

2015 Conservation Farmer of the Year Mike and Ina Bazley



Mike and Ina Bazley have been familiar faces at area farmers markets for more than 22 years, but the products for sale on their table have never stayed the same.

“We’ve always kept it fresh and interesting, and raised just about everything you can raise, from honey to hogs,” Mike said, “and we’ve really enjoyed it.”

Through all the decades and all the creative agricultural ways they have used their 53 acres in Derry Township, the Bazleys have been good conservation stewards. They have installed measures to reduce erosion, encourage pollinators, limit sediment pollution, and improve pastures.

The conservation measures they installed have benefited their agribusiness – two high tunnel structures extend their growing season and produce highly desirable crops, including lush, uniform heirloom tomatoes and no-spray raspberries that store as long as seven days.

The Bazleys’ conservation measures also benefit the community. The three stabilized stream crossings and the pollinator-plant-rich

buffers they created on both sides of the stream that flows through their farm, for instance, help to improve water quality in McGee Run, a stream and watershed that is the current focus of a major conservation effort.

In the early days of their farming the Bazleys focused their efforts solely on vegetable production, raising non-typical for-market crops that Mike had identified in his studies the previous winter as being in-demand – yellow watermelon, Pattypan squash and the then-rare but now everywhere kale.

Today, Mike and Ina continue to raise vegetables (look for microgreens and baby vegetables at next year’s farmers market), but the Bazleys’ emphasis is more on animals, including cattle, sheep, and Mike’s number one agricultural passion, poultry.



Today, the Bazleys raise chickens as well as grass-fed Texas Longhorn cattle and lambs. They use two separate rotational grazing systems with a total of seven paddocks.

They installed a spring development and a watering system for the animals and an animal walkway system to protect steep areas of their farm from erosion.

“We’ve learned from and worked with Mother Nature and Father Time over the years, and gotten a lot of help from the conservation folks,” Mike said.

**Westmoreland
Conservation
District**

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