

Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District



Summer 2013 Summer 2013



Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
10165 Oxford Pike
Brookville, IN 47012
(765) 647-2651, ext. 3

www.franklincountyswcd.org

**Due to the nature of our work there will be times the office must be closed. Please call ahead before visiting.*

District Supervisors:

Michael Schwab – Chairman
David Hartman – Vice-Chairman
Louis Schwegman – Secretary
John Selm - Supervisor
Darin Hodapp – Supervisor

Associate Supervisors:

Roger Bommer
Clinton McNally
Eugene Meyer

Conservation Staff:

Clint Harrison – NRCs
Chris Fox – SWCD



The SWCD Board of Supervisors meets on the third Wednesday of each month starting at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

July 23* **Aug 21** **Sept 18**

Hoosier Harvest Market: Food Hub

If you would like to sell produce or buy Indiana-grown food products online visit hoosierharvestmarket.com website or call Michael Morrow at (317) 800-0312 for more information.

Food for thought

Experts estimate that the world's population will grow from seven billion today, to more than nine billion by the year 2050. In order to clothe and feed a growing population, farmers will need to produce as much food and fiber over the next 40 years as they have produced in the past 500 years. Farmers are working to find innovative solutions that can meet the growing demand using sustainable practices that protect the soil and environment.

However, the reality is that many people around the world are struggling with hunger right now. Approximately, one out of six Americans experience food insecurity today. This need not be the case as there is a more than adequate food supply available. According to the USDA, we throw away a pound of food per person per day in this country, or well over 100 billion pounds of food per year. Now think of all the labor, land, water, fertilizer, fuel and other inputs that went into producing that food. Production of wasted food pulls resources away from uses that may be more beneficial to society. Now think how easy it would be to reduce the food waste in your daily life. Perhaps you could even consider donating

food or excess garden produce to one of our local food pantries. We can all make a difference and become a part of the solution to the growing global food demand. Below are local food pantries that are in need of supplies and fresh garden produce.

SIEOC Food Pantry Wed. 9-12pm
Brookville (765) 647-5967

Batesville Food Pantry Wed 12-4pm
Batesville (812) 932-2622



GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAPs) Training:

The Franklin County Extension office is conducting training on three Wednesday evenings, **July 10, 17, and 24th from 6:30 – 9:00 pm**. For growers interested in receiving a certificate of attendance, they will need to attend all three trainings in person. The Wednesday evening sessions will be offered in the Extension Office Conference Room of the Franklin County Government Center. Contact Anna Morrow at 765-647-3511 or annamorrow@purdue.edu.

PURDUE | **LOCAL FACES**
EXTENSION | COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS

CONSERVE INDIANA:

Farmers help America keep soil healthy

Submitted by Clint Harrison, District Conservationist

Our lives are dependent on healthy soil. While most people think of soil as just dirt, its functions are crucial to our very existence. Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife and beautiful landscapes. It's the reason why USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service experts are in your community and across the nation.

Healthy soil contains nutrients necessary for supporting plants and animals. And just as plants and animals depend on soil, the soil microbes depend on them, too. Soil is composed of air, water, organic matter and minerals. A community of organisms – functioning as a soil food web – lives all or parts of their lives in soil. More individual organisms are in a teaspoon of soil than there are people on earth.

Increasing soil organic matter typically improves soil health, since organic matter improves several critical functions of soil. To improve the health of their soil, more and more farmers and ranchers are keeping soil covered, reducing disturbance activities such as tilling, keeping plants growing throughout the year, and diversifying the crops they're planting in a rotation. Taking these steps allow farmers and ranchers to help reduce erosion while increasing the soil's ability to provide nutrients and water to the plant at critical times during the growing season.

When producers focus on improving soil health, they often have larger harvests, lower input costs, optimized nutrient use, and improved crop resilience during drought years like last year. In heavy rainfall years, healthy soil holds more water, reducing runoff that helps avert flooding downstream. And because healthy soil allows for greater water infiltration and less erosion, nutrients and pesticides stay on the farm where they benefit crops, and are far less likely to be carried off the farm into streams and lakes where they can cause harm.

In addition, demographers tell us there will be 9 billion people on this planet by the year 2050. Farmers will need to produce as much food in the next 40 years as they have in the last 500. To do this, we need cropping systems that are sustainable and include conservation measures.

If soil is not cared for, fertile land may become worn out leading to less food and higher prices. It's important to remember the Dust Bowl era of the 1930s and the lessons of not taking care of soil. This ecological disaster, compounded by drought, led to windstorms and massive soil erosion for nearly a decade on our Great Plains as farms were rendered infertile. The NRCS was born out of the Dust Bowl and continues to work with farmers to install conservation practices such as cover crops to maintain and improve soil health – all of which can lead to productive, profitable and sustainable farming and ranching operations for generations to come.

