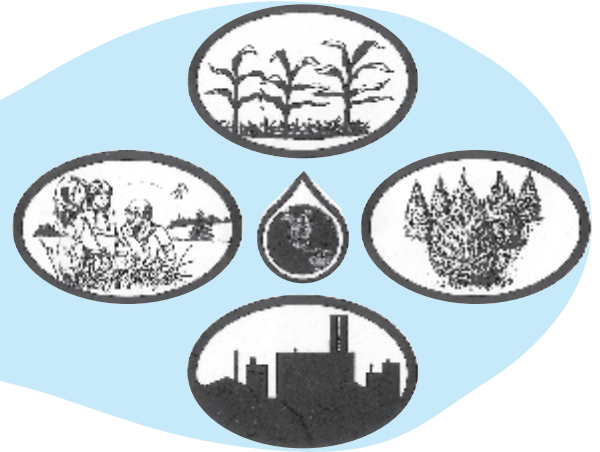




St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

January/February 2013  
Volume 15, Issue 1

2903 Gary Drive, Ste 1, Plymouth, IN 46563  
Website: [stjosephswcd.org](http://stjosephswcd.org)

Telephone (574) 936-2024  
e-mail: [info@stjosephswcd.org](mailto:info@stjosephswcd.org)

Alisa Wynn, Editor

### What's Going On...

#### JANUARY

- 1 - New Years Day, Office Closed
- 11 - **DEADLINE for Dinner Tickets** - 53rd Annual Meeting on 1/18/13 ...
- 12 - Come visit our display at **Earth Friendly Eating**, at St. Joe Co. Public Library, downtown South Bend - 10:30 to 3:00/ Info: 574-282-4630
- 18 - **Our 53rd Annual Meeting, Holy Family Parish, South Bend, 5:45 PM**
- 20 - 57th Presidential Inauguration
- 21 - Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. - OFFICE CLOSED
- 22 - (TUES) **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg.**, Centre Township Library, 7PM

#### FEBRUARY

- 1 - SNOW DATE for 53rd Annual Mtg.
- 2 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - St. Joseph Co. Public Library (Downtown South Bend) - **SCIENCE ALIVE** Family Event
- 6 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - **Tree Selection & Planting Seminar**, Centre Township Library, 6PM - Call to RSVP
- 12 - Lincoln's Birthday / Mardi Gras
- 14 - Valentines Day
- 18 - Presidents' Day - OFFICE CLOSED
- 20 - (WED) **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg.**, Centre Township Library, 7PM
- 22 - Washington's Birthday

#### MARCH

- 1 - **Tree Sale PRE-ORDERS Due Today**
- 10 - Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 14 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - **Producers' Breakfast & Soil Health Meeting**
- 15 - **Rain Barrel/Composter PRE-ORDERS Due Today**
- 17 - Saint Patrick's Day
- 18 - (MON) **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg.**, Centre Township Library, 7PM
- 20 - First Day of SPRING
- 22 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - **COMPOST 101 SEMINAR**, St. Joseph Co. Library (Downtown South Bend), 6PM - Call to RSVP
- 24 - Palm Sunday
- 29 - Good Friday
- 31 - Easter Sunday

## Have You Heard? We've MOVED (AGAIN)

As of early November 2012, and as decided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Tom Vilsack, the **Farm Service Agency (FSA)** office and staff charged with serving St. Joseph County, Indiana were officially closed and have re-located to the Plymouth/Marshall County USDA Service Center. Technically, the FSA Office and Staff have merged and will serve both Marshall County and St. Joseph County. A few weeks later, the office and staff of the **St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership** have also elected to move to the Plymouth USDA Service Center for the time being. By **Soil & Water Conservation PARTNERSHIP**, we are referring specifically to the Staff of these two partner-agencies:

- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** (or NRCS, a federal USDA agency charged with serving St. Joseph County) and
- **St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District** (sub-division of state government changed with serving St. Joseph County).

