

Seeking Nominations for The River Friendly Farmer Award

Environmental stewardship is the focus behind the River Friendly Farmer Award, a program established in 1999. It is designed to recognize farmers who protect and enhance Indiana's rivers, lakes and streams by using sound cropping and livestock management practices in their operations. The RFF award was initiated as a statewide initiative recognizing farmers who, through good production management, help keep Indiana's rivers, lakes and streams clean. Since then, approximately 300 farmers have been publicly honored for their stewardship. To nominate a farmer in our county; go to <http://www.iaswcd.org/RFFpage.htm> click on the **NEW! Click here** to download the **2007 RFF award application (Microsoft Word document)**, complete and mail to Hancock County SWCD at 1101 W Main St Ste N, Greenfield, IN 46140 or you can email it to cindy.beckner@in.nacdnet.net. If you do not have computer connections – contact me to assist in getting one to you – or help in filling it out. **Completed applications must be submitted to your local Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District office by Friday, June 22, 2007. Applications from Districts are due to the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts by June 27, 2007**

“This year’s nominees we would like to see more representation of our local farmers in our counties across the state,” said Gene Weaver, president, Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD), one of the award sponsors. “They are men and women who make decisions based on the impact their choices will have on the environment,” Weaver added. “Economic viability is certainly an important criterion as well, but these RFF winners also know that a healthy environment only sets the stage for a farm’s healthy overall bottom line....not to mention the legacy it leaves for future generations,” Weaver added. Award winners will be recognized at the Indiana State Fair on Farmer’s Day in August.

River Friendly Farmer Award Partners:

- Indiana's 92 Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts,
- Indiana Farm Bureau, Inc.
- Indiana State Department of Agriculture Division of Soil Conservation
- Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The River Friendly Farmer Award Criteria

1. Soil loss on all land is at or below tolerable (T) soil loss levels, either by maintaining 30% crop residue or by other appropriate tillage or crop rotation measures.
2. Fields soil tested at least once every three years.
3. Fertilizer applied at correct application rates based on soil tests. Realistic yield goals used in setting fertilizer application rates for crops.
4. Nutrient credits given for manure applied and legumes (i.e. soybeans, alfalfa, clover) used in rotation.

5. Nitrogen best management practices for your region (i.e. N stabilizers/inhibitors for fall or pre-emerge nitrogen applications, sidedressed N, no fall N on sandy soils) as recommended by Purdue University.
6. Phosphorous fertilizer banded or incorporated when applied on crop land, or incorporating practices used to keep soluble phosphorus from reaching water sources.
7. Livestock manure utilization part of your farming operation. Fencing used to exclude livestock from sensitive areas. Manure storage facilities that have at least 120 days storage capacity.
8. Livestock facilities that are currently approved by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) or in the process of being approved.
9. Pesticides and their containers handled, stored and disposed of in accordance with labeled recommendations. Label instructions followed for all applicable water quality restrictions and use of cultural or other management practices to reduce the volume of chemical controls.
10. Non-cropland areas are managed and/or enhanced in an environmentally appropriate manner.
11. Farm records kept to track inputs and conservation practices.

For more information, contact Cindy at 317-462-2283 Ext. 3 or visit at 1101 W Main St Ste N, Greenfield, IN 46140.