

Jerry Clark Named 2025 Wisconsin Certified Crop Adviser of the Year

Jerry Clark, Regional Crops and Soils Educator with the University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, has been named the 2025 Wisconsin Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) of the Year in recognition of his decades of service providing trusted, research-based agronomic guidance to Wisconsin farmers.

Clark has built a reputation as a highly credible and dependable CCA, known for delivering timely, practical information that helps producers make sound economic and environmental decisions. His work has directly influenced crop management, nutrient efficiency, conservation practices, and profitability on farms across Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties, with impacts extending statewide and beyond.

Clark joined UW Extension in 1998 after farming dairy in Chippewa County and earned his Certified Crop Adviser credential in 2002. He holds both a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Agricultural Education from the University of Wisconsin–River Falls. While he is widely respected for his expertise, Clark is equally known for his humility and commitment to meeting farmers where they are.

Throughout his career, Clark has worked closely with farmers to bring university research directly onto working farms. Producers credit his applied research and local trials with helping them reduce input costs, refine nutrient management decisions, and evaluate new cropping opportunities. His nitrogen management research, including work with the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP) and other multi-farm trials, has enabled farmers to confidently reduce nitrogen application rates—often without sacrificing yield—leading to improved profitability and reduced environmental risk.

Clark is also recognized as a leader in alternative and emerging crops, helping Wisconsin farmers assess opportunities such as malting barley, winter barley, hemp, sorghum, and fruit crops. Through on-farm plots, field days, and economic analysis, he has provided unbiased, locally relevant information that helps farmers weigh risks and benefits before making major production decisions. Farmers consistently cite Clark’s work as saving them time, money, and unnecessary risk.

In the area of nutrient and manure management, Clark has had statewide impact. He leads annual training programs for custom manure haulers and nutrient applicators, helping improve safety, decision-making, and environmental stewardship. These efforts have contributed to significantly reduced insurance rates for participating companies and now reach more than 270 for-hire manure application businesses managing billions of gallons of manure annually. Clark also plays a key role in organizing the North American Manure Expo, bringing high-quality education and demonstrations to Wisconsin and other states.

Clark’s commitment to soil and water conservation is evident through his long-standing support of farmer-led watershed groups. As a technical advisor, he helps producers design and implement research projects focused on cover crops, interseeding, tillage systems, soil health, and water quality. His guidance ensures that data collected is scientifically valid and useful far beyond the local level, empowering farmers to turn ideas into action.

Education and outreach are central to Clark’s work.

“Jerry Clark exemplifies the mission of the Certified Crop Adviser program,” said George Polzin, a local dairy farmer. “His applied research, accessibility, and deep understanding of local soils and farming systems make him an invaluable resource to Wisconsin farmers.”

Clark is known as a lifelong learner who continually seeks answers through research and takes the time to explain complex information in practical, usable terms. His dedication to agronomy, soils, nutrient management, conservation, and farmer education continues to serve as a model for CCAs across Wisconsin.

