



St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

March/April 2019
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What's Going On...

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

March

19th - Breakfast with a Forester, see page 3 for more details.

19th - Monthly Board Meeting - Open to the Public 6:30 PM
LOCATION: Butterfly Room Centre Township Library at Kern and Miami Roads in South Bend - 1150 Kern Road South Bend, IN 46614

20th - Contractors Breakfast - see page 4 for details.

April

2nd - Composting Workshop. 5:30-6:30 PM, Dickinson Conference Room, Main Branch Library, 304 South Main St, South Bend, IN. This is a FREE workshop!

16th - Monthly Board Meeting - Open to the Public 6:30 PM
LOCATION: Butterfly Room Centre Township Library at Kern and Miami Roads in South Bend - 1150 Kern Road South Bend, IN 46614

19th - Good Friday - County Holiday

2018 Farm Bill

What has changed or updated from the 2014 Farm Bill?

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is one of the bedrock conservation programs responsible for introducing many farmers, ranchers and forest-land owners to conservation. The 2018 Farm Bill has an over \$1 billion increase in the federal government's investment into EQIP.

The new bill creates an incentive contract to further encourage adoption of conservation practices focused on management-type activities rather than structural practices. These contracts would be targeted to priority resource concerns identified at the local level. In laying out what type of practices may qualify for these incentives, the conference report states that they: "anticipate incentive practices with broad resource benefits (including, but not limited to, cover crops, transition to resource conserving crop rotations, and incorporation of precision agriculture technologies into agriculture operations) will be available to producers within the program. Similarly, a broad suite of incentive practices relating to grazing lands and forest lands will be available to incentivize increased levels of conservation around locally-established resource priorities."

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) provides financial assistance to producers who have already begun to implement conservation on their land and commit to doing more. Producers must enroll their entire operation in the program, already have addressed two priority resource concerns, and commit to addressing another priority resource concern over the life of their five-year contract. CSP is a competitive program, and only producers that commit to achieving the highest level of conservation are awarded contracts. With more than 70 million acres enrolled, it is the largest conservation program in the United States.

CSP will continue as a standalone program even though the House of Representatives proposed merging CSP into the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The 2018 Farm Bill made changes to CSP, including moving from an acreage-based program to a monetary one, cutting the program's 10-year baseline, and eliminating the \$18 per acre payment requirement.



**Continued on
page 2...**

...Farm Bill changes continued from page 1

Urban Agriculture

Two changes to conservation programs were included in the farm bill to support urban producers. First, the farm bill authorizes soil testing and remediation as a practice within the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This change will allow the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to offer cost-share funding to urban producers that need to test their soil for contaminants and address whichever contaminants are found. For urban producers, addressing soil contamination is an important and expensive challenge.

The farm bill also expands the Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) program to include a focus area on developing new urban agriculture practices. The CIG

program awards competitive grants designed to drive innovation in conservation and pursue new approaches. Grants are available annually at both the state and national level.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The new farm bill allows for an increased acreage cap, while also addressing the issue of CRP competing with farmers for productive land by reducing rental rates, cost-share and incentive payments.

For more details on the changes to the 2018 farm bill, visit the National Association of Conservation Districts blog at: www.nacdnet.org/tag/2018-farm-bill/.

If you are interested in applying or receiving more information on NRCS programs, contact your District Conservationist, Debbie Knepp at 574-936-2024 Ext. 4.

59th Annual SWCD Meeting February 8, 2019 St. Hedwig Memorial Center 111 in attendance



Friend of Forestry
Eugene & Linda Matzat



Educator of the Year
Theri Niemier

Mike Burkholder was unable to attend but was re-elected as a Supervisor. **Dave Vandewalle** has been re-appointed for another term as a Supervisor.

2018 River Friendly Farmer of the Year
Lichtenbarger Farms



A special thank you goes to Senator Mike Braun's Field Representative Misty Cosgrove, Representative Jackie Walorski's Field Director Chris Lee, Indiana State Representative Ross Deal, and St. Joseph County Commissioners Dave Thomas & Deborah Fleming for joining us!

