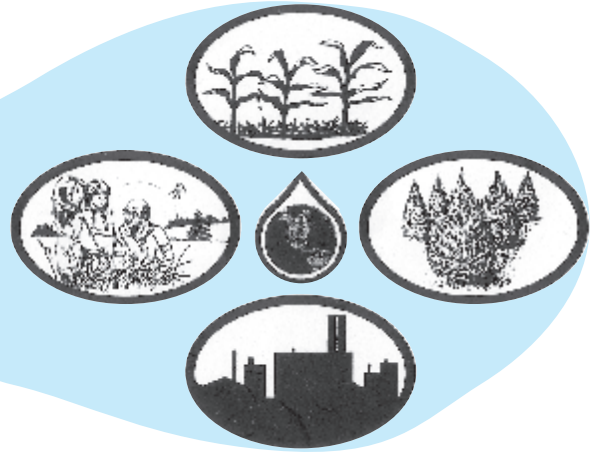




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

March/April 2014
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What's Going On...

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

March 2014

- 1st - Tree Pre-Order deadline
- 12th - Advanced Cover Crops
- 17th - Rain Barrel/ Composter Pre-Order deadline
- 18th - Annual Producer's Meeting 9:00 am- 2:00 pm. P.A.R.P credits available
- 18th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (6:30 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 19th - Advanced Crumpling Systems

April 2014

- 12th - Tree Pick up/ Saturday Sale
- 15th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 18th - Good Friday
- 20th - Happy Easter!

May 2014

- 6th - Primary Election Day -
- 20th - St. Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 26th - Memorial Day - Office Closed

Have You Heard? ...

Dooms named Supervisor of the Year



IASWCD President Jeff Meinders, left, presented the Supervisor of the Year award to John Dooms

The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (IASWCD) presents the Supervisor of the Year award to one district supervisor each year to recognize outstanding and exemplary supervisor achievements and leadership in the protection and enhancement of Indiana's soil and water resources. John, along with a few other supervisors and staff, braved the early January weather to attend the IASWCD's annual conference. Arriving late, but safe, they attended the awards banquet, legislative breakfast, and met with several state legislators at the statehouse. John thought he was simply an attendee at the banquet, as he had been for many years past. He was completely surprised when he was called up front and awarded 2013 Supervisor of the Year.

John, a producer in North Liberty, has been an integral part of the St. Joseph SWCD for many years, and will likely be for many years to come. He has served on the SWCD board as either an associate or elected supervisor for the past 32 years with 24 of those years as board chair. He has made a lasting impact on soil and water conservation in St. Joseph County through his work on the board.

John serves as a member of the District's conservation committee (as well as other committees). The conservation program is designed to educate local farmers on the use of conservation practices. He also helped plan and implement a new year-long activity, the Soil Health Master Series, which will help train the next generation of farmers to use soil health practices.

Dooms says that while he is the chair of the St. Joseph County SWCD, he only represents what the board as a whole wishes. While this is true, he does much more. Dooms is described as one who "demonstrates leadership that guides the board to make wise decisions by remembering SWCD history and embracing new and emerging trends within soil conservation." The district is thankful to have John as a supervisor and proud to congratulate him on his award!



Has your wife has been telling you all winter that you need to update the landscaping around your house? Why not plant some white flowering dogwoods, redbuds, or serviceberries next to your house to give it that extra pop that will be the envy of your neighborhood? Or maybe you're neighbors are too envious and you need some privacy! Try planting some Arborvitae, White Pines, or Norway Spruce to block that neighbors view. There are many reasons to plant trees around your yard or property and we have the tree you will want on April 12, 2014 at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds (at the Swine Barn).

The St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District will be hosting its 28th annual Tree Sale event on April 12th from 8 – 11:00 AM. If you missed the opportunity to pre-order trees by the March 1st cut off, don't worry because we will have a few extra trees on hand to sell the day of the event. However, quantities are limited and are available on a first come first served basis, so if you want a specific type of tree, be sure to get there early. Other items for sale will include rain barrels, and accessories, marking flags, ground covers, etc. For any questions on the tree sale please call the SWCD office at 574-936-2024 x 4.

**Thank You to all who helped support the SWCD with
generous donations to our Silent Auction!**

St. Joseph County
Soil and Water Conservation District's
54th Annual Meeting

A huge thank you goes out to all who braved the weather and joined us for our 54th Annual Meeting on Friday, January 24, 2014. While we do know that some were not able to make it, we still had 101 in attendance.

A special thank you goes to Senator Joe Donnelly, his wife Jill, and Meredith Perks (the Senator's Regional Director, North Central Indiana) as well as Representative David Niezgodski, his wife Sheila, and County Commissioner Dave Thomas for joining us!



Guests socialize and browse the silent auction items prior to the meeting's call to order.



(Senator Donnelly spoke briefly praising the successes that the state of Indiana has had in cover crops - being that we are number one in cover crop use in the nation!)



Sara Stewart, Founder and Executive Director of the Unity Gardens, was our guest speaker. She told us the story of how she went from being an RN to "growing" what has become a huge community outreach in the form of community gardens, free classes, hands on education, and free locally grown healthy food.

