

On August 11, 2022, New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball joined the Sand County Foundation to announce that Greenfield Farms of Skaneateles was selected for the 2022 New York AEM-Leopold Conservation Award. The distinguished award honors a farm for its extraordinary efforts to promote and protect the environment through the preservation of soil and water quality while ensuring farm viability for future generations.

The Greenfield's are fourth generation farmers. "Just about every acre that the farm owns or rents has views of Skaneateles Lake!" Greenfield Farms, LLC produces corn grain, soybeans, hay, wheat, and oats on 1,400 acres of crop land in both the Skaneateles and Owasco Lake Watersheds.

The unique part about Greenfield Farms, LLC is they believe, and therefore operate their farm, based upon the guiding principle "Our most valuable commodity is not corn or soybeans, it is our topsoil!" The farm sold their moldboard plows in 2000 and they were the first farm in the area to invest in no-till conservation technology. Today the farm is on its fourth no-till drill!

The farm is operated by brothers Bill, Tom and Jim Greenfield as well as Tom's son TJ (the fourth generation). Bill assists with all aspects of the farm operation, drives trucks, and helps install practices for neighbor relations. "Everybody has their own role and responsibilities on the farm."

The farm leads by example by demonstrating their conservation ethics daily. Greenfield's have adapted over the years and have been able to mentor other farms that aspire to be strong conservation leaders in the community! Their vision and mission statement, which was produced in 1997, with the farm's voluntary participation in SLWAP, still guides them today. Both are below.

Vision Statement: "Greenfield Farms, LLC will be an economically viable business that works harmoniously with the community to improve water quality in Skaneateles Lake."

Mission Statement: "To operate a diversified, profitable, hay and cash crop farm that maintains neighbor relations through improved environmental management practices".

All members of Greenfield Farms, LLC go to work every morning with the understanding that "topsoil is our most valuable commodity". Everything that the farm does daily, provides protection of their natural resources. And, because the farm protects their natural resources, they help to protect the City of Syracuse's drinking water supply at Skaneateles Lake.

They do all that they can to increase and maintain soil organic matter concentrations through crop rotations, residue management, and cover cropping. This creates a 1,400 acre "bigger, better sponge" to help absorb storm water from ever changing weather patterns. Their diversification into many commodity markets enables them to weather

“financial storms” that are frequently experienced in the agricultural industry. All of their efforts work together to provide a busy, tiring, but excellent quality of life for the Greenfield family, their employees, neighbors, and community!