



St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



**Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future**

March/April 2016  
Volume 18, Issue 2

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### What's Going On...

*Events hosted by the St. Joseph County SWCD  
& Our Partners in Conservation*

#### March



- 13th - Daylight Savings Time Begins. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead 1 hour!
- 15th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (6:30 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 22nd - Tri County Producers Conference (see page 3 for details.)
- 25th - Good Friday - County Holiday
- 25th - Poster Contest Deadline

#### April

- 19th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (6:30 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 22nd - Earth Day
- 27th - Compost Seminar - 1 pm, Colfax Auditorium at the Main Library, downtown South Bend.
- 28th - Compost Seminar - 6:30 pm, Colfax Auditorium at the Main Library, downtown South Bend.

#### May

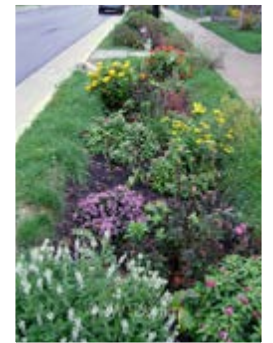
- 3rd - Primary Election Day - County Holiday
- 17th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 30th - Memorial Day - Office Closed

## Clean Water Indiana Grants

In a tri-county effort, St. Joseph, Marshall, and Starke County SWCDs applied for and received two separate grants through the Clean Water Indiana fund. The first, "Conservation Cropping Systems to Improve Soil Health," offers education, technical assistance, and cost share to implement no-till, cover crops, nutrient management, and filter strips to increase soil health and improve water quality. This grant gives each SWCD \$8,000 per year for 3 years to support and incentivize getting these conservation practices on the ground. Cost share is based on practices implemented: \$15/acre for no-till/strip-till (maximum 100 acre per producer), \$20/acre for cover crops (maximum 100 acre per producer), \$20/acre for nutrient management (maximum 100 acre per producer), and \$350/acre for filter strips (maximum 6 acres per producer). Priority will be given to producers who have not previously utilized these practices and practices already in place will not be funded.



The second grant, "Rainscaping – Education, Demonstration and Installation" focuses on an urban/suburban audience. The main purpose of this grant is to raise awareness of the impact of stormwater on the watershed, create a change in how stormwater runoff is handled in urban and suburban settings, and enable residents to make a difference through installing raingardens and reducing the amount of stormwater runoff entering the watershed. The EPA defines stormwater as the number one threat to water quality of our lakes and streams. Raingardens are shallow depressions planted with flood tolerant plants that capture rainwater and allow it to soak into the ground, acting as a natural filter. This is also a three year grant with the first year (2016) focused on educational workshops and outreach, the second year (2017) will consist of installing a demonstration garden and signage, and the third year (2018) we will offer cost share – 50% up to \$3,000 for a raingarden installation.



Still need to know more about the aspects of conservation cropping systems? Join us at our Farming for the Future producers workshop. See page 3 for more information. For more information on our CWI grants and to apply for cost share, please contact our office at [info@stjosephswcd.org](mailto:info@stjosephswcd.org) or 574-936-2024 Ext. 4.

# 56th Annual SWCD Meeting January 29, 2016 St. Hedwig Memorial Center 136 in attendance



Mike Burkholder was re-elected as a Supervisor. Dave Vandewalle has been appointed for a first term as a Supervisor.



Entertainment was Fascinating Rhythm

Friend of Conservation  
Unity Gardens



Educator of the Year  
Tracey Slattery & Terri Hebert



A special thank you goes to Senator Donnelly's Regional Director Lauren Varga, Representative Walorski's District Director Brian Spaulding, as well as Indiana Senator Jim Arnold and his wife Lauren, Indiana Representative David Niezgodski and his wife Sheila, and St. Joseph County Commissioners Dave Thomas & Deborah Fleming for joining us!

