



Spring 2016

**WILSON COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION**

Newsletter

Farmers Appreciation Dinner



The Farmers Appreciation Dinner was held January 21, 2016 at the Wilson Agriculture Center. This is an annual event to give thanks to all of our farmers and their families in the community for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.



The dinner began with a welcome by Mr. Billy Little of the Wilson County Cooperative Extension Service followed by Miss Nora Stinagle with special music and the invocation by Mr. Dwight Batts of the Wilson County Soil & Water board of supervisors. Mr.

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Rob Lipford of the NC Forest Service gave recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the NC Forest Service. Mrs. Sue Glover, Director of the Wilson County Soil & Water Office, then introduced Dr. Charles Petty, the featured speaker for the night and Mr. David McBryde of the Wilson County Farm Service Agency handed out door prizes and gave closing remarks.



*Dr. Charles Petty,
featured speaker*

There were several sponsors that contributed to show appreciation to our farmers and helped make this night possible. Some of the sponsors include Southern Bank, Lee Ford Lincoln, University of Mount Olive, BB&T, Wilson County Farm Bureau, Joyner's Funeral Home, Ag Carolina Farm Credit, Ag Resource Servicing LLC, Shingleton Funeral Home, Springhill Outfitters, and many more.



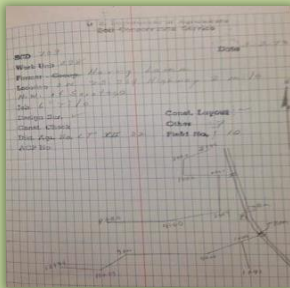
A special thanks to everyone who participated in this event and most importantly a special thanks to our farmers and their families. As a farmer you invest hard work and commitment into every acre, every crop, day in and day out. We thank you!

ARE YOU DEALING WITH SATURATED SOILS IN YOUR CROP FIELDS?

Over the winter months the Wilson County Soil and Water staff has been working in conjunction with landowners and farmers to address the problem of saturated crop fields. Installing underground tile can help lessen the severity of the saturation and can boost productivity. In many cases, we have seen that old clay tile lines already exist in many of the crop fields. Back in the 1960's and 1970's, Soil and Water Conservation offices would design and cost share on underground tile for drainage purposes. However the tile installed many years ago is now not functioning correctly due to clogged outlets.



Staff member, Ricky Hayes, digging for old drain tile.



Above is a log book of 1961 drainage tile design installed in Wilson County.

Wilson County Soil and Water staff pulled many of the tile log books and started contacting landowners and farmers on saturated crop fields to attempt to get the old drain tile lines back in working order. This has been very successful and also a big money saver for the landowners and farmers. To install new drainage tile the cost will run approximately 3 dollars per foot, so being able to utilize the existing underground drainage tile can help costs tremendously.

Common Benefits of Field Drainage Tile

- ✓ Early and timely planting
- ✓ Improved harvesting conditions
- ✓ More consistent yields
- ✓ Fewer plant diseases
- ✓ Less soil compaction
- ✓ Increased land value
- ✓ Less plant stress
- ✓ Better plant stand



Pictured to the left is staff member, Josh Pate, and farmer, Earl Sullivan, overlooking the repaired drain tile.

Area IV Spring Meeting

On February 25, 2016 the Spring Meeting for Area IV Soil and Water Conservation Districts was hosted by the Durham SWCD. The meeting was held at the Frontier Building in RTP. The counties that make up Area IV are as follows: Durham, Granville, Wake, Franklin, Wilson, Nash, Vance, Edgecombe, Halifax, Warren and Johnston.





What is the Envirothon?

The Envirothon program is a hands-on environmental and natural resource competition for middle and high school students. The program will test student teams on their knowledge and awareness of environmental issues. The Envirothon curriculum provides hands-on training in ecology and natural resource management while emphasizing teamwork. Areas of study incorporate 5 major subjects: Aquatics, Forestry, Soils/Land Use and Current Environmental Issues.

The Envirothon program helps develop environmentally aware youth, able to assume future leadership roles. Many students go on to pursue careers in environmental law, natural resource management, etc. or go on to be doctors, lawyers and more with a background and understanding about nature and the environment.

2016 Area IV Envirothon

Offering young minds a challenge!

The Area IV Envirothon serves as the qualifying event for the NC Envirothon state-level competition. Teams from the Area IV Region will compete against others from and 11 county area in order to advance on the state-level event. The 1st place high school team at the NC Envirothon will represent NC at the North American Canon Envirothon in the summer. The Area IV region includes Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Johnston, Nash, and Wilson counties.

This year the Area IV Envirothon was held Friday, March 18th at the Rose Hill Plantation in Nashville, NC with Nash County as host. Thirty middle school teams and twenty three high school teams competed representing Wilson, Johnston, Nash, Halifax, Wake, Durham and Granville counties.



Six Wilson middle school teams and one high school team have earned the right to compete at the state-level Envirothon. Middle school teams, "SAS" (Serious about Science) from Wilson 4H Environmental Science Club, The Shadows and Expecto Petroleum from Elm City Middle School, Speight and BAKE from Speight Middle School and Environmental Eagles from Wilson Preparatory Academy will compete in the state event at Cedarrock Park in Burlington, NC April 29-30. High school team EPIC from Wilson 4H Environmental Science Club will also attend the state event.



The advisors for the Area IV Envirothon were Rebecca Wise, Kathryn Thomas, Barbara Thayer, Rebecca Barry and Elizabeth Logan.

Bridgestone Americas, Inc. hosted and sponsored the local mock Envirothon that was held at the company's Freedom Wildlife Habitat on January 29th. Bridgestone is a continued Platinum sponsor of the regional Area IV Envirothon.



LET'S TALK COVER CROPS!

