



# Grass Roots for Conservation



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www.elkcoswcd.org

## Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District

59358 County Road 7, Elkhart, IN 46517 ~ Phone: (574) 523-2030 – jhess@elkhartcounty.com



Elkhart County  
SWCD  
and  
local vendors  
at Elkhart County  
4-H Fairgrounds

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022 • 10 am-4 pm**

**\$10 registration please call 574-523-2030**

*Featuring:*

### **Max Armstrong & Michelle Miller**

**Ag Broadcaster**

**The Farm Babe**

**Max Armstrong** is one of the most highly-regarded and widely-followed agriculture journalists in America. For more than 40 years his broadcasts have been viewed and heard by millions of farmers, ranchers and consumers across the country.

The recipient of numerous honors from trade associations and farm organizations, Max has originated broadcasts from every state in America and from more than 30 different nations.

An honored alum of Purdue University, Max is a native of Indiana, having grown up on a grain and livestock farm in the southern part of the state.

With long-time partner Orion Samuelson, Max is host of *This Week In AgriBusiness* on television, as well as *Farm Progress America* and *Max Armstrong's Midwest Digest* on radio. He also continues as a weekend voice on Chicago radio powerhouse WGN, where he has been heard on agriculture broadcasts every week since 1977.

Max is also a past president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting.



**Michelle Miller**, better known as the Farm Babe, is an internationally recognized speaker; published writer and columnist, and an online influencer as a full time advocate for agriculture.

She started her social media outreach over seven years ago as a way to better bridge the gap between farmers and consumers, making a name for herself as a dedicated "mythbuster" in food and farming.

Farm Babe has over 205,000 followers; an average social media reach of 2-3 million monthly, been featured in *Forbes*, a guest on *Dr. Drew*, has influenced corporations such as *Burger King*, and has proudly spoken alongside some of the biggest names in food and farming today.



## ***Capture the Credits Panelists***

### **Bruce Kettler** ***Director of ISDA***

Bruce Kettler is the Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, appointed by Governor Eric Holcomb on January 8, 2018, as well as the Director of Agribusiness Development for the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. He joins the department with over 30 years of agricultural leadership experience and knowledge that spans from production agriculture and sales, to community and industry relations.

He began his professional career in 1987 at Dow AgroSciences where he spent 17 years working in a variety of roles. In 2006, he joined Beck's Hybrids as a Sales Consultant and worked his way up to Area Team Leader, Field Sales Manager and then Director of Public Relations, the position he held prior to joining ISDA. Furthermore, he is a member of the AgriNovus Indiana board of directors. Recently, Bruce was appointed to serve on the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Board of Directors as second vice president.

At ISDA, his main priorities include agricultural advocacy, economic development, youth development and environmental stewardship.



### **Betsy Bower** ***Ceres Solutions Agronomist***

For more than 25 years, Betsy Bower has been a trusted agronomic voice in the Indiana agriculture community. Betsy works as a professional certified crop advisor for Ceres Solutions Cooperative, a large retailer operating more than 35 agronomy service locations across Indiana and into Michigan. Betsy's areas of expertise include working with no-till and conventional customers on improving their cropping system regarding nutrient, pest and irrigation management and cover crops. Her nutrient management and irrigation programs utilize soil moisture probes and tissue analysis to help her guide customers on irrigation and fertigation decisions. Betsy brings a degree in Agronomy from Purdue University and a master's degree in Agronomy from the University of Nebraska. For nearly 15 years she has been instrumental in developing success strategies for farmers in the areas of resource management and conservation agronomy.



### **Matt Meersman** ***Director of SJRBC***

Matt Meersman developed a strong connection to the water growing up near the St. Joseph River and spending summer weekends at his family's lake cottage in southern Michigan. He now lives along the river in downtown South Bend, IN and works as the Director of the St. Joseph River Basin Commission. He also serves as the President of the Friends of the St. Joe River Association. His passion for protecting the water comes from a love of being on and in it. When he is not working on watershed projects, you will likely find him paddling canoes and kayaks on lakes and rivers in southwest Michigan and northern Indiana.



### **Todd Feenstra** ***President of Midwest Water Stewards***

Todd Feenstra has nearly 25 years of experience in developing, managing, and protecting high-capacity groundwater supplies in Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. He founded the hydrogeologic consulting firm Tritium, Inc. in 2004 with municipal, industrial, developer, and agricultural clients. He has been working with a group of farmers across all of Michigan and Northern Indiana since 2009 to monitor and model groundwater-surface interactions and the environmental impact of irrigation wells. He has testified to both the Indiana and Michigan Congress and helped craft new Michigan groundwater law in 2018. He also serves as director of Midwest Water Stewards, which currently operates over 150 active monitoring wells and stream gages across Michigan and Indiana with more than 8 years of continuous water level records.