The Supervisor Election was officiated by SWCD Vice-Chair, Jeremy Cooper. He introduced candidates John Doods and Dave Vandewalle as well as explaining the legal requirements to vote. After the ballots were passed out, picked up, and counted, it was determined that John Doods had been re-elected to the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner Dave Thomas swore Mr. Doods into office.

Award Winners (not pictured - John Doods, Supervisor of the Year (see front page), and Doug Millar as River Friendly Farmer of the Year):



St. Joseph County Parks Dept. was named the 2013 Friend of Conservation



Bob Feitz was named the 2013 Friend of Forestry



Al Allsop accepts on behalf of Wayne Allsop as 2013 Conservation Farmer of the Year



Shane Whitmer accepts for Jim & Theresa Whitmer as 2013 River Friendly Farmer of the Year

Our new Farm Bill - The Agricultural Act of 2014

The Agricultural Act of 2014 will reform agriculture programs, reduce the deficit, and help farmers, ranchers, and business owners grow the economy. The legislation:

- Repeals the direct payment program and strengthens risk management tools
- Repeals outdated programs and consolidates duplicative ones, eliminating nearly 100 programs or authorizations
- Helps farmers and ranchers create jobs and provides certainty for the 16 million Americans working in agriculture
- Strengthens conservation efforts to protect land, water and wildlife for future generations
- Maintains food assistance for families while addressing fraud and misuse in SNAP
- Reduces the deficit by billions of dollars in mandatory spending

Ends Direct Payments, Strengthens Risk Management

The Agricultural Act of 2014 reforms farm programs and saves taxpayer dollars by ending direct payments and other farm programs. The bill provides risk management tools that help American farmers and ranchers survive weather disasters and market volatility.

The bill also strengthens crop insurance, which is an essential cost-effective risk management tool. With crop insurance, farmers invest in their own risk management by purchasing insurance policies so they are protected in difficult times. Crop insurance also helps protect Americans from spikes in food prices. Without crop insurance farmers would have no way to recover from disaster unless the government steps in and provides unplanned disaster assistance. The effectiveness of crop insurance was underscored during the historic droughts of 2012, which impacted more than 80% of the country. Crop insurance protected farmers without the need for an emergency disaster relief bill.

Additionally, the bill provides a permanent livestock disaster assistance program for producers affected by natural disasters, and also covers producers who were affected by recent droughts, winter storms that hit the Northern Plains last year, and spring freezes that affected fruit growers in the Midwest.

Streamlines Programs, Strengthens Conservation

The Agricultural Act of 2014 consolidates 23 existing conservation programs into 13 programs while strengthening tools to protect and conserve land, water and wildlife. By streamlining programs, the farm bill provides added flexibility and ensures conservation programs are working for producers in the most effective and efficient way – an approach supported by nearly 650 conservation organizations from all 50 states.

Grows the Agricultural Economy

The Agricultural Act of 2014 reduces the deficit while strengthening top priorities that help to grow the agricultural economy. The bill:

- Boosts export opportunities to help farmers find new global markets for their goods
- Continues investments to meet growing consumer demand for fresh fruits and vegetables, local foods and organics by helping family farmers sell locally, increasing support for farmers' markets, and connecting farmers to schools and other community-based organizations
- Supports beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital
- Increases assistance for food banks
- Reduces regulatory barriers
- Invests in state-run pilot projects to encourage and incentivize employment and training opportunities for families in need
- Creates initiatives to help veterans start agriculture businesses
- Grows American bio-based manufacturing (manufacturing processes using raw agricultural products grown in America)
- Expands bio-energy production, supporting non-food based advanced biomass energy production such as cellulosic ethanol and woody biomass power
- Invests in research to promote productivity and new agricultural innovations
- Strengthens rural development initiatives to help rural communities upgrade infrastructure and create a better environment for small businesses

*Excerpt from article by Bob Meyer of Brownfield Ag News



ST JOSEPH COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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PLYMOUTH IN 46563

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PERMIT NO. 225



St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

2014 Producer's Lunch & PARP Re-Certification Meeting

When: Wed., March 18, 2014 @ 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

Where: Green Township Community Bldg.

Take advantage of this FREE event to take in some helpful information AND get your annual PARP credits. We will be discussing cover crop termination, proper application of fungicides, the Palmer Amaranth, nutrient management and soil health, and category 14 rules.

If you have questions or to RSVP, please call 574-936-2024, ext 4.

Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chair
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair
Mike Burkholder, Member
Arlene Schuchman, Member
Stacey Silvers, Member

SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Dave Craft
Jan Ivkovich
Melvin Kulwicki
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Joe Long
Randy Matthys
Eugene Myers
Carole Riewe
Richard Schmidt
Dale Stoner
Dave Vandewalle
Paul Williams, III
Dru Wrasse

SWCD Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd
Al Gostola
Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Andrew Fox, SWCD
Sarah Harville, SWCD
James Rodriguez, NRCS

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED
Linda Bentele
Abby Curtis
Kathie Kensinger
Aldona Martin
Cindy Slonaker

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!!!!