



PROFILES IN soil health

Wenning Farm
Greensburg, Indiana
650 acres
Crops: Corn, Soybean, Freshwater Shrimp
Planting: 100% No Till
Covers: Cereal Rye, Ryegrass, Radishes, Crimson Clover



Healthy Soil for a New Generation

With four children, and seven grandchildren, Roger Wenning has plenty of reasons to think about the future. For Roger, the key to sustaining his farming operation for the future lies in conservation practices. Roger has been incorporating no-till and cover crops for thirty-five years. For the past eleven years, his operation has been 100% no-till.

“Before, when I saw the soil leaving, I would think, ‘that’s my livelihood –gone.’ I look at the farm now, and I’m seeing us keeping the soil here now and keeping it healthy. It’s brightened my outlook and the future for my kids and grandkids. It also gives me hope for our ability to feed a growing population.”

Roger explains that the different practices he uses work in conjunction to create a complete conservation system.

“When you do cover crops and no-till, one plus one doesn’t equal two; it equals three. What I mean is that the systems feed off each other,” Roger explains. “No-till preserves organic matter in the soil, and cover crops continue to build organic matter. Put the two together and you keep what you already have and actually multiply it.”

Conservation practices on the farm haven’t just changed Roger’s outlook, but also his day-to-day operations. He credits these practices with allowing him to do more with less.

“Before we were concerned with tilling and breaking up the clods and getting the fertilizer in. Now, we plant and side-dress, but overall there’s

profiles in soil health

less work involved and it goes faster, and we use less chemical inputs.”

Because of these changes, Roger was able to take on more projects for the business he owns and operates, Wenning Excavating and Drainage. Two of his sons, Kevin and Nick, have also been able to come back into the operation. Nick also took the opportunity several years ago to start raising freshwater shrimp on the farm in addition to the corn and soybeans already in place.

Look at the farm now, and I'm seeing us keeping the soil here now and keeping it healthy. It's brightened my outlook and the future for my kids and grandkids.

- Roger Wenning, landowner

Roger encourages other farmers in his community to get started on their own no-till journey. There is no shortage of resources for farmers looking to start no-tilling or using cover crops. Roger credits other no-till farmers, the Midwest Cover Crop Council, his local SWCD, and NRCS with helping him along the way.

As for his advice to farmers looking to start using cover crops or no-till?



With four children and seven grandchildren, Roger Wenning has plenty of reasons to think about the future.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Wenning Farms, Indiana



Turnips are just one of the many cover crops incorporated into the Wenning Farm's soil health plan.

“Just do it. Find a way. There are plenty of people out there to help. The ideal time to start is last year. But, if you missed out on doing it last year, then do it this year. Next year is too late.”

Eligible producers can receive financial assistance for cover crops and other conservation solutions through NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives program.

To learn more about using cover crops on your operation or improving the health of your soil, visit http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/in/home/?cid=nrcs144p2_031079 or stop by your local USDA Service Center.

Want to unlock the secrets in YOUR soil?

Go to: www.nrcs.usda.gov



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**