Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District Fall 2017 Newsletter

Agricultural BMP Cost-share Funding



If you are interested in implementing **agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) on your farm**, contact Charlie Wootton at (434) 392-3782 ext. 108 or Kevin Dunn at (434) 392-3782 ext. 116. BMPs include cover crops, excluding livestock from streams, long-term vegetative cover on cropland, and nutrient management plans, to name a few.

Although current funding has been allocated, Piedmont SWCD has a <u>continuous sign-up period</u> for interested clients. Being placed on

this list demonstrates your interest to District staff, who can then make a farm visit to advise you of the appropriate BMPs for your farm before the next funding cycle begins. Additionally, if more funding becomes available during the current program year, staff may be able to fund pending BMP projects.

USDA- NRCS Cost-share Opportunities

NRCS is currently running an open sign-up for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

All applications that were received by October 20th, 2017 will be ranked and submitted by close of business November 17th, 2017. All applications taken after October 20th but before January 19th, 2018 will be ranked and submitted by close of business February 16th, 2018.

Other program opportunities include the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Contact your local Service Center today to explore opportunities on your farm, agriculture operation, or private land.

Farmville Service Center: (434) 392-4171 Amelia Office: (804) 561-2947

2018 VFGC Winter Conference



If It Don't Make Dollar\$, It Don't Make Sense: Adapting in a World of Change

The Virginia Forage and Grassland Council will be hosting their upcoming winter conference, which highlights the realities of grassland farming and what it takes to adapt to the changing circumstances.

Presentations include:

- Better Grazing: Lessons on Efficient Forage Management from the Best in the World
- The Technical Revolution: Tools and Techniques Worth Considering in 2018 and Beyond
- From Tobacco, to Cattle, to Grazier: Making it Work in the Real World
- Changes in Management Provides Opportunities for Production, Marketing and Soil Health
- Economics of Change

For more information, visit vaforages.org or contact:J.B. DanielDavid Fiske(434) 392-4171 ext. 115(540) 377-2255j.b.daniel@va.usda.govdafiske@vt.edu

The daylong conference will be repeated at four locations:

- Jan. 29, 2018: Wytheville Meeting Center
- Jan. 30, 2018: Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex (Chatham)
- Jan. 31, 2018: Madison Fire Hall

Feb. 1, 2018: Weyers Cave Community Center

Education Events



Children place magnetic insects and animals to their corresponding locations underground.

Family & Farm Day was a great success! The event, hosted on September 9th at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Blackstone, drew a record crowd this year: 1,099 attendees! The District set up its soils tunnel, which children crawl through and imagine themselves as earthworms or ants traveling underground. They learn about the various components of soil: air, water, plant roots, organisms, and soil particles. District staff then explain how soil supports us every day and why it is important to make sure it stays healthy.

Local teachers attended our **Envirothon Q&A session** on September 28th to learn about becoming an Envirothon coach or improving their coaching skills. Envirothon is a natural resource competition for high school students, and coaches guide students as they learn about how to address real-world environmental issues. Teachers from all three counties—Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward—were in attendance. New coaches were able to learn from veteran coaches, who shared their experiences and advice.

Conservation Corner

Tips to "Green" the Holidays

This year, instead of throwing your holiday scraps into the trashcan, consider composting or repurposing them! According to the WorldWatch Institute, each year the United States <u>produces an extra 5 million pounds</u> <u>of household waste</u> between Thanksgiving and New Year's, which includes three times as much food waste when compared to the rest of the year. In addition to enjoying leftovers, composting is a great way to minimize your holiday waste. The National Waste & Recycling Association offers the following tips for composting or repurposing food waste.



- Meat cannot be composted; however, it can be used in stocks, soups, sandwiches, or other dishes.
- Stale bread can be composted, but make sure to bury it in the compost bin to keep pests away. If you'd rather reuse the bread in other recipes, you can make it into croutons or bread crumbs.
- Fruit and vegetable scraps, peels, and rinds can go straight into the compost bin, along with leftover fruit desserts and coffee grounds.
- Even paper towels and paper plates are compostable once they have been dampened and shredded.

For more information on composting, visit <u>https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home</u> or <u>http://www.diynetwork.com/how-to/outdoors/gardening/how-to-compost-and-the-different-types-of-compost-bins</u>. As for Christmas trees, sink pieces of your cut Christmas tree into a backyard pond as a refuge and feeding area for aquatic wildlife.

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Partner Agency News

Farm Service Agency

FSA would like to remind owners and producers to watch their mailbox for the county office <u>Committee Election Ballot</u>. The election will be held for the following candidates in local administrative area (LAA 2):

Janet Hamilton Bowen- lives in the Burkeville area in the Leigh/Lockett, Haytokah/Winningham district which is in Prince Edward County. She is a produce, poultry, and cattle farmer. She is the incumbent and serves as County Committee Chair at this time.

Dennis Christopher- lives in Nottoway County in the Leigh/Lockett, Haytokah/Winningham district. He is a cattle farmer and a logger and serves presently on the County Committee as Advisor.

The elected candidate will serve as a County Committee member for a 3-year term beginning January 1, 2018. Eligible candidates participate or cooperate in FSA programs, are of legal voting age, and reside in the LAA in which the election is being held.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning November 6, 2017. The ballots must be postmarked or returned to the Prince Edward County FSA Office at 100 Dominion Drive, Farmville, Virginia 23901 <u>no later than December 4, 2017</u>. Ballots will be tabulated on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in the Prince Edward/Nottoway County Office conference room. The public is invited to attend.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

If your Private Pesticide Applicator License expires December 31, 2017 and you **have not** attended a recertification program in the last two years, you must attend a recertification meeting by February 28, 2018 (60-day grace period) to maintain your present license. However, if you do not become recertified by December 31, 2017 you cannot purchase restricted-use pesticides legally until you recertify during the grace period. If you do not recertify by February 28, 2018, your license will expire and you will have to take the private pesticide test to regain your license.

Pesticide Licenses are only issued once every two years regardless of how many years of recertification credit you have banked (maximum 4 years).

December 6	Nottoway County: Southern Piedmont AREC, 2375 Darvills Road, Blackstone, VA from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Contact Haley Norton: 434-645-9315
January 4	Amelia County: Amelia County Government Building Conference Room, 16360 Dunn Street, Amelia, VA from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Contact Laura Siegle: 804-561-2481