



Ann Fischer

NRCS District Conservationist in Baker, MT and Rancher in Rhame, ND

Ann Fischer has served as District Conservationist in Baker, MT for 25 years. She and her husband Chip own and operate his family's farm south of Rhame, ND where they raise a commercial herd of Red Angus and four children (to be fair-they are mostly "raised," the youngest son in college).

The Fischer's run 250 pair on 3,000 acres and have been using grazing rotations, cover crops, and bale grazing to improve soil health—and thus increase productivity – on their land while reducing their inputs. They've moved their calving date to the end of April to reduce winter feed costs and reduce stress on the livestock during calving. Eight years ago, they sold their haying equipment in order to expand their grazing acres. They are now able to spend less time running to the equipment store for parts! Their focus on soil health has improved their operation and overall quality of life.

Soil health has been a huge part of Ann's life at home and in her career for the last 15 years. Her work with soil health has resulted in a network of mentors, friends, colleagues and practitioners who have helped guide her journey. Focusing on a systems-approach to farming and ranching, she has seen many operations improve their net profit and begin to regenerate their landscapes. Seeing a newfound enthusiasm from the older generations and more youth coming back to agriculture with ideas and inspiration have been the most rewarding parts of her career.