

Water Quality Efforts in the WLEB from a Farm

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What a difference a year makes

- ▶ Crop year 2019
 - ▶ Over 1.5 million acres unplanted. Much of which was in WLEB
 - ▶ Less nutrients were applied
 - ▶ Weed suppression became an issue, more tillage was used
- ▶ Crop Year 2020
 - ▶ Most typical growing season in recent years
 - ▶ Smaller bloom forecast indicates the complexity of the issue
 - ▶ Again more tillage
 - ▶ Catch up applications of nutrients??



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H2Ohio/OACI Participation

- ▶ Meetings with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Agriculture Conservation initiative yielded record attendance.
 - ▶ People new to conservation efforts
- ▶ More than 2,000 farmers signed up in the initial enrollment period
- ▶ Sign-up covered more than 43% of cropland in the watershed
- ▶ Why successful? Diversity of groups promoting and practices that can be embraced by all types of farming operations.
- ▶ Some farmers continued practices, even in the uncertainty of funding
- ▶ Farmers are coming back in to sign up for Crop Year 2021 practices
- ▶ Efforts will focus on Nutrient Management Planning
 - ▶ Payments will be made upon completion of NMP and practice
- ▶ Farmers are interested in participating in programs that can confidentially aggregate data



What are farmers thinking?

- ▶ Farmers are thankful for a better planting season, but we could use rain
- ▶ Awareness and interest of conservation practices is very high
- ▶ Conservation is becoming more of the conversation among farmers
- ▶ Financial assistance is needed for practices that require a significant capital investment
- ▶ Economic stress on farms continues to increase.

