

# GREEN BAY WEST SHORE DEMONSTRATION FARM NETWORK

# REPORT



GREEN BAY WEST SHORE DEMONSTRATION FARMS NETWORK

Year 2 (2022)  
Annual Report



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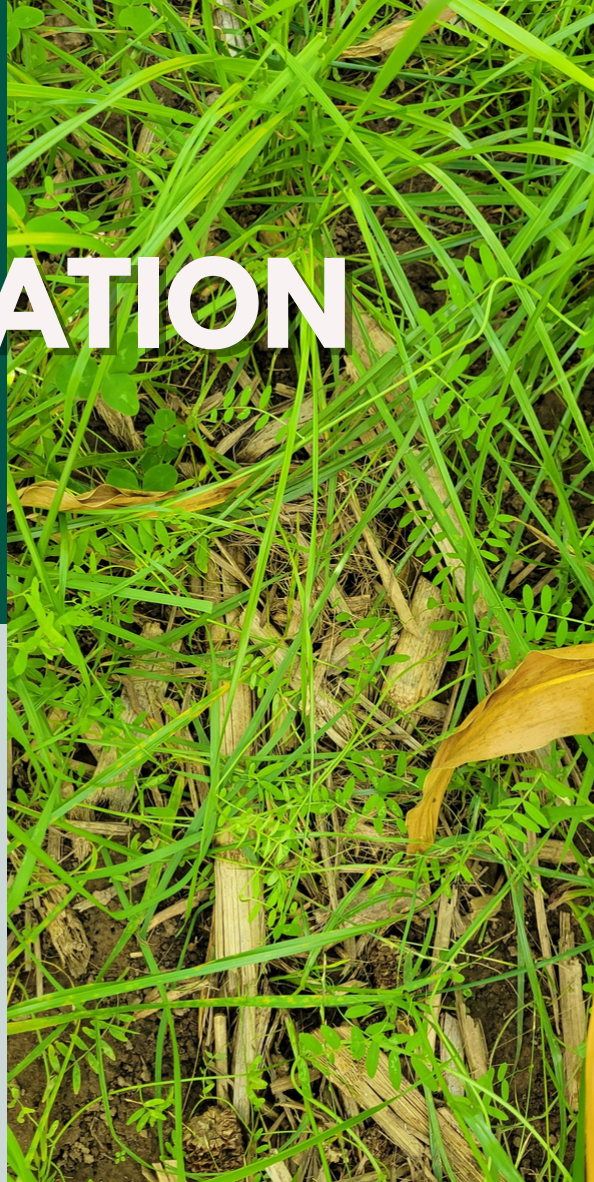
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# ABOUT THE DEMONSTRATION FARMS

The Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farm Network, a collaboration between U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Oconto County Land & Water Conservation Department, in partnership with Marinette and Shawano counties was formed in 2021. The network's goal is to test and demonstrate conservation practices to reduce phosphorus, nitrates, and sediment entering the Great Lakes basin.

The four demonstration farms represent a range of crop and farm types, but all have a common goal – to share the knowledge learned on their farms about innovative techniques to improve soil health. These farmers, with technical support from the project management team, voluntarily implement conservation agricultural



practices in their operations. They also host educational field days and share their soil health journeys with other farmers and the public with the goal of helping others implement soil health practices in their operations. In this way, the Network tests and demonstrates the best conservation practices to reduce non-point source pollution entering the Great Lakes basin.

## CONTACT OUR TEAM

- **Matt Brugger** (Project Manager)
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- **Jeff Maroszek** (NRCS Coordinator)
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- **Ken Dolata** (Oconto County Conservationist)
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# FARM SUMMARIES



## BROWN STAR DAIRY

OCONTO COUNTY

- In 2022 the farm, in cooperation with UW Extension Agent Scott Reuss, collected data for an on-farm research project looking at Nitrogen rates on triticale covers.
- The farm applied manure using two tanker mounted Low Disturbance Manure Application (LDMA) bars.
- The farm utilizes strip till to plant green into unharvested cover crop fields, leaving an undisturbed row between the corn rows.
- The farm also hosted a fall field day in October covering the on farm research plots and LDMA.

### Plans for the Future

- The farm plans to continue utilizing cover crops and LDMA, as well as hosting another Nitrogen rate plot on the farm.
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## MAHONEY FARMS

OCONTO COUNTY

- The farm continues to implement no-till/minimal till practices on a number of acres.
- The farm has experimented with wide row corn for 3 years, utilizing 30" twin rows next to a 60" gap with a cover crop planted in between.
- In 2022 they made modifications to their vertical till unit to include a cover crop seeding unit.

