Thelen Farms Conservation in Action

Thelen Farms beginning in 1981

North of St. Johns in northern Clinton County

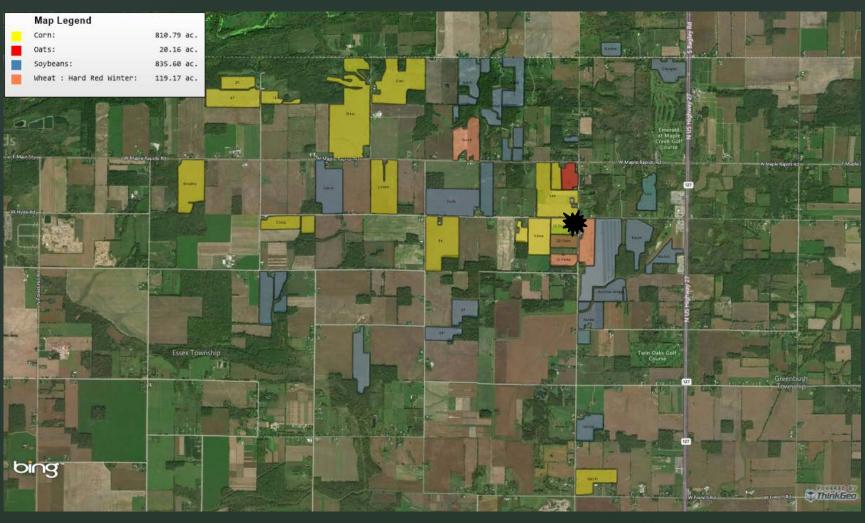
1800 acres

- 500 owned
- 1300 rented

120 Holstien Steers



Fields all within 4 miles of home farm



Soils around home farm

- over 30% sandy soils



- 39% Conover loam, 0-4%
- 18.5% Capac-Marlette loams, 1-6%
- 14.4% Metamora-Capac sandy loam, 0-4%
- 7.5% Oakville fine sand, 0-6%
- 8.8% Corunna sandy loam, Metea loamy sand, Selfridge loamy sand

Farms near the Maple River

- some pretty impressive slopes!
- 25% Filer loam, 6-12%
- 24% Marlette loam, 2-6%
- 15% Conover loam, 0-4%
- 9% Filer loam, 12 18%
- 9% Metea loam sand, 2-6%



Conservation over the years...

- Challenges
 - Money
 - Horse Power
 - Sandy soils
 - Slopes, some over 12%

Approach

- Purchased 1st no-till planter in 1986
- Manure and cover crops on sandy ground
- Continue with reduced tillage today



Building equipment to meet the need





Minimal passes, minimal horse power

Corn planter



Soybean planter



Adapting to changing conditions



Covers that are affordable and winter kill

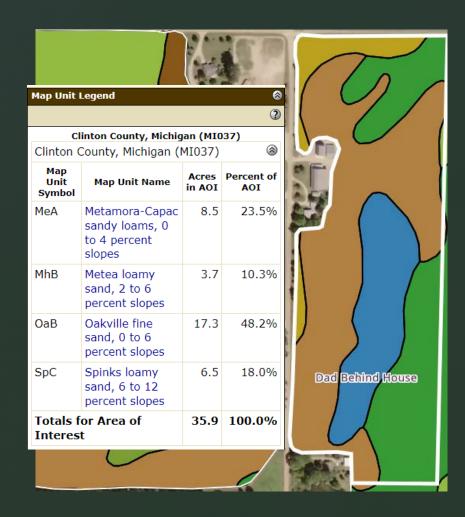
Corn and oats



Oats and radish



Sandy field on the home farm



- Management practices
 - Reduced tillage
 - Pen pack manure
 - Cover crops
- Maintain Organic Matter
 - 2012 2.16
 - 2022 2.14

Our goals

- Preserve/build soil carbon
- Improve water holding capacity
- Improve water infiltration
- Minimize erosion
- Make NO tracks