Cover crops have become increasingly more popular in our area. Why? Because they accomplish great things! Mr. Will Mann with the Fishing Creek SWCD in Halifax, NC had the opportunity to work with one of our farmers here in Wilson County, Mr. Tommy Shingleton. Mr. Shingleton has an operation that produces close to 500 acres of cucumbers in Stantonsburg, NC. Mr. Shingleton has been very focused on how to improve soil health and reduce inputs on his farm. Mr. Will Mann worked in conjunction with the Wilson County SWCD and Mr. Tommy Shingleton to come up with a cover crop plan that would best benefit Mr. Shingleton's land and crops.



Above is an example of 2 different types of cover crops on the Shingleton Farm.



Pictured above is farmer, Mr. Tommy Shingleton observing the growth of his cover crop.



Above is an example of a cover crop that was drilled on old beds.

COVER CROP BENEFITS

- Reduce Soil Erosion
- Build Soil Tilth & Improve Soil Health
- Increase Soil Porosity & Infiltration
- Reduce Pests
- Improve Soil Microbiology
- Produce/Scavenge Crop Nutrients
- Reduce Soil Compaction
- Increase Nutrient Recycling
- Good Forage Source
- Help Winter Annual Weed Control
- Improve Yield Potential Over Time

WHICH COVER CROP IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

NUTRIENT SCAVENGERS?

- Annual Rye Grass
- Radish
- Winter Cereal Rye
- Oats

NITROGEN PRODUCERS?

- Crimson Clover
- Hairy Vetch
- Austrian Winter Pea

NITROGEN PRODUCERS & SCAVENGERS?

- Crimson Clover/Radish
- Hairy Vetch/Annual Rye Grass
- Crimson Clover/ Radish
- Austrian Winter Pea/Radish

Environmental Field Days

Environmental Field Days were held April 19th through April 21st at Batts Tree Farm in Macclesfield, NC. Over 600 fourth graders from Wilson County came out to the farm to learn about wildlife, soil, aquatics, forestry, soil conservation, plants and animals. Stations for aquatics, soils and soil conservation were hosted by the Wilson County SWCD staff.



Pictured above is Wilson County SWCD staff member Josh Pate teaching the kids about the importance of soil & water conservation.



Pictured above is the soil & water conservation station. It demonstrates the effects of erosion on different surfaces.



Dave Little with NRCS teaches the kids about the different soil types & their characteristics.



Wilson County SWCD staff member Ricky Hayes discusses the importance of wetlands and their purpose. The kids also get to see and touch different plants, insects and animals that inhabit the wetlands.

Conservation Programs

The Wilson County SWCD is currently accepting applications for NC Agriculture Cost Share Program, Agriculture Water Resources Program, Community Conservation Assistance Program & Environmental Quality Incentive Program. These programs are voluntary cost share programs designed to assist landowners with installation of various Best Management Practices that help protect or improve water quality in our state.

AG Cost Share Tour

In March, the Wilson County SWCD held the annual cost share tour. The supervisors and office staff first met at the Ag Center for a brief board meeting. Then, a tour is included to randomly selected areas throughout the county where cost share practices have been applied.

NC Agriculture Cost Share Program

The major cause of water quality problems in North Carolina and in much of the United States is nonpoint source pollution. In many places, damage to our water resources comes from soil erosion, excessive fertilizer use, animal waste contamination, and improper use of agricultural chemicals. The North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program helps address nonpoint pollution by providing technical and financial resources. If you are a landowner or renter of an existing agricultural operation that has been operating for more than three years, you are eligible to participate in the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program.



Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)

The Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) is administered by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission through the Wilson County SWCD. The AgWRAP program is actively working towards reserving water resources in Wilson County.

The purposes of the AgWRAP are to:

- Identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, availability and storage
- Implement best management practices (BMPs) to conserve and protect water resources
- Increase water use efficiency
- Increase water storage and availability for agricultural purposes



Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)

CCAP is a voluntary, incentive-based program designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on urban, suburban and rural lands not directly involved with agriculture production.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a federal voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related natural resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. NRCS is in charge of this program. EQIP may also help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal, and local environmental regulations.



Ag Cost Share



Pictured above is a grassed waterway put in place to reduced soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution.

CCAP



Pictured above is a grassed waterway used at the Ag center to help with storm water pollution.

AgWRAP



Pictured above is sediment removal to increase water storage for irrigation.

EQIP



Pictured above is dry litter storage. This structure provides environmentally safe storage of litter and allows for proper timing of litter application to crops. It also stabilizes litter for pathogen and insect control.



Wilson County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Find us on the Web:
<http://www.wilson-co.com/157/Soil-Water>

Office Hours
Monday-Friday
7:30 am – 5:00 pm

2016 Holiday Schedule

Memorial Day	May 30
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	September 5
Thanksgiving	November 24-25
Christmas	December 23 & 26

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

May 2, 2016	5:00 pm
June 6, 2016 (tentative)	5:00 pm
September 6, 2016	5:00 pm



About the Wilson County SWCD

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The Wilson County Soil and Water Conservation District is a governmental subdivision of the State of North Carolina and organized to develop plans and programs for the protection and management of Wilson County's natural resources. The district provides assistance in erosion control, drainage, soils descriptions, aerial photos, animal waste management, and conservation planning and design.

Mission Statement

We are committed to quality leadership and customer service for the conservation of our natural resources.

Vision Statement

To provide quality and timely service to our customers through technical excellence, positive attitudes, and team work.

Our Staff

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Josh Pate
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Meet our Board of Supervisors



Left to right:
Bryan Lamm – Vice Chairman
Gary D. Scott - Chairman
Dwight Batts – Secretary & Treasurer
Alan Sharp – Member
Carroll Coleman – Member