

## **2018 Conservationist of the Year**

**The Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is proud to announce that Gerald and Dianne Peter, of Mabel, have been chosen as the 2018 Fillmore County Outstanding Conservationists. The Peter's will compete with outstanding conservationists from across the State of Minnesota for the title of Minnesota Outstanding Conservationist at the annual convention of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Districts (MASWCD) to be held in Bloomington December 9-11, 2018.**



**The Peters farm 370 acres of corn, soybeans, oats and hay on both owned and rented land in Preble Township. All their land is in contour strips and no-tilled, except where the cows are wintered. They started using cover crops with EQIP and have continued their use on all acres following corn and soybeans. They maintain a 750 foot farmstead shelterbelt, adding trees as needed. A hedge has also been planted along one field to reduce erosion.**

**The Peters have 85 Black and Red Angus cow/calf pairs. All their cattle are grass fed and the calves are sold after weaning in November. Cows are wintered on corn stalks and spend no time in a feedlot. Their 125 acre pasture is rotationally grazed and divided into twelve paddocks which the cows are moved through weekly.**

**Their 120 acres of woodland are fenced to exclude cattle, which enhances the wildlife habitat. They also have a seven acre field that is maintained specifically for wildlife habitat, which they have inter-seeded with species beneficial to wildlife. This area is used by both family and guests that include young hunters and participants in the Wounded Warrior hunting program.**



**Gerald is a former Fillmore SWCD supervisor, Preble Township Board member and Mabel Cooperative Telephone Board member. He currently is a member of the Fillmore County Cattlemen, and the Mabel Legion, having served six years in the Army Reserves, and is a member of the Land Stewardship Project. The Peters have been participants in the SE MN Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Program since it began in 2008.**

**Gerald and Dianne are carrying on the conservation tradition on the farm where Gerald grew up and maintain many of the practices that were installed by his parents.**

**Congratulations Gerald and Dianne!**