While our physical office may be currently located in Marshall County, the Staff and Board Members that make up the St. Joseph County SWCD and the NRCS (of St. Joseph County) are as determined as ever to serving our customers – the landowners, land-users, and citizens of St. Joseph County. **In other words, our MISSIONS have not changed even though our office location has ... We (the People that make up this long-standing Partnership) are dedicated to:**

**Helping People Help the Land (NRCS Mission)  
and  
Providing guidance and education to the**

**youth and adults of St. Joseph County and administering programs to preserve, improve, and protect soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources for future generations.**

(SWCD Mission)

Here is our new contact information for the following Staff Members:

- **Deb Knepp**, *District Conservationist (NRCS)*
- **Rick Glassman**, *Environmental Education Coordinator & District Manager (St. Joseph County SWCD)*
- **Andy Fox**, *County Conservationist (SJC SWCD)*
- **Lisa Wynn**, *Administrative Asst. (SJC SWCD)*

**Plymouth USDA Service Center**

**2903 Gary Drive, Ste 1**

**Plymouth, IN 46563**

**Phone: 574-936-2024 Ext 4**

**Fax: 574-936-5715**

**General Email: [info@stjosephswcd.org](mailto:info@stjosephswcd.org)**

Please note (and congratulate!) Amanda Kautz, who worked with our office for nearly 2 years as a NRCS Soil Conservationist, has recently been promoted as the new District Conservationist for Elkhart County.

**The Plymouth USDA Service Center  
is now comprised of:**

1. **St. Joseph County SWCD**
2. **Marshall County SWCD**
3. **USDA-NRCS (serving St. Joseph County)**
4. **USDA-NRCS (serving Marshall County)**
5. **USDA-FSA (merged/serving Marshall/St. Joseph County)**
6. **USDA-OCIO International Technology Services**
7. **USDA-NRCS Soil Survey Office**

**Questions? Concerns? Let us know.**



# THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

## SPRUCE UP YOUR YARD FOR THE WILD ONES

If that title sounds familiar, it should as it was a title from one of the articles in our May/June 2012 edition of the Conservation Kaleidoscope. But with spring on its way, we wanted to take a moment to discuss how some of our conservation trees can help you Spruce up your Yard. Whenever we do things to try to invite the wild animals into our yard remember **FOOD, WATER, SHELTER** and **PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG**.

**FOOD:** Normally when we talk about food for wildlife, we think of berries, seeds or leaves and this year the SWCD annual **Tree Seedling Sale fundraiser** offers a variety of plants for this purpose. Here are a few specific items we are offering:

**Black Walnut** is enjoyed by Fox Squirrels, Gray Squirrels (the Black Squirrel is really just a Gray Squirrel with black hair), Red Squirrels, Flying Squirrels and even mice.

**Common Persimmon** is loved by not only all the squirrels, but raccoons, opossums, deer and a wide variety of birds.

**Northern Red Oak**— What can we say about acorns, from squirrels to deer to woodpeckers and blue jays ... You can't go wrong with any type of oak tree in your yard.

**American Cranberry** (shrub) makes a wonderful addition to any yard, its white flowers in the spring provides nectar for insects and to hummingbirds. Its red berries in the fall will not last too long once the Robins and Cedar Waxwings find them. This is also a great bush to put close to the house because it can be trimmed.

**Hazelnut** is another great seed producer that will amaze you with what you find feeding on its fruit.

**Shadblow Serviceberry** and **White Flowering Dogwood** will make you smile with their white spring time flowers which will provide nectar for a wide variety of insects. Their berries are favored by over 30 species of birds!

**Butterfly Bush** and **Common Lilac** have gorgeous flowers that attract a wide variety of insects and birds.

You may be thinking to yourself, "Why would I want to attract a wide variety of insects to my yard? Butterflies are great but why the others?" The answer is: **FOOD**. Sometimes we need to recall the importance of providing indirect food sources for wildlife, and many species of birds depend on insects for food. So, attract the insects so you can enjoy the birds. *(Continued on Page 3)*



Ron Warner

PHOTO SOURCE: Ron Warner (photographer), illustrates the phrase "Happy as a possum in a persimmon tree," via [www.treknature.com/gallery/photo244499.htm](http://www.treknature.com/gallery/photo244499.htm)



# THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

*(Spruce Up Your Yard for the Wild Ones, Continued from Page 2)*

**SHELTER AND PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG:** Look to the **EVERGREENS** especially for this purpose. **Anytime you plant ANY EVERGREEN, you WILL attract wildlife.**

Every winter, I enjoy the show as countless birds fly into my Spruces and Pines to roost on the cold winter nights and every spring I enjoy searching and finding the many nests in my evergreens. This year through our tree sale, we are offering the **White Spruce** which is a species that deer do not actually like to eat, which is a definite bonus in some neighborhoods. The **American Arborvitae** makes a great windbreak, incredible shelter, and excellent nesting area, and you can even trim the top at the height you desire and it will grow no higher (note, however, it will grow out wider.)