## Supervisor Tenure Awards

Jim LaFree  
25 Years



Chuck Lehman  
35 Years



Richard Schmidt  
30 Years



2015 River Friendly  
Farmer of the Year  
Tom Hesters

2015 River  
Friendly  
Farmer of the  
Year

Ed Leininger  
was unable to  
attend.

Dave Craft  
15 Years

Unable to Attend

## Natural Resources Conservation Service: Conservation Technical Assistance

Since the very early days, the Natural Resources Conservation Service has been committed to protecting and conserving our natural resources. To successfully meet that commitment, the NRCS provides "Conservation Technical Assistance", which represents NRCS's foundation and main tool for developing conservation plans and implementing high quality scientific supported practices to address natural resource concerns. This service aims to assist landowners, farmers, communities, state & local governments, entities, tribal governments & others, to explore what natural resource concerns they have on their respective land and develop alternatives to resolve them. The conservation technical assistance helps with:

- ✓ Assessment, evaluation and monitoring of natural resources
- ✓ Conservation practice development and implementation
- ✓ Exploring different effective conservation alternatives and sustainable agricultural operations
- ✓ Maintain and/or enhance aesthetic features of private/public land
- ✓ Protect water, air and soil quality
- ✓ Maintain and/or enhance wildlife habitat

All landowners, managers and others are eligible to receive technical assistance from NRCS and does not require to be enrolled in any financial assistance program the USDA offers. However, this service may serve as a step towards financial assistance and easement conservation programs provided by the USDA if interested.

To receive technical assistance, please contact your local NRCS office or local soil and water conservation district who will gladly provide you with the information you need to reach your goals towards resource conservation. St. Joseph NRCS & SWCD can be reached at 574-936-2024 Ext. 4.

## Farming for the Future – Combining Productivity, Profitability, and Conservation

As most of us know, the need for food and fiber production continues to increase as viable land for agriculture continues to diminish. Producers need to grow more with fewer inputs. How can it be done? By mimicking nature and rebuilding and supporting the health of the soil. Our goal is to enable producers to do this as well as improve water quality by utilizing all aspects of the *conservation cropping system*. What is the conservation cropping system? Conservation cropping entails four main practices: no-till, cover crops, nutrient management, and vegetative filter strips. These practices support healthy, functioning soil by limiting disturbance, increasing diversity, and keeping a living root growing year round.

Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife, and beautiful landscapes. Soil does all this by performing five essential functions:

1. Regulating water - Soil helps control where rain, snowmelt, and irrigation water goes. Water and dissolved solutes flow over the land or into and through the soil.

2. Sustaining plant and animal life - The diversity and productivity of living organisms depends on soil.
3. Filtering and buffering potential pollutants - The minerals and microbes in soil are responsible for filtering, buffering, degrading, immobilizing, and detoxifying organic and inorganic materials, including industrial and municipal by-products and atmospheric deposits.
4. Cycling nutrients - Carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, and many other nutrients are stored, transformed, and cycled in the soil.
5. Physical stability and support - Soil structure provides a medium for plant roots. Soils also provide support for human structures and protection for archeological treasures.

Want to know more about Conservation Cropping Systems? Join us at our Producers Workshop March 22. See below for more details.

**Join the St. Joseph, Marshall, and Starke County SWCDs  
in learning more about soil health and how it can increase productivity and profitability  
as well as improving water quality at our Producers' Workshop this March.  
CCA and PARP credits will be available (please bring \$10 for PARP).**

**When: March 22, 2016 registration opens at 8:15 am, programs from 9:00 am- 3:00 pm  
Where: Swan Lake Conference Center, 5203 Plymouth-LaPorte Trail, Plymouth, IN  
Cost: \$15 registration fee (includes lunch)  
\* Registration Deadline is March 15, 2016 \***

## USDA Confirms Highly Pathogenic H7N8 Avian Influenza in a Commercial Turkey Flock in Dubois County, Indiana

WASHINGTON, January 15, 2016

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic H7N8 avian influenza (HPAI) in a commercial turkey flock in Dubois County, Indiana. This is a different strain of HPAI than the strains that caused the 2015 outbreak. There are no known cases of H7N8 infections in humans. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 °F kills bacteria and viruses, including HPAI.

