



Dairying in the Fox River Watershed

USDA United States
Department
of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative ~ Success Story

Brothers Paul and Ken Hoelzel operate a medium-size dairy operation in the Fox River Watershed, milking 360 milking cows, and farming 800 acres, half of which is owned, and half rented.

that manure can be spread when conditions are right for minimum risk of runoff. The new system includes a vegetated treatment area, with underground tank and pump for transporting manure from barn to pit.

For 10 years, the Hoelzels have been doing nutrient management planning. Diane Ott is their crop consultant, and has worked with the Hoelzel family for over 30 years.

“The Fox River is not far, and the heavy rains in 2013 showed the need for improved manure storage,” says Diane. Through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), the Hoelzels were able to begin a new manure management regimen to significantly reduce runoff and phosphorus going into the Fox River.

Their previous manure storage system was an old small concrete pit and an earthen pit, which allowed only six months of storage. The new concrete pit provides a full year storage, 3.5 million gallons, so



Diane, who is an NRCS-certified Technical Service Provider, developed a comprehensive nutrient management plan to incorporate the new manure storage facilities, improved nutrient management and erosion control practices.

In addition, they are investing in energy reduction practices identified through an Energy Management Plan through Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in 2015.

The Hoelzels are also enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), with many enhancements for wildlife, water and soil quality.

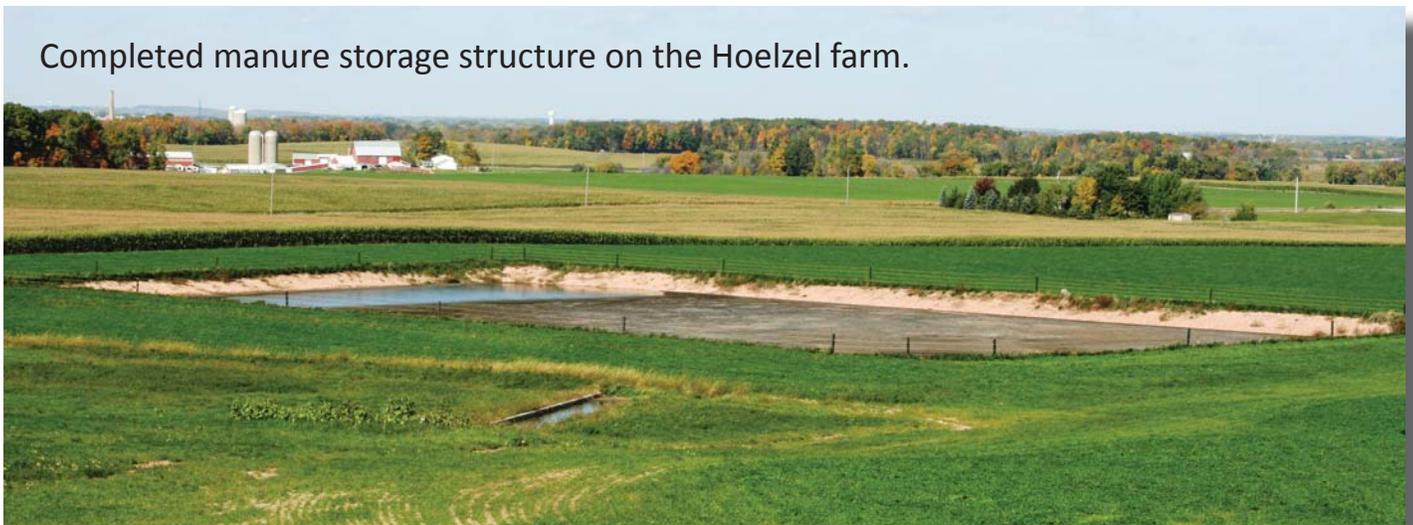
According to Lynn Sculczewski, NRCS District Conservationist for Outagamie County, Paul and Ken don't make a lot of noise, but they are very big on conservation. "They have made a lot of improvements and are really focusing on manure management, getting a lot of assistance from GLRI and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program."



The Hoelzels and NRCS District Conservationist Lynn Sculczewski work together to address resource concerns on the farm.

"We have seen great improvements in the area recently – more conservation and more awareness for conservation practices and needs, like timing of manure applications," said Paul. "Through GLRI, we accomplished our goal – a full year of storage, so we can apply when conditions are right, where we need the nutrients, and reduce the risk of runoff."

Completed manure storage structure on the Hoelzel farm.



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