These are just some of the highlights of our Conservation Trees offered this year in the SWCD tree sales program. Just remember anything you do to improve your yard will be appreciated by the **WILD ONES**.

If you have other goals and considerations you would like to consider, we hope you find the information on page 4 of this edition of our newsletter to be helpful.

For instance, perhaps you would like to plant trees that can act as a natural border or screen for a sense of privacy in your yard. We have many species that would be appropriate for this purpose, including any of the **Evergreens** and several flowering trees and shrubs. If you are concerned about controlling soil erosion, we offer a number of choices that would be appropriate, including **Pachysandra** (a groundcover). Perhaps your trees will be planted near a road that is salted during the winter months? If your soil is moist and there is full sun available, **River Birch** and **Black Walnut** may work for you.

Let us know if you need some extra guidance to make your spring planting as successful and rewarding as possible. Please don't hesitate to give us a call today: 574-936-2024, EXT 4 (ask for Andy Fox, our County Conservationist).



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR Saturday, February 2, 2013 10AM to 4PM

Join the **St. Joseph County SWCD Board Members and Staff**, and over **50 other organizations** as you and your family experience **SCIENCE** as it comes **ALIVE**.

Enjoy hands-on displays and activities that will take you from electricity to urban planning ... from chocolate to the stars ... and of course ... from **SOIL to WATER!**



PHOTO: St. Joseph County SWCD Board Member, Carole Riewe, guiding several young attendees through our hands-on Food Chain display at last year's Science Alive.

For more information on this **FREE FAMILY EVENT**, contact the **St. Joseph County Public Library** at **574-282 - 4646** or visit **www.sjcpl.org**



