

Jane Dow

I am impressed that you emphasize using cover crops, no till, diversification, rotational grazing to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous run off in section xxiv (water shed based strategies). I hope you are giving incentives to farmers to make the transition from conventional farming practices to organic using compost instead of chemical fertilizers and natural pesticides like Neem oil instead of chemical fertilizers. Educating farmers on the fact that they save money by having less costs for inputs and a higher yield from doing organic farming should be done. You could harness the talents of Gabe Brown who is a persuasive model for success. Please make livestock farmers practice rotational grazing to restore the soil to health and decrease contamination of air and water. Don't allow manure pools anymore which means limit the number of animals and no confined operations. Thank you.

You rightly note the great environmental benefits for climate change in practicing organic farming. In Minnesota, growing cover crops on half of corn and soybean acres could reduce GHG emissions by 2.9 million tons each year, equal to 611,000 cars taken off the road; reduce nitrogen loss by 20%, erosion by 35%, increase profit 20%.

Reduced tilling and less chemical inputs could store about 4 million metric tons of carbon reducing GHG emissions by 5 to 10%.

Rotational grazing stores ♦ to 3 tons of carbon per acre.

All in all the benefits to our environment and health from using organic farming practices far outweigh the harm caused by conventional farming and are the only path forward if we are to save our planet. That's why strong incentives are needed to encourage farmers to take the risk like monetary incentives and lots of coaching and assistance to them in how to make a successful transition. I hope you allocate funding for that. Thanks.