water supply for the chemical sprayer, they built a fertilizer storage area that the roof rolls back for ease of dumping when the fertilizer is delivered, and then Kimmel's load the fertilizer onto their equipment from below.

These improvements coupled with the operations current conservation practices epitomes the programs intent and helps promote good conservation to surrounding farms and the general public while improving the economic well-being of the operation.



Grassed waterways and field borders well maintained.



Creekland Farms is a model of good conservation.



Innovative water system for chemical sprayer. 5000 gal tank fed from a spring development. Overflow goes to a water control structure.



Fertilizer storage. Top rolls back for easy filling. Loads out from below.