



# FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR AWARD

AISWCD | [www.aiswcd.org](http://www.aiswcd.org)

## SPONSOR(S):

Illinois Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Brownfield Network, and Prairie Farmer.

## PURPOSE:

The object of this award is to provide recognition to an outstanding conservation farm family in each Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District that exemplifies Total Resource Management. Each SWCD is encouraged to sponsor a local contest and submit their winner for Council competition.

From the 16 Council winners the AISWCD Awards Committee will select a Governor's Award winner. Selection will be completed prior to and announced at the AISWCD Annual Meeting/BLWR Summer Conference.

## ELIGIBILITY:

- Open to all landowners and/or operators who are soil and water conservation district cooperators.
- Previous LUC winners will be eligible to reapply in the fourth year following their selection as a winner (e.g. winner in 2014 or prior can reapply in 2018).
- Former Governor's Award winners are permanently ineligible.
- Only districts in good standing with AISWCD are eligible to compete at the state level competition.
- Entry includes information on all land operated by the owner-operator or the tenant operator.
- Only complete entries will be accepted.

## ORDER OF ENTRY:

Entries should be typed and submitted in a 3-ring standard binder, for 8½ inch x 11 inch paper with all supporting materials in correct order put into plastic page protectors. Unusual circumstances will be scored at the discretion of the judges with all decisions final.

- Completed, signed entry form
- **Section 1:** Nominee & Land Overview
- **Section 2:** Conservation Activities - aerial photos of fields delineated out and a copy of the nominees/landowners FSA 1026A.
- **Section 3:** Overall Farm Efforts
- **Section 4:** Signed and typed nominee's essay, not to exceed 2 pages, single spaced, 12-point font. Must address in separate paragraph (25 words or less) nominee's conservation philosophy.
- **Section 5:** Typed and signed Soil & Water Conservation District letter of support, not to exceed 2 pages, 12-point font explaining how nominee(s) has contributed to your local conservation efforts and overview of nominee's general farm husbandry.
- **Section 6:** Approximately 8-10 color photos showing family, homestead, conservation practices, etc. with narratives displayed in binder. Photos submitted must be jpg, bmp or tiff format on USB drive along with narration in a Microsoft Word document. Photos placed in PowerPoint or Word document will be accepted if pictures can be cut/pasted into another document.



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Please note: The more information provided in the narratives provides AISWCD more information for inclusion in the awards presentation ceremony.

## JUDGING | GUIDELINES FOR DISTRICTS

Each SWCD should submit their Conservation Farm Family from the entries received at the local level. Only entries completed on the current entry form will be accepted. Entry must include items listed in “Order of Entry” found on page 1 and 2. Districts may announce their Conservation Farm Family after local selection.

Deadline: Entries sent to Land Use Council Chairman by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

## JUDGING | GUIDELINES FOR LUCS

If more than one (1) entry per Council is received, judging will be performed by an adjoining Land Use Council of their choice. Entries posted after the deadline date will be disqualified. Each LUC Chairman is responsible for:

- Selection of a judging committee. The judging committee should consist of at least three members from the following groups but not limited to; District Employee, District Conservationist, SWCD Director, LUC Rep., Area Forester or Biologist.
- The committee is responsible for selecting one entry to represent the LUC at the state level and signing entry.

Deadline: Notify AISWCD of the LUC winner immediately following selection and send binder by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## AWARD PACKAGE:

Each of the 16 Council winners will be honored at a hospitality hour and awards banquet during the AISWCD Annual Meeting. During the conference each council winner (only one family per entry) will receive the following:

- One (1) room for lodging Monday night
- Four (4) complimentary award banquet tickets
- A plaque of recognition
- It will be the responsibility of the SWCD to pay for additional plaques if nominee consists of more than one person/family.
- The overall winner will receive the “Governor’s Award” during the awards banquet.
- Recognition at the Illinois State Fair as part of Ag Day festivities.



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## OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

**AISWCD Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Land Use Council:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SWCD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person or persons being honored are:**     Owner     Operator     Both

**List all names of the family (families) being nominated:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name listed on additional plaque:** \_\_\_\_\_

If nominee consists of more than one person/family and the nominating District would like to have multiple plaques given, it is the responsibility of the District to pay for the additional plaques.

**District Chairman Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## SECTION 1: NOMINEE & LAND OVERVIEW

1. List the number of acres for each of the following and enter “0” if an item does not pertain to nominee.

Total Acres (FSA plus farmstead acres)	
Highly Erodible Land	
HEL at or below “T”	
Standard soil testing program	

Tillable Cropland	
Non-Highly Erodible Land	
NHEL at or below “T”	
Nutrient Management	

2. List residue percentage amounts required by conservation farm plan after each crop rotation for most of nominee’s HEL acres and list tillage method (e.g. soybeans after corn = 30% residue, mulch-till; corn after soybeans = 40% residue, no-till).

3. List residue percent amounts left after each crop rotation for most of nominee’s NHEL acres and list tillage method (e.g. soybeans after corn = 30% residue, mulch-till; corn after soybeans = 40% residue, no-till).

