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# PRESS RELEASE

## Working Agricultural Lands Provide Wildlife Habitat

The Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) sponsored a "Wildlife Habitat Management on Working Agricultural Lands" field day on Wednesday, June 25, 2008 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The field day was hosted by Chuck and Deb Uphoff, whose dairy farm is located near New Munich, MN. Chuck and Deb have implemented numerous best management practices on their farm. Currently, they are participating in the Conservation Security Program that rewards excellent farmers for their stewardship of natural resources.



*Chuck and Deb Uphoff, New Munich, MN, are standing by their MN Milk Producers Association's "5 Star" Environmental Quality Assurance sign. The voluntary program assists and recognizes dairy producers that achieve environmental excellence, including wildlife habitat quality and diversity.*

billions has been authorized for the CSP allowing the addition of millions of more acres. Dennis Fuchs, Stearns SWCD administrator, says "The benefits to wildlife habitat could be dramatic with the appropriate policies and incentives for farmers." Chuck added, "These working lands wildlife habitat provisions will become increasingly important with added pressure to bring additional acres into production."

All programs and services are available without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.

Questions can be directed to Dennis J. Fuchs, administrator of the Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District at (320) 251-7800, extension 3.

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Working lands include cropland and grazing land in production. Chuck said, "We all know the wildlife benefits of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program, and other easement-type programs. The goal of this field day is to increase the public's awareness of wildlife habitat enhancements in working lands programs, such as the Conservation Security Program." With the recent passage of the The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 otherwise known as the "farm bill", the Conservation Security Program is now called the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Over \$1