Jeff Polenske, of Tilth Agronomy Group, has been named the 2014 Wisconsin CCA of the Year. Polenske was nominated by his staff and has more than 26 years of crop advising experience.

Polenske advises 56 dairy and cash grain producers on 50,000 acres of soybean, corn, alfalfa, wheat, specialty forages, and cover crops, providing a complete foundation of seed, fertilizer, and pesticide recommendations. He is a registered Technical Service Provider with NRCS and writes nutrient management plans, pest management plans, and comprehensive nutrient management plans and is one of the few privately registered certified conservation planners in Wisconsin.

Polenske understands the need for profitability but strives for environmental stewardship by assisting clients with local, state, and national conservation requirements that protect ground and surface water and reduce soil erosion. His recommendations are also designed to build soil organic matter and promote soil health and tilth. Polenske understands the need to stay current with agricultural technology while recognizing the need for proper caution, making sure new trends provide value to his clients.

He also understands the value of research and has written several articles and technical reports with the Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants (WAPAC) and University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension service with on-farm projects.

Polenske is a leader the agricultural community. He is an active member of WAPAC and has served as executive council and as president. He is also active with the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, serving on the Precision Agriculture Committee and as Co-Chair of the Educational Outreach Committee. He has served on the Midwest IPM Regional Committee and is currently the Co-Chair of the University of Wisconsin’s Nutrient and Pest Management Program and the Integrated Pest Management Program. Polenske has participated in Wisconsin’s Nutrient Management 590 and manure management practices for concentrated animal feeding operations (NR243). Locally, he served as past president of the Outagamie County Forage Council and also participates in the annual land day as an instructor and speaking contestant. He frequently speaks at local “Breakfast on the Farm” events and has volunteered for the 2012 Outagamie Technology Days.

Maybe Polenske’s biggest attribute is his teaching. He has served as a mentor to staff members, student interns, and of course to producers using teaching methods that include practical field knowledge and hands-on application. He has also written several articles and technical reports with the Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants (WAPAC) and University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension service with on-farm projects.