# SEEDLING & PLANT SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET (Source: Arbordey.org)

SOIL DRAINAGE		PLANT PRODUCTS					SUNLIGHT NEEDS			GROWTH RATE				
W - Wet	D - Dry	M - Moist	C - Cone	FR - Fruit	N - Nut	S - Seed	FL - Flower	S - Shade	PS - Partial Sun	FS - Full Sun	SL - Slow	M - Medium	F - Fast	
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT USE														
B - Borders, Screens		Be - Beauty	Fc - Fall Color	E - Erosion Control	H - Home Sites	S - Shade	T - Timber	W - Windbreak	WL - Wildlife					
SPECIES	MATURE HEIGHT	GROWTH RATE	SOIL DRAINAGE	PLANT PRODUCTS	SUNLIGHT NEEDS	SALT TOLERANT	REMARKS	1-PACK PRICE	5-PACK PRICE	10-PACK PRICE	25-PACK PRICE	50-PACK PRICE		
<b>EVERGREEN SEEDLINGS</b>														
American Arborvitae	30-60'	M	Most Soils	C/S	FS	NO	B, Be, E, H, W, WL	N/A	\$9.50	\$18.00	\$42.50	\$85.00		
Canadian Hemlock	40-70'	M	M	C/S	S-FS	NO	B, Be, E, H, W, WL;	N/A	\$9.50	\$18.00	\$42.50	\$85.00		
Fraser Fir	30-40'	S	M	C/S	PS-FS	NO	B, Be, E, H, T, W, WL;	N/A	\$9.30	\$17.60	\$41.50	\$83.00		
Norway Spruce	50-75'	M-F	M	C/S	FS	NO	B, Be, E, H, W, WL	N/A	\$9.30	\$17.60	\$41.50	\$83.00		
White Pine	75-100'	F	M, D	C/S	PS-FS	NO	B, Be, E, H, T, W, WL	N/A	\$9.20	\$17.40	\$41.00	\$82.00		
White Spruce	40-60'	M	M, D	C/S	FS	INTERMEDIATE	B, Be, E, H, W, WL	N/A	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$45.00	\$90.00		
<b>DECIDUOUS SEEDLINGS</b>														
Black Walnut	70-100'	S-M	M	FL/FR/N	FS	YES	Be, E, H, T, WL; Valuable timber	N/A	\$5.50	\$10.00	\$22.50	\$45.00		
Common Persimmon	50-70'	SL-M	W, M	FL/FR	PS-FS	INTERMEDIATE	Be, E, H, S, T, WL Edible Fruit	N/A	\$6.80	\$12.60	\$29.00	\$58.00		
Large Tooth Aspen	60-80'	F	W, M	FL	FS	INTERMEDIATE	Be, Ec, W, WL	N/A	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$45.00	\$90.00		
Northern Red Oak	60-75'	F	M	N	PS, FS	INTERMEDIATE	Be, Fc, E, H, S, T, WL	N/A	\$6.00	\$11.00	\$25.00	\$50.00		
River Birch	60-80'	F	W, M	FL/FR/S	FS	YES	Be, E, H, S	N/A	\$7.90	\$14.80	\$34.50	\$69.00		
Sweetgum	60-75'	M-F	M	S	FS	NO	Be, Fc, H, S, WL	N/A	\$7.90	\$14.80	\$34.50	\$69.00		
Tulip Poplar	70-100+'	F	M, D	FL/FR/S	PS-FS	INTERMEDIATE	Be, E, H, S, T, WL; State tree	N/A	\$8.30	\$13.60	\$36.50	\$73.00		
<b>FLOWERING &amp; SHRUB SEEDLINGS</b>														
American Cranberry	8-12'	M	M, D	FL/FR/S	PS-FS	INTERMEDIATE	B, Be, H, W, WL	N/A	\$9.10	\$17.20	\$40.50	\$81.00		
Butterfly Bush	4-6'	F	M, D	FL	PS-FS	NO	Be, H, WL; Attracts birds and butterflies!	N/A	\$8.30	\$15.60	\$36.50	\$73.00		
Common Lilac	6-10'	M-F	M, D	FL/FR/S	PS-FS	INTERMEDIATE	B, Be, H, W, WL; Great native wildlife shrub	N/A	\$7.80	\$14.60	\$34.00	\$68.00		
Hazelnut	15-18'	M-F	Most Soils	FL/N	FS	LIMITED	B, Be, H, S, W, WL; Edible Nuts	N/A	\$6.80	\$12.60	\$29.00	\$58.00		
Red Bud	25-35'	M	D	FL/FR/S	S-FS	NO	Be, H, S, WL; Spring Color!!!	N/A	\$8.70	\$16.40	\$38.50	\$77.00		
Shadblow Serviceberry	10-20'	M	M, D	FL/FR/S	S-FS	YES	Be, H, S, WL; First to bloom in spring	N/A	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$45.00	\$90.00		
White Flowering Dogwood	20-25'	M	M, D	FL/FR/S	PS-FS	NO	Be, H, S, WL; Beautiful flowering native.	N/A	\$6.80	\$12.00	\$29.00	\$58.00		
<b>GROUNDCOVER</b>														
Pachysandra	10-12"	SL-M	M	FL/FR	PS-S	NO	B, Be, E, H; Thrives under pines	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$15.50	N/A		
<b>WILDFLOWER SEED</b>														
American Wildflower Mix	12-36"	SL-M	Most Soils	S/FL	FS-PS	Depending	Be, H, WL - 1 oz package/250 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$7.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Bird & Butterfly Mix	12-36"	SL-M	Most Soils	S/FL	FS-PS	on Variety	Be, H, WL - 1 oz package/250 ft <sup>2</sup>	\$7.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

Please complete this order form, using a separate sheet of paper if necessary, and return it to:  
 St. Joseph County SWCD • 2903 Gary Drive, Suite 1 • Plymouth, IN 46563  
 and post-marked by the APPLICABLE DEADLINE (see Terms & Conditions #2 & #3)

\* Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* Main Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use: **ORDER # 2013-**\_\_\_\_\_

\* Required Information

By providing your e-mail address above you are electing to receive next year's tree sale flyer, and any other tree sale news, by email. SJCSWCD respects your privacy and will never sell or share your information. You may opt out at any time.