4. Select soil types that apply to nominee’s land and give approximate percentage of each.

Timber \_\_\_\_\_  Prairie \_\_\_\_\_  Hydric \_\_\_\_\_

5. Score the nominee using a scale of 1-5 with 5 being “excellent” and 1 being “poor.”

a. Follows and utilizes Best Management Practices such (but not limited to) conserving water, eliminating or reducing soil erosion, integrated pest management or other pesticide or herbicide management, maximizes animals’ such living conditions and veterinary care	
b. Stays current with and implement new and innovative technologies	
c. Demonstrates a history of maintaining a conservation plan and consistently implementing it	
d. Demonstrates a commitment to conservation by investing their own resources in implementing practices and has sought sources of support other than NRCS	
e. Demonstrates good stewardship such as placing conservation easements on land, allowing public and multi-use access, building trails, maintaining wildlife habitat	



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f. Participates in educational programs such as 4-H, allows tours or conducts demonstration events, participates in the community including donating to food banks, schools, or contributing to other groups or other events	
g. Demonstrates leadership by participating in community, government, and nonprofit or grassroots groups and furthers their work	

## SECTION 2: CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

1. Add recent FSA Aerial Photos (Arc View acceptable) with farm fields delineated out.
2. Add copy of nominee's current FSA 1026A
3. List nominee's acres in the following conservation practices:

Pasture w/out rotational grazing	
Timber w/out livestock exclusion	
Wetlands (shallow water areas, bogs, marshes)	
Streams w/out livestock exclusion	
Ponds w/out livestock exclusion	
Waterways	
Riparian Buffers	
Streambank Stabilization Practices	
Diversions	
Farmstead/Field Windbreak	

Pasture with rotational grazing	
Timber with livestock exclusion	
Prairie	
Streams with livestock exclusion	
Ponds with livestock exclusion	
Terraces	
Filter Strips	
Wildlife Habitat	
Field Border Strips	
<b>Total Acres</b>	

4. List the number of practices the nominee has completed for each type of practice listed.

Grade Control Structures	
Abandoned Well Sealing	

Water & Sediment Control Basins	

5. Briefly describe nominee's livestock waste management or animal waste system, if applicable.



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6. Evaluate nominee's involvement in the following areas:

Yes  No All tillable cropland must be at or below Tolerable Soil Loss level

Yes  No Residue Management must be practiced on all tillable cropland

Yes  No Demonstrates a history of maintaining a conservation plan & consistently implementing it

Yes  No Cooperator demonstrates participation in conservation programs and uses conservation technical assistance

## **SECTION 3: OVERALL FARM EFFORTS**

1. What specific accomplishments have the various members of this family made to better their farm/land and community?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How do the members of this family work together to make their farming operation viable & sustainable? List specific examples.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Tell how nominee's farm has been used to demonstrate to others in the community the problems & solutions in pollution abatement & environmental enhancement. Explain other ways the nominee helps publicize conservation and natural resources.



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4. Describe condition of the nominee's farm when they started and its current condition.
5. Identify the soil & water resource management problems found on nominee's farm. Describe the innovative, as well as traditional, conservation techniques they have used to address these problems.
6. List participation, offices held, awards presented to nominee in conservation/farm organizations (e.g. SWCD, Farm Bureau, etc), local community organizations, church, 4-H or FFA.
7. Attach any additional information to supplement this section such as newspaper clippings, etc.



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## **SECTION 4: NOMINEE'S ESSAY**

Signed and typed nominee's essay, not to exceed 2 pages, single spaced, 12-point font. Also, please include (25 words or less) in a separate paragraph the nominee's conservation philosophy.

## **SECTION 5: SWCD LETTER OF SUPPORT**

Typed and signed Soil & Water Conservation District letter of support, not to exceed 2 pages, 12-point font explaining how nominee(s) has contributed to your local conservation efforts and overview of nominee's general farm husbandry.

## **SECTION 6: PHOTOS AND NARRATIVES**

- 8 - 10 high quality, color photos depicting family, homestead, conservation practices, etcetera with narratives displayed in binder.
- Photos submitted must be jpg, bmp or tiff format on USB drive along with narration in a Microsoft Word document.
- Photos placed in PowerPoint or Word document will be accepted only if pictures can be cut/pasted into another document.





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## JUDGING CERTIFICATIONS FORM

### COUNTY JUDGING COMMITTEE SECTION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### COUNCIL JUDGING COMMITTEE SECTION

Council **MUST** choose one entry to represent LUC at State contest

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adjoining Council: \_\_\_\_\_ Council #: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**



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## STATE JUDGING FORM

The AISWCD Awards Committee is responsible for selecting the Illinois Conservation Farm Family. A spot check may be made when recommended by the Executive Committee. A member of the Annual Meeting & Awards Committee and an Area Vice President will conduct the spot check.

Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Overall Rating**  
(5 = excellent, 1 = poor)

**Section Comments**

	<b>Overall Rating</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>Section Comments</b>
<b>Section 1:</b> Nominee & Land Overview		
<b>Section 2:</b> Conservation Activities		
<b>Section 3:</b> Overall Farm Efforts		
<b>Section 4:</b> Nominee's Essay		
<b>Section 5:</b> SWCD Letter of Support		
<b>Section 6:</b> Photos and Narratives		



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## STATE JUDGING FORM

OVERALL COMMENTS:



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**ADDITONAL SPACE**



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