### Plans for the Future

- The farm plans to continue to implement cover crops and experiment with wide row corn. They will also continue to implement soil health practices to hopefully grow more corn.
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# FARM SUMMARIES



## FINGER FAMILY FARMS

MARINETTE COUNTY

- The farm has been adopting no-till and Low Disturbance Manure Application (LDMA) practices.
- In 2022, Fingers purchased a tanker mounted LDMA toolbar for their farm and tried it out on some acres in the fall.
- For the past two years the farm has Interseeded a mix of clover, vetch and annual ryegrass in corn silage fields.

### Plans for the Future

- The farm plans to continue to find ways to utilize LDMA and cover crops.



## WAGNER FARMS, INC

SHAWANO COUNTY

- The farm has utilized no-till and cover crops on many of their acres, recognizing the benefits to soil health.
- Wagner Farms in 2022 interseeded around 100 acres of corn with a mix of clover, vetch and annual ryegrass.
- The farm has also utilized surface applied manure on top of growing covers to spread out manure across their acres and provide nutrients to the rye cover crop.

### Plans for the Future

- The farm plans to continue interseeding, harvesting cover crops for forage and planting green into covers.

# OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



## In-Person Outreach

Farmers learn best from other farmers and when the information they receive is locally-based and relevant to them. For this reason, one of our main outreach strategies is in-person field days. Farmers, agency personnel, and county conservation professionals attend in-person field days where they are shown local soil health practices our demonstration farmers are using.

Participants can ask questions of demonstration farmers, and can see on-the-ground practices that are working. They may also find practices that aren't working so well, and can explore ways to adapt these practices to work better in their systems.

## In-Person Outreach at a Glance

This year, in conjunction with our partners and with the support of the demonstration farmers, we hosted two field days.

### Field Days

#### Field Day at Finger Family Farms

- Topics included: interseeding, silage considerations & a soil health discussion
- September 7

#### Brown Star Farms Field Day

- Topics included: Low Disturbance Manure demonstration, cover crop on farm research
- October 20



Participants at a field day.

# FIELD DAY AT FINGER FAMILY FARMS

September 7, 2022

This field day showcased Finger Family Farms's interseeded fields. Specifically, project manager Matt Brugger discussed the farm's interseeding cover mix. He also shared what he considers when interseeding cover crops into corn. The discussion also included the species that could be used, cost considerations, and how the cover's can help suppress weeds.

UW Extension Agent Scott Reuss held a silage drydown at the event, while also leading a discussion on forages and considerations for using cover crops in a forage situation. He emphasized paying attention to chemical programs when looking to feed covers.

Participants also learned about soil health and examined some samples with NRCS' Jeff Maroszek as he demonstrated a table top rainfall simulator. With this visual, attendees could see the soil's ability, or inability, to resist erosion and explore how well the soil could maintain its structure to provide water infiltration and water holding capacity for plants and soil biota when it experiences rain.

This field day was hosted in partnership with UW Division of Extension and Marinette County Department of Land and Water Conservation.



Jeff Maroszek demonstrates the rainfall simulator.



Soils after the "rainfall".



Finger's interseeded cover crop mix.

# BROWN STAR DAIRY FIELD DAY

October 20, 2022

This field day was hosted by Matt Bjelland of Brown Star Farms and was intended to showcase the cover crops that the farm plants to use as feed and for soil health. This day was put on as a partnership with Oconto County Land and Water Conservation and UW Division of Extension. Matt shared his experience with cover crops, and discussed his Low Disturbance Manure (LDMA) toolbars.

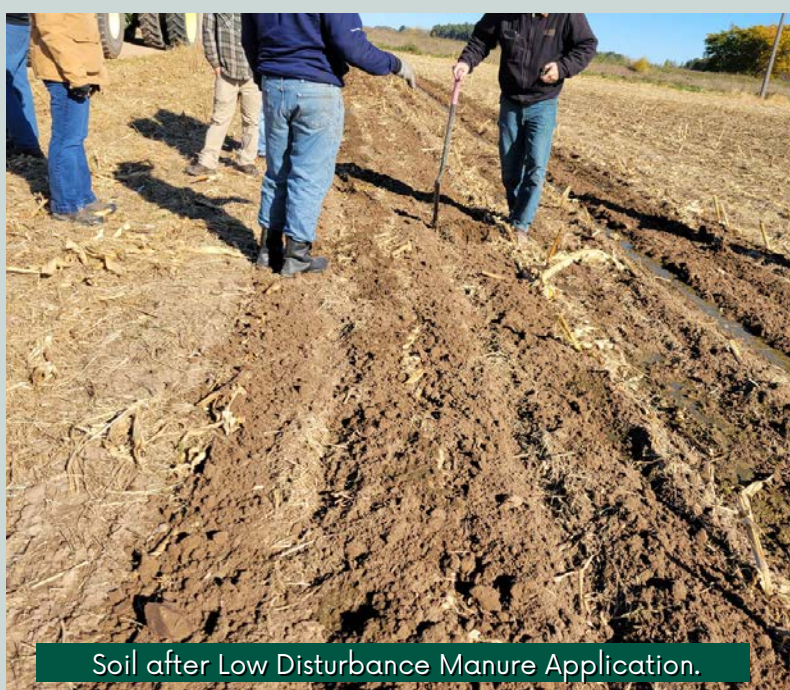
Attendees got to see a demonstration of one of the two tankers Brown Star uses to apply manure. The tanker mounted LDMA toolbars provide a way to incorporate manure with minimal disturbance to the

soil. In this demonstration, participants got to view soil in an LDMA system, plus an undisturbed area.