**How Did You Hear About Our Fundraiser?**

I am a previous customer

Advertising

Craigslist

The Farmers Exchange

South Bend Tribune

www.stjosephswcd.org

Facebook

Printed Flyer

Word of Mouth

Other (\_\_\_\_\_)

**Terms & Conditions**

- Orders of 500 or more trees per species are eligible for a discount. Call for pricing information.
- Orders for Trees/Plants must be postmarked by: March 1, 2013
- Orders for Rain Barrels, Rain Barrel Accessories, & Composters must be postmarked by: March 15, 2013
- Orders will be filled on first come first served basis.
- Trees are available to anyone and may be planted without restriction from the St. Joseph County SWCD. Please check with you local government for possible planting restrictions.
- We reserve the right to make alterations if necessary.
- We DO NOT furnish replacements on Trees/Plants. If you have problems with your trees please call our office before June 1st.
- Tree/Plant sizes may vary due to weather conditions beyond our control.
- 10% re-stocking fee for Rain Barrels, Composters, & Accessories that have not been picked up during the designated (or pre-arranged) date and time.
- 10% re-stocking fee for Rain Barrels, Composters, & Accessories that are returned for reasons unrelated to the Manufacturer's Warranty.
- Arrangements by the SWCD for Rain Barrels, Accessories, & Composters returned under the Manufacturer's warranty may take 1-3 weeks to complete."
- Make your Check payable to:  
 St. Joseph County SWCD  
 2903 Gary Drive, Suite 1  
 Plymouth IN 46563  
 Questions? Call 574/936-2024 EXT 4

Tree / Plant / Item Pick-Up: Sat, April 13, 2013 @ the St. Joseph County 4H Fairgrounds Pre-Order Confirmations/Receipts will be mailed in late-March 2013							
SECTION A. EVERGREEN, DECIDUOUS, & FLOWERING/SHRUB SEEDLINGS							
ENTER QUANTITY							
LINE #	1-PACK	5-PACK	10-PACK	25-PACK	50-PACK	SPECIES NAME	SPECIES TOTAL
Sample	N/A		1	1		Can. Hemlock	\$60.50
1A	N/A						
2A	N/A						
3A	N/A						
4A	N/A						
5A	N/A						
6A	N/A						
7A	N/A						
8A	N/A						
9A	N/A						
10A	N/A						
SECTION B. GROUNDCOVER							
ENTER QUANTITY							
LINE #	1-PACK	5-PACK	10-PACK	25-PACK	50-PACK	SPECIES NAME	SPECIES TOTAL
1B	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Pachysandra	
SECTION C. WILDFLOWER SEED							
ENTER QUANTITY							
LINE #	1-PACK	5-PACK	10-PACK	25-PACK	50-PACK	SPECIES NAME	SPECIES TOTAL
1C		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
2C		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
SECTION D. RAIN BARRELS, ACCESSORIES, & COMPOSTERS							
ENTER QUANTITY							
LINE #	QUANTITY	ITEM NUMBER	ITEM NAME			ITEM TOTAL	
Sample	1	UP5	50 Gal. T-Cotta Barrel			\$66.50	
1D							
2D							
3D							
4D							
5D							
6D							
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>						\$	
<b>+7% SALES TAX</b>						\$	
<b>ORDER GRAND TOTAL</b>						\$	

\*\* For OFFICE USE ONLY \*\*

CK# \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_

Pricing for Rain Barrels, Accessories, and Composters can be found on Page 8. The info in this newsletter is derived from our full 6-Page Fundraiser Sale Flyer ... Get yours by giving us a call or by visiting [www.stjosephswcd.org](http://www.stjosephswcd.org) ... THANK YOU!



### THE EFFECTS OF THE 2012 DROUGHT ON OUR AREA'S FORESTS

*Guest Article by Steve Winicker,  
District Forester with Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources*

St. Joseph County forest areas remain in fairly good condition after the recent dry weather. If the dry conditions continue for several years the damage will increase and eventually become a more serious problem for a number of species.

Interestingly, the chief symptoms of early drought damage appear to be in low land woods growing on soils with a high water table. Although this seems counter to what one would expect trees on low ground often suffer more damage than those on upland. The high water table soils prevent deep root penetration. In an unusual year, such as the one we have just gone through, the water table drops and the surface becomes very dry. Shallow rooted trees tend to suffer the most under these conditions. I have noted what appears to be some mortality in bottomland stands with ash, soft maples, elms, and aspen to name a few of the more common. Ash and elm have additional issues, mainly emerald ash borer and Dutch elm disease respectively. Understory trees are also an early indicator of stress as these smaller trees have shallow root systems and less reserves to draw on and often show symptoms before the larger trees in the woods.

