

THE CONSERVATIONIST



Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District *Conservation • Development • Self-government*

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Equine Environmental Awareness Program

Helping horse farms of all sizes better manage environmental and liability issues is the ultimate goal of the Equine Environmental Awareness Program being co-hosted by the Delaware & Franklin SWCDs, the Heart of Ohio RC&D, NRCS, and the Delaware/Franklin County Farm Bureau on Saturday, March 15, 2008 from 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM at the OSU Equine Center off Sawmill Road.

The program's curriculum focuses on key issues that are critically important to the success of an equine operation, developing and implementing practices that are economically viable, environmentally friendly and socially acceptable. Specific topics that will be addressed include protecting water quality, manure and nutrient management, pasture

management, facility design, conservation practices, neighbor relations, regulatory compliance, basic equine health and vaccinations, and Ohio's equine liability law.

Manure on horse farms is typically handled and stored very differently than other livestock farms. Additionally, many horse farms do not have a direct link to cropland, nor adequate forage resources. It is very important to recognize these and other unique challenges, and become acquainted with management practices that can help address natural resources concerns and potential liability issues. This comprehensive program will help to do exactly that.

The fee for the workshop is \$40 and includes EEAP certification, notebook, and lunch. To make a reservation, or for additional information about the program, contact Traci Aquara at the Heart of Ohio RC&D, (740) 368-5979, ext. 112. Checks should be made payable to Heart of Ohio RC&D and mailed to them at 557 Sunbury Rd., Delaware, OH 43015. The registration deadline is Friday, February 29, 2008.

SWCD CALENDAR

For more info on these events, please call the District Office, (740) 368-1921.

| Jan. | |
|-------------|---|
| 1/15 | SWCD Board Mtg. |
| 1/19 | Listening to the Land - Madison Co. |
| 1/21 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - OFFICE CLOSED |
| 1/23 | Tree Sale Begins |
| Feb. | |
| 2/2 | Schoolyard Science - Highbanks MetroPark |
| 2/4 | O'Brien Drainage Improvement Petition - 1st Hearing Continuance |
| 2/6 | Friends of the Lower Olentangy mtg. |
| 2/10 | Listening to the Land - OSU Orton Hall |
| 2/18 | Presidents Day - OFFICE CLOSED |
| 2/19 | SWCD Board Mtg. |
| 2/21-22 | Conservation Tillage Expo - Ada, OH |
| 2/23 | Energy-From the Sun to the Soil - Highbanks MetroPark |
| 2/27 | Listening to the Land - Albany Schools Nature Preserve |
| Mar. | |
| 3/6 | Upper Big Walnut Creek Watershed Partnership Mtg. - 9:00 AM |
| 3/13 | Central Ohio Stormwater & Erosion Control Expo - OSU Longaberger Alumni House |
| 3/13 | Upper Scioto River Watershed Project Advisory Council Mtg. |
| 3/15 | Equine Environmental Awareness Program |
| 3/18 | SWCD Board Mtg. |

Delaware SWCD Mission

To provide progressive leadership, support, and assistance to the public through grassroots programs that promote natural resources conservation and stewardship.

Exercise Caution in Winter Manure Management

The application of livestock manure to frozen and/or snow covered farm fields, while sometimes necessary, continues to come under increased scrutiny. Problems associated with the application of manure to frozen and/or snow covered ground usually come in the form of polluted runoff finding its way into waters of the state during thawing conditions. Unfortunately, incidences of runoff continue to occur and garner a lot of media attention. At one point, these issues were the front-page topic of 21 daily newspapers in the State. Winter manure application is a very critical issue that livestock farmers need to address in both the short and the long term.

As it should be with all applications of nutrients in any form, top priority must be given to protecting the environment, particularly water quality. This can be accomplished by following best management practices (BMPs) as outlined in the USDA NRCS Waste Utilization Standard #633. This specification is the basis for the development and implementation of nutrient management plans. To obtain a copy of this standard, which was revised in 2003, contact the District office or go the Ohio Livestock Coalition website at http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/references/public/OH/OH633_Waste_Util_June2003.pdf.

The best way to avoid the problems associated with application of manure in winter is to avoid doing it altogether. This requires having an adequate amount of storage and proper planning of applications in the fall. If you find that applications are necessary, you should contact the NRCS office to see about increasing the amount of storage or making necessary revisions to your nutrient management plan so that winter applications are not necessary next year.

In the event that the application of manure to frozen and/or snow covered ground becomes necessary in an "emergency" situation, all the criteria outlined in the NRCS Waste Utilization Specification must be followed to help prevent runoff problems from occurring. This includes limiting the application rates, making applications only to ground with good residue cover, limiting the contiguous area of application, and increasing the setbacks from grassed waterways, swales, ditches, streams, surface inlets, etc. Above all else, the amount of manure applied should be only as much as is necessary to alleviate the "emergency." All other manure applications should be delayed until application conditions are improved.

For more information on the NRCS Waste Utilization Standard, waste storage facilities, or nutrient management planning, please contact the SWCD/NRCS office.

Petition Projects Update

BASIGER #336: Construction is currently underway on the Basiger #336 project in Liberty Twp. The majority of the clearing and snagging operation as well as the excavation work for the open ditch reconstruction has been completed. The contractor is currently working to install the 6600' of surface and subsurface drainage which comprises Laterals A-1 and A-2 as well as the rock chute grade stabilization structure. Work will begin in the Spring on Lateral B, which involves nearly 2800' of subsurface drainage, surface drain construction, grassed waterway, open ditch, and a grade stabilization structure..

