

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers highlight conservation research at annual meeting

PLYMOUTH, Wis. — On Feb. 13, the Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers, a farmer-led conservation group in the Sheboygan River watershed, gathered over 50 farmer members, industry partners and community members for its annual meeting. Programming featured updates from the group's conservation projects and other ongoing sustainability projects in the area.



Brody Stapel opened the meeting by sharing key achievements from the previous year and outlining future goals.

“In 2025, our group hosted six events, giving members and others in the community opportunities to learn and network,” Stapel said. “We participated in our eighth year of the Member Conservation Practice survey, documenting our sustainability progress. I’m always amazed by the significant impact of our efforts that the survey indicates.”

Farmers for Sustainable Food Strategic Account Manager Marti Viste provided an update on SRPF’s 2025 survey results. There were 35 members involved in the survey encompassing 20,217 cropped acres, of which 40% had cover crops, 58% were no-till and 14% were planted green.

Tricia Verville from the Sand County Foundation provided an update on the Johnsonville project, which involved four SRPF farm members. The project aims to improve water quality in the Sheboygan River Basin and has demonstrated positive outcomes this past year.

Joe Ailts of Ailts Agronomy discussed the advantages of using a Haney Soil Test to measure nitrogen and encouraged farmers to run the test in their fields.

“You can’t manage what you can’t measure,” Ailts said. “Running more Haney Tests provides additional data points to help farmers identify soil trends.”

He encouraged all SRPF members to participate in a new Haney Testing Incentive Program, made possible with funding from the Fund for Lake Michigan. Members interested in participating in the program signed up at the annual meeting. More details will be released soon.

John Gaska, a board member for the Fields of Sinsinawa, shared an update on a carbon benchmarking project aimed at providing insights into soil health and how it is influenced by various management practices. Gaska encouraged the Sheboygan-area farmers to participate.

Gaska led a robust question-and-answer session focused on important factors to consider regarding soil sampling, including consistency in depth and timing of sampling throughout the year.

During the business portion of the meeting, Jim Webb of Byron Seeds was elected to the board. The following members were reelected: Brody Stapel, Double Dutch Dairy; Mark Loehr, Loehr Dairy, vice president; and Mike Mulder, Higher Ground Ranch.

Other board members include: Derek Sippel, Airy Point Dairy, president; Brian Huenink, Huenink's Seed and Dairy, treasurer; Mark Breunig, A-OK Farms, secretary; Ken Strack, Strack-View Farms and Chuck Born.

Photos:

[SRPF Board photo](#)

About Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers:

Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers is a nonprofit farmer-led conservation group in the Sheboygan River watershed in Sheboygan and Fond du Lac Counties in Wisconsin whose members explore farming strategies that lead to improved soil health, greater farming efficiency, sustained profitability and reduced environmental impact. Members share information gained through field trials with fellow farmers and strive to foster an understanding of the role of agriculture in the community. More information: <https://srpfarmers.com>

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