

2016 COOPERATORS OF THE YEAR MARK AND JANIE WORTHINGTON

The partnership between Mark and Janie Worthington began as sweethearts at Miami East High School and as they traveled life together, they have, in multiple ways, created and maintained special aspects of life. Aside from arguably the most valuable, the raising of their two sons Matthew and Dustin, there is another aspect of their lives that was of particular value to the Miami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and the reason why Mark and Janie Worthington have been named 2016 Cooperators of the Year.



Seen as good stewards and good examples of operators who've taken advantage of and utilized programs and practices promoted by the District and their partners, Mark and Janie have built an operation that includes almost 1200 acres in three counties; Miami, Shelby and Champaign. While they reside in Brown Township at 10175 N. St. Rt. 589 outside Fletcher, they've established a well-run operation that includes a soybeans/corn rotation with wheat recently added. The rotation uses 100% strip till. They've even dabbled in double cropping of wheat into beans. In addition to the three relatively recent grassed waterways, they've been part of CRP and CP-33.

On the property Mark's called home for pretty much his whole life, you'll see established practices like a very healthy windbreak put in shortly after the blizzard of '78. But its history doesn't begin there. Descendants of the Anderson family from way back in the late 1830-40s, Mark recounted that the property was originally around 80 acres. Over the years, acreage has been added, and elements aiding the operation have 'popped' up; grain bins, useful sheds and a very nice shop that houses a good number of high quality and extremely clean implements and equipment in a variety of colors. Outside, grain trucks and augers stand ready right next to very well kept outbuildings and an old farm house that has seen more than one renovation in its lifetime. Little evidence remained that they'd raised hogs until 1998. Also, and much like a lot of other farm families, Mark's dad lives just across the road, on property just as rich in history and just as well kept.

Traveling out to the acreage, we took a look at a waterway currently assisting a bean field and very long and nicely filled in field border on another part of the acreage. We also took a moment to have a little conversation with an old but very noble horse named Joe, who's been a fixture on the property for decades.

Mark and Janie just celebrated 35 years together. Their son Matthew and his wife and son live in Columbus and are awaiting the birth of a second child. Another son, Dustin lives in Bradford.

Mark and Janie will be guests of honor at the 2016 Annual All Ag Banquet on August 25th at the Miami East High School. For their efforts and accomplishments, they'll receive a sign to post outside their home, a plaque for inside the home and jackets to thank them for what they've done. They make being a good example look easy.