



Renville County Soil Conservation District

Your Conservation Connection

Spring Newsletter

March 2019

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Spring Decisions

Have you ever daydreamed of warming winds, a bright sunny sky, and little green legs of plants stretching out of the soil as another seed bursts through to the surface? With the sound of chirps and rustling as the birds scavenge for a morning snack and squirrels jump between trees, do you feel the new found hope of another growing season? Another year of new possibilities? Many decisions are made in the winter months, but the final planting decisions come when your drill touches down into that seedbed. It's the beginning of hopeful sowing. As you get out into your fields this year, keep us in mind. Do you need some landscape shake-ups? Any windbreaks that need to be replaced? Are there a few areas in need of some grass plantings? If you are planting trees or seeding grass, please refer to your planting design sheet to ensure you have all of your ground prep completed. If you see an area that could use some trees or that needs to be seeded to grass, stop in or give us a call. Please take a moment to double check your CSP or EQIP contract planned practices and enhancements. Did you change operations of any of your land? Do you need engineering designs? Are you getting all your enhancements implemented on the acres you planned? Please contact the Mohall NRCS office to make sure you are on the same page with your conservation contract plans.



Two Noxious Weeds Added to State list

Two Noxious Weeds Added to State List

BISMARCK— Palmer amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*) and houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale* L.) have been added to the state noxious weed list.

Palmer amaranth is an aggressive pigweed species similar in appearance to waterhemp and was first found in the state last year. It has now been found in five counties.

Houndstongue, which does not spread aggressively like Palmer amaranth, has been found in North Dakota since at least 1911 but infestations have tripled since 2008. It is now found in at least 25 counties.

“Noxious weeds cause millions of dollars in damage to North Dakota crops and forage, and many additional dollars are spent in both public and private efforts to control these weeds,” Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. “In addition to their agronomic impact, noxious weeds adversely affect rural and urban landscapes, tax revenues, recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat.

Palmer amaranth may spread through multiple channels, including: contaminated seed mixes; equipment and machinery movement; animal feed and bedding; and wild birds. It is a prolific seed producer that can emerge throughout the growing season. It grows rapidly at 2-3 inches per day in optimum conditions and is prone to herbicide resistance and multiple modes of action. It is a highly invasive weed that can dramatically cut crop yields. Farmers and ranchers are encouraged to scout fields and pastures frequently to monitor.

Houndstongue is spread when its burr-like seeds are picked up by animals or people moving through infested areas. The infestations are most often found near wooded and riparian areas, making it difficult to control. Houndstongue is toxic to livestock if ingested.

The public is urged to work with local weed officers, extension agents and other experts to identify and report suspect plants.

More information on these and other noxious weeds is available at <https://www.nd.gov/ndda/plant-industries/noxious-weeds>.



*Above: Houndstongue
Below: Palmer amaranth*



Renville County SCD Annual Report

January

Assist in Processing Program Payments
Do end of year tax reports
Present at KMOT Living Ag Classroom
Take Aglearn courses
Prepare annual report

February

Booth at RBAIA Ag Show
Update producers direct deposit forms
Multiple meetings on "ND Soil Conservation Deliverable Planning Partnership"
Plan and prepare for Shop Talks
Order Earth Day shirts

March

Update tree orders and plans
Attend ag pest recertification training
Print out and mail Conservation program renewal letters
Acquisition of contracting documents
Sponsor Shop Talks
Order Litany for Soils Stewardship
Apply for Envirothon grants

April

MRL Envirothon planning meeting
Make Conservation program appointments
Complete and mail spring newsletter
Celebrated Earth Day in Glenburn & Mohall 4th grade
Do quarterly reports
Update newsletter ads
Plant handplants
Complete and submit annual budget

May

Hold Stewardship luncheon for Area Clergy
Call Clients about site prep.
Plant and measure trees
End of year hand plant sale
Complete SCD Audit paperwork and submit to State Auditor

June

Build a community garden for 4-H club
Complete fabric application
Cleanup shop and equipment
Start mowing between tree rows for clients
Tree planting plan designs for Outdoor Heritage Fund
Billing for tree and fabric application

July

Take and submit Achievement award picture and interview
Contact presenters and caterers for ECO-ED and Mouse River Loop Envirothon
Attend Area III meeting
Judge at Renville County Fair
Upload Conservation Stewardship contracts into Computer
Submit Outdoor Heritage Fund applications

August

Prepare for Eco Ed
Prepare of Envirothon
Make Conservation Programs producer copies
Write and mail out newsletter
Prepare and mail out letters to schools for ECO- ED and Envirothon
Sponsor and attend Manure Compost Day