JONES-TIMMS #516: The Jones-Timms #516 Drainage Improvement Project, in Radnor Twp., was approved by the Delaware County Commissioners on Nov. 5, 2007. The bid was awarded to G&G Enterprises of Bellville, OH on Jan. 7. Construction should begin soon.

AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP OFFERED

Applications are being accepted for the Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District Dick O'Keefe Memorial Scholarship. This \$500.00 scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior who will be pursuing a degree in agriculture. Visit our website, www.delawareswcd.org to download an application. Call the SWCD for more information at 740/368-1921, ext 4. Completed applications must be received by the SWCD office by Tuesday, Tuesday, April 15, 2008.

Woodland Management: Where to Start

Woods in Delaware County have different values to different people. Some value their woods for scenic beauty, timber production, and/or wildlife habitat, but others may treat them as wasteland as they may occupy poorly drained areas that are too wet to farm or develop. Whatever your viewpoints are about your woods, you may be able to actively manage them to improve their value. The first step in managing woods is determining your overall goals. Consider why you value your woods, or what you want to use them for. Some common management goals include timber, wildlife, water quality, recreation, and aesthetics.

Once you set your goals, the possible actions that you could take will be determined by the current condition of the woods. For example, if timber and wildlife management are your goals, you can contact a professional forester to help you evaluate your woods with those goals in mind. He/she can determine if there are trees that are ready to be harvested, and if so, how to do so while maintaining or enhancing the value of your woods for wildlife and future timber production. A forester might also point out specific practices that can be done in the woods, such as controlling grapevine or removing exotic invasive plants. In some cases, the recommended management "activity" is to do nothing and let the trees grow more. In many cases, spending one weekend a year working in your woods can pay big dividends in meeting your long-term goals, by shortening the time to your next timber harvest or significantly improving the wildlife value of your woods.

In summary, if you own woods and are wondering if they have value, or if you can do something to improve their health and value, first think about your management objectives. Then, contact a forester. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Div. of Forestry has professional foresters who can come to your property and offer forest management advice (specific to your goals), tree planting assistance, and limited timber marketing assistance (www.ohiodnr.com/forestry/landowner). Cotton Randall is the ODNR Service Forester for Morrow, Knox, Licking, and Delaware Counties. You can contact him in his Delaware office at (740) 368-0053 (Email: Cotton.Randall@dnr.state.oh.us).



FSA Notes

by Don Henry, County Executive Director

Status of Cash Rent Statements: In the past FSA has provided a form fill cash rent statement as a convenience to assist producers in meeting farm program requirements. Midway through 2007 DCP sign-up, FSA was notified that we may not longer provide producers with an "unofficial document" to meet cash rent documentation requirements for program participation. So, where do we stand on 2008 farm program sign-up? So far, there is not a new Farm Bill, therefore we also have no provisions for '08 cash rent requirements. It appears that cash rent statements provided by FSA are a thing of the past. If you are meeting with your producers at this time, we would encourage you to either have a lease agreement on file or a written cash rent agreement that both the operator and landlord agree on.

Status of CRP Sign-up: The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, signed into law on 12/26/2007, provided a continuation of CRP authority until 3/15/2008. Producers interested in enrolling in continuous CRP or CREP may apply at this time at the Delaware County FSA Office.

Drainage Water Management Workshop

The Delaware and Marion SWCDs are sponsoring a Drainage Water Management Workshop the end of January for farmers growing corn and soybeans. For more information contact Ed Miller at the Delaware SWCD, (740) 368-1921, ext. 4.

Look For The Blue Envelope

Farmers in the Upper Scioto River watershed have first-hand experience with water quality and land management decisions. The Upper Scioto River Watershed Project is working to improve and protect water quality by gathering information from both rural and urban communities to help direct technical and financial assistance for land management activities. The insights of those involved with an agricultural operation are particularly important to the project.

In several weeks, a survey questionnaire will be mailed in a blue envelope by the project. Those who receive it will be asked to complete and return it in an included prepaid envelope. This is a fact-finding survey to collect baseline data about awareness, attitudes and behaviors. This data will be used to help shape the kinds of technical assistance and outreach efforts provided by the Upper Scioto River Watershed Project. Responses will remain confidential. Researchers from The Ohio State University will be conducting the analysis and will keep the collected information protected.

Voluntary participation in this survey is very important to ensure that the land management activities and the needs and interests of the agricultural community in the watershed are understood. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Ed Miller, Upper Scioto River Watershed Project and Delaware SWCD, (740) 368-1921 ext. 4, or Joe Campbell, Ohio State University, (614) 634-6363. We hope that you will be on the lookout for the blue envelope, and take the time to complete it when it arrives. Thank you in advance for your help.

FESTIVE TOSSED SALAD



Ingredients:

1/2 Cup Olive Oil

1/4 Cup Balsamic Vinegar

3 Tablespoons Water

1 Package Envelope Italian Dressing Mix

2 10 oz. Packages Italian Greens

2 Medium Tomatoes, seeded and chopped

1 Red Onion, thinly sliced

1 Cup Crumbled Feta Cheese

3/4 Cup Dried Cranberries

Directions: Mix Olive Oil, Balsamic Vinegar, Water, and Italian Dressing mix until powder is completely dissolved. Set aside. Mix Greens, Tomatoes, and Onion. Add in dressing mix and toss. Top with Feta Cheese and Cranberries. Refrigerate or serve immediately.



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