

# SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

"Helping bring YOU clean water"



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## News Release

### **Water Quality Certification expands to farms across Minnesota**

*Yellow Medicine SWCD now accepting applicants*

Clarkfield, Minn. – Farmers across Minnesota are now taking advantage of a state program that celebrates and ensures protection of the state’s water resources. With the help of a five-year, \$9 million award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and legislation enacted earlier this year, the [Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program](#) (MAWQCP) is formally transitioning from four pilot areas to being available to any agricultural producer statewide.

[Minnesota’s Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program](#) was designed by an advisory committee of independent stakeholders and implemented by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, and local public, private and non-profit partners. The program is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water. Farmers and landowners who implement and maintain approved farm management practices are certified and in turn obtain regulatory certainty for a period of 10 years.

The MAWQCP certifies farmers and landowners for managing their land in a way that protects water quality through a whole-farm assessment that evaluates:

- Physical field characteristics,
- Nutrient management factors,
- Tillage management factors,
- Pest management factors,
- Irrigation and tile drainage management, and
- Conservation practices.

Producers interested in becoming certified also receive priority status for technical and financial assistance.

The MAWQCP puts producers together with local professionals and the new on-line [field assessment tool](#) to determine where risks to water quality exist on their farm, and empowers them to fix those risks when they're found, at the same avoiding the expense, time and trouble of applying half-measures or implementing misplaced actions.

Anyone interested in learning more about MAWQCP, the assessment process, or becoming certified should contact Tyler Knutson at the Yellow Medicine SWCD at 320-669-4442 x3 or [tyler.knutson@mn.nacdnet.net](mailto:tyler.knutson@mn.nacdnet.net).

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