

Healthy Farm Index:

-Developing a Healthy Farm Index

How can agricultural landscapes be structured and managed to maintain sustainable production while preserving native biodiversity? With the Healthy Farm Index, we plan to provide a tool for landowners to measure their farm's ecological health, retain social and economic capital, and maintain or improve crop productivity. An index of farm health would be a valuable tool to policy makers, farmers, and citizens.

Developing a healthy farm index requires relevant indicators that can be quantified and communicated.

- Status and Future Objectives

In 2007, we started collection of ecological data for the Healthy Farm Index. This summer initial bird, vegetation, and invertebrate surveys were conducted on twenty organic farms across Nebraska. In these surveys, over 100 bird species were located on the farms, with invertebrate and vegetation information waiting to be analyzed. After a great first season, we are looking forward to the summer of 2008 and are seeking five to eight new farms for the upcoming summer.

Over the next two years, we will return to each farm, collecting further ecological data. In addition we are seeking to understand and measure the economic and social variables that encompass a healthy farm. Through interviews, surveys, and research we are intend to develop an index of farm health with a framework to add additional components.

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Photos by Bill Schmoker, Liz Sarno, & John Quinn

Healthy Farm Index

2007 Bird List

Ecological measure #1



Compiled by
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In collaboration with
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
OCIA R&D
NSAS

	Spring Migration	Summer	Fall Migration	Winter
Mallard		X		
Blue-winged Teal		X		
Northern Shoveler		X		
Northern Pintail		X		
Green-winged Teal		X		
Wild Turkey		X		
Northern Bobwhite		X		
Great Blue Heron		X		
Green Heron		X		
White-faced Ibis		X		
Turkey Vulture		X		
Cooper's Hawk		X		
Swainson's Hawk		X		
Red-tailed Hawk		X		
Ferruginous Hawk		X		
Killdeer		X		
American Avocet		X		
Lesser Yellowlegs		X		
Willet		X		
Upland Sandpiper		X		
Long-billed Curlew		X		
Rock Pigeon		X		
Mourning Dove		X		
Black-billed Cuckoo		X		
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		X		
Great Horned Owl		X		
Burrowing Owl		X		
Common Nighthawk		X		
Chimney Swift		X		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird		X		
Belted Kingfisher		X		

Red-headed Woodpecker		X		
Red-bellied Woodpecker		X		
Downy Woodpecker		X		
Hairy Woodpecker		X		
Northern Flicker		X		
Eastern Wood-Pewee		X		
Willow Flycatcher		X		
Eastern Phoebe		X		
Great Crested Flycatcher		X		
Western Kingbird		X		
Eastern Kingbird		X		
Loggerhead Shrike		X		
Bell's Vireo		X		
Warbling Vireo		X		
Red-eyed Vireo		X		
Blue Jay		X		
American Crow		X		
Horned Lark		X		
Purple Martin		X		
Tree Swallow		X		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow		X		
Cliff Swallow		X		
Barn Swallow		X		
Black-capped Chickadee		X		
White-breasted Nuthatch		X		
House Wren		X		
Sedge Wren		X		
Marsh Wren		X		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		X		
Eastern Bluebird		X		
Wood Thrush		X		
American Robin		X		
Gray Catbird		X		
Northern Mockingbird		X		
Brown Thrasher		X		

European Starling		X		
Orange-crowned Warbler		X		
Yellow Warbler		X		
Yellow-rumped Warbler		X		
American Redstart		X		
Common Yellowthroat		X		
Spotted Towhee		X		
Eastern Towhee		X		
Chipping Sparrow		X		
Field Sparrow		X		
Vesper Sparrow		X		
Lark Sparrow		X		
Lark Bunting		X		
Savannah Sparrow		X		
Grasshopper Sparrow		X		
Song Sparrow		X		
Swamp Sparrow		X		
Harris's Sparrow	X			
Northern Cardinal		X		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		X		
Blue Grosbeak		X		
Indigo Bunting		X		
Dickcissel		X		
Bobolink		X		
Red-winged Blackbird		X		
Eastern Meadowlark		X		
Western Meadowlark		X		
Yellow-headed Blackbird		X		
Common Grackle		X		
Brown-headed Cowbird		X		
Orchard Oriole		X		
Baltimore Oriole		X		
House Finch		X		
American Goldfinch		X		
House Sparrow		X		