To learn more about soil conservation, and how you can get help on your land, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov or your local USDA/NRCS/SWCD service center.

Ag-Day 2013



Tuesday, April 9, 2013

This year, over 400 students took part in the program held at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Third grade students were introduced to various farm animals and the roles they play in agriculture. The fourth grade students learned about natural resources conservation and farm safety. Thanks to all the sponsors and volunteers that make this event possible!

Arbor Day Tree Give-away 2013



Our 2nd Annual Arbor Day Tree Giveaway and Food drive was a big success. We handed out 650 trees and collected over 270 cans of food and \$85 in cash donations for the SIEOC food pantry. Thanks to all that helped with this great event.



Funding for Cover Crops:

Cover crops are not only important for reducing erosion but also for improving soil health. The Franklin County SWCD promotes the use of cover crops and will again be offering a cost-share program for cover crop seed. Funding is limited and will be on a first come basis. For more information or to sign-up contact the office or visit our booth at the Franklin Co. 4-H fair.

2013 River Friendly Farmer

David Hartman was recently selected as a 2013 River Friendly Farmer by the Indiana Assoc. of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. He will be presented with the award at the Indiana State Fair on Aug 14 at 1pm. *Congratulations to the Hartman's!*

“Bee Kind to Pollinators”



Why ‘bee’ concerned about pollinators? ‘Bee’cause, they are the little things that run the world. More than 80% of the world’s flowering plants require a pollinator to reproduce, equating *to one of every three bites of food we eat*. Unfortunately, most pollinator species have been experiencing falling populations. Many of us have heard about the significant decline in honeybee populations. The die-off is blamed on colony collapse disorder, in which all the adult honeybees in a colony suddenly die. The disorder has destroyed honeybee colonies at a rate of about 30% per year since it was discovered in 2006. However, the severe decline in native bees & other pollinators could be an equally alarming threat to crop yields according to a recent worldwide study. Scientists studied more than 40 crops in fields across every continent and found wild pollinators were twice as effective as honeybees in producing seed and fruit on crops, such as; onions, almonds, coffee, strawberries, tomatoes etc. Wild pollinators deploy a wider range of pollination techniques, such as “buzz” pollination. They also

tend to visit more plants, meaning better cross-pollination. Bringing in managed honeybee hives did not replace wild pollination when that was lost, but only added to the pollination that did take place. Scientists attribute a number of factors to the pollinators’ peril, including habitat loss, disease, parasites and environmental contaminants. The studies find that biodiversity (both in terms of pollinator species and habitat) has a direct impact on food production. Integrated Crop Pollination (ICP) is a concept that combines the use of managed pollinators (such as honeybees and mason bees) with the restoration of habitat for wild pollinators, and the adoption of bee-friendly farm practices. Agencies and conservation partners across the country are working on science-based solutions to support pollinators. With a growing world population and concerns for global food security, protecting our pollinators is critical. You can do your part by providing pollinator habitat, reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides containing neonicotinoids and spreading the word about the importance of protecting our pollinators. So remember, the next time you enjoy a fresh tomato or a slice of apple pie or even a piece of chocolate, take a moment to thank the pollinator that made it possible. For more info visit:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/pollinators

www.xerces.org/



Dates to Remember



July 15-21: Franklin County 4-H Fair week. See you there!

July 23: **SWCD monthly meeting at 7:30pm.** *Change of date due to the 4-H fair.*

July 25: Hay & forage field day

August 2-18: Indiana State Fair



August 21: **SWCD monthly meeting at 7:30pm.**

September 2: **Labor Day.** Observed holiday. **Office closed.**

September 4: Outdoor business workshop for landowners.

September 18: **SWCD monthly meeting at 7:30pm.**



Upcoming Local County Fairs:

Decatur Co. July 11-18th

Franklin Co. July 15-21st

Ripley Co. July 20-27th

Union Co. July 20-26th

Fayette Co. July 27-Aug 3rd

State Fair Aug 2-18th

2013 Pesticide Clean Sweep Project

If you have unwanted pesticides that you need to dispose of call the State Chemists office at 765-494-4331 for dates and locations near you.

No-till Drill Rental



A 7' and 10' Great Plains No-till drills are available to rent at \$10 per acre.

Call (765) 647-2651 ext. 3



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Wenning Farms, Inc
Roger Wenning
Cover Crop Specialist
812-593-1148
rwenning@etczone.com

Bounty Ryegrass - Crimson Clover
Oilseed Radish - Cereal Rye
Other Cover Crop Seed

Call Roger to order your cover crop seed!



Greensburg, IN

Grassed Waterways (NRCS Certified) - Septic
Farm Drainage - Grass Seeding - Ponds

Roger: 812-593-1148

Kevin: 812-528-6512

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