## ***Meeting Agenda***

A meeting and tradeshow on decision making in conservation management

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022 • 10 am-4 pm**

**ECCC, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds • Goshen, IN**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 9:00-10:00 am     | Registration  |
| 10:00-11:00 am    | <b><i>Finding Our Roots</i></b><br>Michelle Miller “Farm Babe”  |
| 11:00-11:15 am    | Break   |
| 11:15 am-12:00 pm | <b><i>Share the Story</i></b><br>Michelle Miller  |
| 12:00-1:00 pm     | Lunch with Max and Michelle   |
| 1:00 - 1:30 pm    | <b><i>The Restoration Project</i></b><br>Facilitator: Max Armstrong<br>Panelists: Bruce Kettler (Director ISDA)<br>Gene Schmidt (LaPorte Co. SWCD Supervisor)                     |
| 1:30-2:15 pm      | <b><i>Dollars and Sense</i></b><br>Facilitator: Max Armstrong<br>Panelists: Betsy Bower (Ceres Solutions Agronomist)<br>Todd Feenstra (Midwest Water Steward)                     |
| 2:15-2:30 pm      | Break   |
| 2:30-3:00 pm      | <b><i>Then, Now, and Always</i></b><br>Facilitator: Max Armstrong<br>Panelists: Matt Meersman (Director SJRBC)<br>Tom Coomes (Chief Meteorologist ABC 57)                         |
| 3:00-3:15 pm      | Break   |
| 3:15-4:00 pm      | <b><i>Creating Our Conservation Economy</i></b><br>Facilitator: Max Armstrong<br>Panelists: Gene Schmidt, Betsy Bower, Todd Feenstra,<br>Matt Meersman, Michelle Miller, Jim Hess |



ELKHART COUNTY  
**SOIL & WATER**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**Our website has  
had a makeover!**

Check out the new look at  
**www.elkcoswcd.org,**  
and while you are there make  
sure you can sign up for our  
**Conservation Connections  
e-newsletter**  
to get our latest updates.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 21 **SWCD Board Meeting:** 5:30 PM,  
SWCD Office, 59358 County Road 7, Elkhart, IN
- March 4 **2022 Tree Sale DEADLINE:** Don't forget **today** will be the  
last day to place an order, you better hurry before it is too  
late!!! Remember you can call into the office and pay with  
a debit/credit card at (574) 523-2030 and talk to Lora.
- March 15 **80th SWCD Annual Meeting: Save the Date** ~ 6:30 PM  
in the ECCC Building/Martin Room at the Elkhart County 4-H  
Fairgrounds, Goshen. To register call the office (574) 523-2030,  
or you can email Lora at: [latkins@elkhartcounty.com](mailto:latkins@elkhartcounty.com)
- March 16 **"Capture the Credits" Workshop:**  
Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds in the ECCC Bldg, the cost  
is \$10/per person registration is required, you can call into  
the office at (574) 523-2030 to pay by credit/debit card, or  
stop by the office, or you can pay at the door.
- March 21 **SWCD Board Meeting:** 5:30 PM,  
SWCD Office, 59358 County Road 7, Elkhart, IN
- March 26 **2022 SWCD/Michiana Master Gardener's  
Tree Sale Pick-up:** Elkhart County Fairgrounds  
in the Sheep/Swine Arena from 9 am – 1 pm.  
Make sure you bring your Confirmation sheet  
with you when you come to pick up your order.
- April 15 **Good Friday Holiday:**  
Our office will be **CLOSED** for the Good Friday Holiday.



## Keeling Simmental

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## SWCD - NRCS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

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### Board of Supervisors:

Tom Kercher, Chairman Alex Wait, Vice Chairman  
Dale Leer Dean Rink Darrell Shover

### Associate Supervisors:

David Bontrager Joe Brown  
Brian Campbell Gary Kauffman Keith E. Miller

### SWCD Staff:

James Hess, District Manager Todd Clark, Conservationist  
Lora L. Atkins, Secretary/Treasurer Jenna Wait, Conservationist

### NRCS Staff:

Wes Krug, District Conservationist

All programs and services of the Conservation Partnership and the Soil and Water Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.