Thank you to all of our silent auction item donors:

Bane Welker Equipment, Bare Hands Brewery, Bellman Oil Company, Cardno, Charlene Plasschaert, Country Auto Center, Crooked Ewe Brewery, Greenmark Equipment, Heavenly Goat Brewing Company, Kabelin Ace Hardware, Martins Supermarket, Millers Goats and Gardens, Mishawaka Parks Department, Preferred Auto, The Red Hen Turf Farm, Rise'n Roll, South Bend Brew Werks, South Bend Cubs, Strikes and Spares, The Ridge Company, Tractor Supply Company, Unity Gardens, and the Working Person's Store.




2018 River Friendly Farmer of the Year Gamble Dairy Farm, LLC and Conservation Farmers of the Year, Wykoff Brothers Farms, Inc. were unable to attend.



Breakfast with a Forester



<p>Round the Clock Restaurant 219 Pine Avenue LaPorte, IN</p> <p>May 21, 2019 September 17, 2019</p>	<p>American Table Restaurant 3575 Lake City Highway Warsaw, IN</p> <p>June 18, 2019 October 15, 2019</p>
<p>Christo's Family Dining 2227 North Michigan Street Plymouth, IN</p> <p>March 19, 2019 July 16, 2019 November 19, 2019</p>	<p>Gabriel's Pancake House 101 North Broadway Peru, IN</p> <p>April 16, 2019 August 20, 2019 December 17, 2019</p>
<p>Arrow Head Country RC&D Forestry Committee would like to invite you to an informal breakfast with friends to discuss issues you may be having in your woodland areas.</p> <p>Foresters, including IDNR, Purdue, Consulting & Industry Foresters, depending on the month, will be available for conversation and questions. Everyone is welcome and no reservations needed. Just walk in sometime during the 1.5 hour and join us.</p> <p>No charge other than paying for whatever breakfast you order.</p> 	

Composting 101

Composting is the process of breaking down organic matter. It is an environmentally friendly way to deal with your food waste by reducing the amount of material going to the landfill and making excellent fertilizer you can use in your home gardens. When compost is added to your garden it increases the amount of water that can be stored in the soil, enriches the soil which reduces the need to use chemical fertilizers, and pesticides.

When looking for a spot to create a backyard compost pile, choose a location that is dry and partially shaded. Small decomposers, such as ants, earthworms, beetles, spiders, etc., will enter the pile and begin to break down your scraps. If you don't have a yard, an indoor composting bin or vermicomposting bin might be the right choice for you. Vermicomposting is the composting process using various species of worms, usually red wigglers, white worms, and other earthworms.

There are a handful of different styles of composting, but the general idea is always the same. Browns (things like leaves, paper, and twigs), greens

(things like produce scraps, coffee grounds, and grass clippings), and moisture are the ingredients you will need in your pile or bin. Do not add dairy products or meat to your compost. These will start to smell and attract flies, maggots and other animals. It also slows down the composting process.

Turning your pile with a shovel or pitchfork will add air and help the process move quicker. If you have bigger items, we suggest chopping them up so that they will decompose faster. Don't forget to check your pile often, keep track of the items you are adding, and adjust your ingredients as necessary. Finding the correct ratio of ingredients can sometimes take a little bit of trial and error. Managing your bin or pile properly will help to keep the smell down and the pests out!

To learn more about composting and how to start a pile or bin, come to our Composting Workshop at the Main Branch Library on April 2nd at 5:30 pm. You can also visit our Composting Guidebook on our website:

www.stjosephswcd.org/composting-guidebook

St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

Contractors Breakfast

March 20, 2019

7:30am-12:30pm

**Izaak Walton League
20400 Darden Rd
South Bend, IN 46637**

Topics include:

- ◆ Regulatory Compliance: Rule 5 – Erosion Control Permit Requirements, IDEM Updates and Post Construction Components
- ◆ Best Management Products & Washout Systems, Kuert Concrete, Siltworm & D2
- ◆ Implementing the stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) as a Living Document



Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chair
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair
Mike Burkholder
Dave Vandewalle
Dave Craft

SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Jim LaFree
Chuck Lehman
Randy Matthys
Richard Schmidt
Dave Straughn
Dru Wrasse

SWCD Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd
Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

Sarah Longenecker, SWCD
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD
Jane Sablich, SWCD
Debbie Knepp, NRCS

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED
Aldona Martin
Tara Wolfe
Devan Herrell



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!