The United States has the strongest AI surveillance program in the world, and USDA is working with its partners to actively look for the disease in commercial poultry operations, live bird markets and in migratory wild bird populations.

Anyone involved with poultry production, from the small backyard to the large commercial producer, should review their biosecurity activities to assure the health of their birds. To

facilitate such a review, a biosecurity self-assessment and educational materials can be found at [http://www.uspoultry.org/animal\\_husbandry/intro.cfm](http://www.uspoultry.org/animal_husbandry/intro.cfm)

Backyard poultry owners are encouraged to be aware of the signs of avian influenza and report illness and/or death to the USDA Healthy Birds Hotline: 866-536-7593. Callers will be routed to a state or federal veterinarian in Indiana for a case assessment. Dead birds should be double-bagged and refrigerated for possible testing.

Signs include: sudden death without clinical signs; lack of energy or appetite; decreased egg production; soft-shelled or misshapen eggs; swelling or purple discoloration of head, eyelids, comb, hocks; nasal discharge; coughing; sneezing; incoordination; and diarrhea. A great resource for backyard bird health information is online at: [www.healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov)



**ST JOSEPH COUNTY  
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
2903 GARY DRIVE  
PLYMOUTH IN 46563**



## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

Due to declining sales, the board has decided to sit out the 2016 year for our tree sale. If you are in need of tree seedlings please visit one of our neighbor SWCD's, InDNR or our partner nurseries.

- ◆ Kosciusko County SWCD - Order Deadline: April 7.  
Pick up date: April 16, 2016 [www.kosciuskowcd.org/](http://www.kosciuskowcd.org/)  
574-267-7445 Ext 3
- ◆ Elkhart County SWCD - Order Deadline: March 4,  
2016. Pick up date: April 16, 2016 [www.elkcoswcd.org/](http://www.elkcoswcd.org/)  
574-533-4383 Ext 3
- ◆ Hensler Nursery- [www.henslernurseryindiana.com/](http://www.henslernurseryindiana.com/)  
574-867-4192
- ◆ Alpha Nursery- [www.alphanurseries.com/](http://www.alphanurseries.com/) 269-857-7804
- ◆ Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Order between  
Oct. 1, 2015 and May 1, 2016 [www.in.gov/dnr/forestry](http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry)
- ◆ Cardno Native Plant Nursery - 574-586-2412 Call to place an  
order. Minimum of \$100/order

**Soil & Water Conservation  
District (SWCD) Supervisors:**  
John Doods, Chair  
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair  
Mike Burkholder  
Stacey Silvers  
Dave Vandewalle

**SWCD Associate Supervisors:**  
Dave Craft  
Jan Ivkovich  
Jim LaFree  
Charles Lehman  
Joe Long  
Randy Matthys  
Carole Riewe  
Richard Schmidt  
Arlene Schuchman  
Dale Stoner  
Dru Wrasse

**SWCD Honorary Members:**  
Bernard Byrd  
Jerry Knepp  
Keith Lineback  
William Millar

**St. Joseph County  
Soil & Water Conservation  
Partnership Staff:**  
Rick Glassman, SWCD  
Sarah Longenecker, SWCD  
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD  
Debbie Knepp, NRCS  
James Rodriguez, NRCS

**Farm Service Agency Staff:**  
Gideon Nobbe, CED  
Linda Bentele  
Aldona Martin  
Cindy Slonaker  
Abby Ciesielski  
Lorrin Awald

**Are you ready to "GO GREEN" and help us save money and natural resources?  
We can deliver your "Conservation Kaleidoscope" newsletter by email ... Give us  
a call or send us an email and tell us you'd like to "GO GREEN" THANK YOU!!!!**



Scan me to  
go Green!