Upland forests may be damaged as well; however it will take a bit more time to assess whether the damage goes beyond growth loss. Often the older deeper rooted upland trees will be able to get sufficient moisture to stay alive during dry weather. Still these trees are stressed and may have problems that show up over the next 4 or 5 years. The symptoms tend to be dieback of the tops and lack of growth leading to eventual tree death. I do not expect any major disaster, but trees will do a bit worse in the coming years than they have and those which were not healthy to begin with may be shoved over the edge.

Certainly it is time to consider selling ash in your woodland. If you are nearly ready for a timber harvest I would consider moving ash if you have enough to make a sale feasible. The market for ash is fairly good at present and demand for and prices of most species seem to be doing better than over the last few years. It appears to me the markets are weak and vary from fairly good to poor over a short period of time. The best economic indicator for the hardwood market is housing starts. If housing starts increase then the need for furniture, flooring and other products to furnish the new homes increases soon after.

The shorter term cycle is caused by the supply of various species. As prices rise, over production leads to a surplus of wood from that species this then depresses prices. As prices fall, less is bought, leading to a shortage of wood and increasing prices. This price swing is hard to predict even if you are in the market much of the time. The best advice is to seek professional help if you have an area of woodland that is experiencing tree mortality. Consulting foresters can mark trees for harvest and set up a sale that is best able to recover the value of living or recently dead or dying trees.

A list of Consulting Foresters is available at:

[www.ag.purdue.edu/fnr/Documents/  
ForestersDirectory.pdf](http://www.ag.purdue.edu/fnr/Documents/ForestersDirectory.pdf)

**(Hint: Use Google and search for  
Purdue Consulting Foresters)**

Working with a consulting forester on a timber sale will assist you in getting the best price possible for the timber being sold at any given time. In addition the cultural advice they can provide will result in a woods as good as or better than what you now have. You can also request management advice from your District Forester.

For St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, and Elkhart Counties, the IDNR District Forester is myself, Steve Winicker. You can give me a call at 219-843-4827. My office is located at the Jasper Pulaski State Tree Nursery, 15508 W. 700 N., Medaryville, IN 47957.

Additional information on forest management can be found at the Indiana State Division of Forestry Website:

[www.in.gov/dnr/forestry](http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry)

**(Hint: Use Google and search for Indiana DNR Forestry)**



**PHOTO:**  
Steve Winicker,  
Indiana  
Department of  
Natural Resources  
District Forester  
for District 1





## MANAGING FOR DROUGHT WITH SOIL HEALTH IN MIND

Indiana was one of the worst hit of the major corn and soybean states, during the 2012 drought. Reports from every corner of the state indicated moderate to severe conditions comparable to the 1988 drought. Combined with days of heat stress, crops quickly showed signs of failure. Areas in the Northeast and Southwest were the hardest hit and considered severe. A number of areas in the state received spotty precipitation late in the summer (mainly in the Northwest and Southeast), but not enough to significantly improve growing conditions. Some of these areas where rain fell also received high wind and hail damage. Although at harvest time, while many farms were averaging only 40 to 50 bushels of corn per acre, many reports from farmers with soil health management systems were averaging two to three times that. Most attribute the crop resilience to the health and vitality of their soil, due to long-time use of no-till and cover crops in their operation.

### Soil Health Strategies and No-Till

Scientific literature clearly shows an advantage in nutrient cycling, water infiltration and water holding capacity with increased levels of organic matter, which is provided by no-till management systems. The literature also indicates increased loss of soil carbon as tillage intensity increases. Even minimal soil disturbance in a corn-soybean rotation will usually result in a net loss of soil carbon. No-till and cover crops can reverse that trend.

Studies also demonstrate that each tillage pass results in an average loss of 0.5 inches of water from the soil. When it comes to tillage and soil moisture, less is more. Each additional percent of organic matter in the soil has been shown to increase the water holding capacity equivalent to 0.5 to one inch. Imagine what one inch of water in mid to late July could have meant for corn yield.

