

# Le Sueur Watershed of Minnesota

## FARM #14

Tom Klug and his brother Steve, raise corn, soybeans, cattle and small grain in Waseca, Minnesota.

Tom has been farming full-time since he graduated high school in 1975, forming TBS Farms as a partnership with Steve since around 1991. The farm, once operated by their parents, has been in the family for over fifty years.

Tom began implementing strip-till and no-till conservation practices more than 10 years ago. In recent years, he's begun experimenting to determine which soil health practices are most effective on his operation. "We've got to get the right combination," he said. "It's just trying to get more out of the ground without taking too much out of it."

Tom no-tills his soybeans and has found the most success with winter rye and field peas as cover crops. "It really loosens the soil," he said. "The organic matter - they always talk about organic matter in topsoil - that's only a portion of it. Most of your organic matter is underneath, from the roots. So, the more stuff you put onto the roots system, the better you are. That's your soil building." He's also recently started planting tillage radish.

Farming in southern Minnesota, Tom says his greatest challenge is weather, including heavy, wet, cold ground each spring. Cover crops allow him to spread more manure, control weed populations, and fortify his cattle.

For farmers just starting out with implementing cover crops, Tom suggests, "Start with cereal rye, plant it in the fall. And don't go the 70 pounds, go the 40 pounds, unless you're gonna harvest it. Get a feel for what you're doing, and then you can always go from there."



View Tom's interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beKla2Y-T-E>

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