UW Division of Extension Agent Scott Reuss presented some of his on-farm research data from Brown Star's plots. Scott, in cooperation with Matt at Brown Star, looked at timing for adding nitrogen to winter cereals to increase forage yields. Attendees were able to see preliminary results, with the knowledge the study would continue for 2023.



Matt Bjelland discusses his tanker mounted toolbar.



Soil after Low Disturbance Manure Application.



Scott Reuss talks about his on-farm research results.



# OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

(CONTINUED)

## Finger Family Farm Field Day

September 7th, 2022



## Tabletop Rainfall Simulator

Jeff Maroszek - NRCS Oconto-Marinette County District Conservationist

### Digital Outreach

This year we continued to utilize and expand our digital outreach. Aside from in-person events, our main outreach tactics have been to create digital materials that are available online for farmers to access at their convenience. This has included educational Facebook posts and videos around soil health topics. We also utilized our text service to share not only our event, but other pertinent events for farmers and Ag industry.

In 2022, the Demonstration Farm Networks were recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives for their efforts in expanding the adoption of conservation practices.

For the future, we plan to hold a roundtable or annual meeting type event to help reach out to farmers and share the stories of our four demo farms.

### Digital Outreach at a Glance

#### Educational Materials Created:

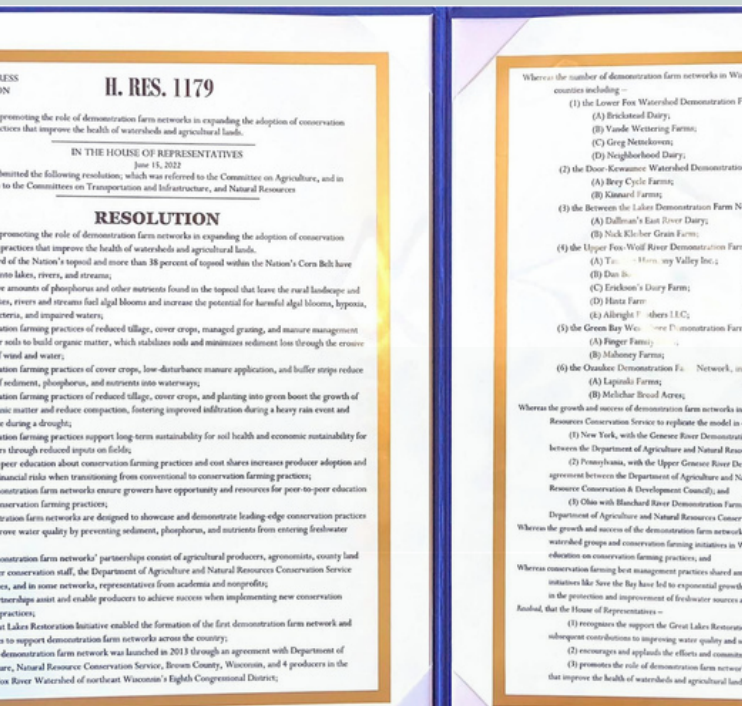
- 1 video
- Facebook posts
  - Our materials
    - 14 posts
  - Sharing Others' Materials
    - 1 post

#### Event Promotion, Thank You's, and Photos

- 8 posts

#### Communication Platforms Utilized

- MoboMix Text
- Facebook
- Twitter



A look at House Resolution 1179 recognizing the Demonstration Farm Networks.

## Project Partners



## Partner Contacts

| Person         | Role                             | Phone        | Email  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Sheri Denowski | Marinette County Conservationist | 715-732-7783 | <a href="mailto:Sheri.Denowski@marinettecountywi.gov">Sheri.Denowski@marinettecountywi.gov</a> |
| Scott Frank    | Shawano County Conservationist   | 715-526-4632 | <a href="mailto:Scott.Frank@shawanocountywi.gov">Scott.Frank@shawanocountywi.gov</a>           |

## Report Credits

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Report Created by - Matt Brugger

Cover Image, Field Day and Practice Images - Matt Brugger

House Resolution Image - Lower Fox Demo Farms

Report Template - Maranda Miller, UW Natural Resource Educator and Upper Fox Wolf and Between The Lakes Demo Farms Outreach Coordinator

# WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023!

GREEN BAY WEST SHORE DEMONSTRATION FARM NETWORK

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