### Nutrient and Soil Health Strategies with Winter Covers

Many farmers follow sound management advice by applying “side dress” nitrogen after corn emergence. This year, however, they paid a penalty for this practice. Drought conditions may have a significant affect on corn utilization of nitrogen. Roots have little capability to go searching through dry soil for nutrients or water. Nitrogen either moves to the roots in solution as nitrate, or roots grow through moist soil to intercept the nitrogen. The 2012 conditions have resulted in roots that have not accessed the applied nutrients. In addition, the nutrients that are normally biologically cycled from the soil and released to be taken up by the roots in a liquid solution

had no water to form a solution.

Purdue University and NRCS are sharing a united message that much of the nitrogen applied to corn went unused this year, and remains in the soil. This year a cover crop is more valuable than ever, as it can trap the much larger residual nitrogen pool that is in the soil. Indiana farmers are heeding this advice, and we have seen the largest acreage of cover crop seeding in recent history. In a two week emergency drought sign-up period, Indiana NRCS received over 22 million dollars in requests for cost-share assistance to seed cover crops.

### Strategies for 2013 & Beyond

Farmers should do as little tillage as possible. Unfortunately, with uncertainty about disease, crop insurance requirements and sheer frustration from an enduring drought, many soils have been tilled already. If we face similar weather in 2013, moisture conservation through the winter will be critical. Establishing a cover crop will sequester nitrogen, improve water infiltration, and provide mulch on the soil surface. No-tilling corn after this year’s corn may be a good use of the conserved nitrogen or, at a minimum, the soybean crop has a much greater reserve of resources.

Innovative farmers in Indiana are in relentless pursuit of soil health. They have seen increases in soil organic matter of two to three percent. They consistently exceed the county average yield by 20 percent or more, and continually improve the water, air and wildlife habitat on and around their land. Broad adoption of these Conservation Cropping Systems, that continually improve soil health, will help to meet the increasing food, energy and environmental demands on United States agriculture.



PHOTO: On July 13, 2012, Andy Fox, St. Joseph County SWCD County Conservationist, stands in front of corn that has been irrigated (left side) and corn that has NOT been irrigated (right side). The difference, in light of the 2012 drought, is quite dramatic.





ST JOSEPH COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
 2903 GARY DRIVE, SUITE 1  
 PLYMOUTH IN 46563

NON PROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 SOUTH BEND IN  
 PERMIT NO. 225



## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation District

### PRICING FOR RAIN BARRELS, RAIN BARREL ACCESSORIES, AND COMPOSTERS

Manufactured by Upcycle Products, Inc., Minooka, IL  
 Visit [www.upcycle-products.com](http://www.upcycle-products.com) for color photos of these items,  
 or give us a call at 574-936-2024 Ext 4 with questions ...

- ⇒ Item UP1 - 55 Gallon BLACK Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$71.50
- ⇒ Item UP2 - 55 Gallon BLUE Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$71.50
- ⇒ Item UP3 - 55 Gallon GRAY Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$71.50
- ⇒ Item UP4 - 55 Gallon TERRA-COTTA Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$71.50
- ⇒ Item UP5 - 50 Gallon TERRA-COTTA Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$66.50
- ⇒ Item UP6 - 30 Gallon BLUE Rain Barrel ... Your Price: \$56.50
- ⇒ Item UP7 - 2X3" WHITE Rain Barrel Diverter Kit ... Your Price: \$31.00
- ⇒ Item UP8 - 3X4" WHITE Rain Barrel Diverter Kit ... Your Price: \$31.00
- ⇒ Item UP9 - 2X3" WHITE Flex Elbow ... Your Price: \$9.00
- ⇒ Item UP10 - 3X4" WHITE Flex Elbow ... Your Price: \$15.00
- ⇒ Item UP11 - Linking Hose ... Your Price: \$9.00
- ⇒ Item UP12 - Pedestal Riser ... Your Price: \$24.00
- ⇒ Item UP13 - 17" METAL Plant Hanger ... Your Price: \$13.00
- ⇒ Item UP14 - 20" METAL Plant Hanger ... Your Price: \$13.00
- ⇒ Item UP15 - 25" METAL Plant Hanger ... Your Price: \$13.00
- ⇒ Item UP16 - BLACK Netting ... Your Price: \$10.00
- ⇒ Item UP17 - 55 Gallon Tumbling Composter ... Our Price: \$121.50

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 Jim LaFree, Member  
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**Are you ready to "GO GREEN" and help us save money  
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"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!!!!**