September

Hold 18th annual Mouse River Loop Envirothon
Hold ECO-ED Days at Mouse River Park
Schedule Conservation Stewardship field visit appointments
Submit newspaper articles for local papers about MRLE & Eco Ed
Sponsor and attend annual Field Talks

October

Assist with Conservation Stewardship program contract reviews
Submit ECO-ED and MRLE final report
Prepare for caseron application

November

Apply caseron for clients
Start winter Newsletter
Attend NDASCD Convention in Bismarck
Make preliminary tree order to nurseries

December

Complete and mail out winter newsletter
Update tree orders
Write annual Soil Health Champion report & submit

Continuous:

Hold monthly SCD Board meetings
Partner with NRCS in education and program application
Tree planting plan designs and orders
Report NDSU and NRCS monthly accruals
Do payroll and reports

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." -Andrew Carnegie



Integrated Systems Synergy and Regenerative Agriculture: Crop, grazing, and Soil Health

Douglas Landblom (Beef Cattle Specialist) NDSU Dickinson Research Ext. and Hal Weiser (Soils Specialist) Natural Resources Conservation Service, presented at the Tolley City Hall on February 21st.

The event started with a group discussion on crop rotation and cover crops, failures and successes. Every one was so involved that we almost ran out of time for the actual presentation. Douglas Landblom gave scenarios on diversity of cover crop and crops used for grazing. Hal Weiser demonstrated a rain fall simulator and a slake test on conventional tilled soil and minimum tilled soil. It's amazing how conventional tilled soil erodes away quickly while the minimum tilled soil holds together. As roots from plants grow, glomalin casts off into the soil where it acts as a "super glue," helping sand, silt and clay particles stick to each other and to the organic matter that brings soil to life. It is glomalin that helps give good soil its feel, as smooth clumps of the glued-together particles and organic matter flow through an experienced gardener's or farmers hands.

Thank you Hal and Doug for your insight on regenerative agriculture. This presentation was sponsored by Renville County Soil Conservation District, NRCS and Renville County Extension Service.



Hal Weiser and Douglas Landblom



Hal Weiser demonstrating the slake test and rain fall simulator.

Renville SCD Supervisor — Monte Bloms

Monte Bloms was elected in November to the Renville County SCD board of Supervisors. While working along side his Dad for many years, in 2000 Monte bought his own farm and is very involved with conservation. He established an animal feeding operation which he expanded into a custom feeding operation for 2000 head. Monte is now in the process of establishing a compost site for the feedlot manure which may lead to future marketing opportunities.

Monte and Nikki live on the farm in rural Carpio, they have 3 daughters and a son. Nikki is busy running with the kids to activities and drives school bus for the Berthold School.

Please welcome Monte as a Supervisor for the Renville County Soil Conservation District.



Earth Day Word Search

EARTH DAY

Name: _____



LET'S CELEBRATE EARTH DAY!

Word search grid with a world map background:

X M R E D U C E
 Q F Q Q P S A M E O M T
 C P B T S O L A R J R R P W
 L A N D F I L L C K D E U N R A
 T W E N T Y S E C O N D S A W E B P
 O Q W P U J M W I C C K O H P U E J
 I D G L O B A L P C A A T U K S S C J F
 Y E S B R J S M M E Z P W R O K E O T B
 A B S V R C L I M A T E W C E B V S R A
 D F L I T T E R I N G T U E K J F Y E A
 V L F N X E B Q I N Q P B L W O U S C P
 O P U Q K L S L D R Q V A A J Z C T Y R
 A X A Z H N J P D R C O M P O S T E C I
 Y U C G R E E N P O L L U T I O N M L L
 P L A N T I N G M S W X D O W Y U E
 M C V O Q I J C O N S E R V E U H U
 A T R E E S O T R A S H T W N P
 X N A K D Z B P P C G K Q A
 G C G J P J R O E Z G E
 D O E A R T H N

APRIL CLIMATE COMPOST CONSERVE EARTH ECOSYSTEM GLOBAL GREEN

SOLAR TRASH TREES TWENTY SECOND

LANDFILL LITTERING PLANTING POLLUTION RECYCLE REDUCE RESOURCE REUSE

Earth Day is a day that is intended to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment. On April 22, 1970, people all over the Country made promises to help the environment and the tradition continues.

There are so many ways to celebrate the Earth every day, but many like to take that extra step and do a little something more for the Earth on April 22 by planting a tree or participating in a community cleanup event. Planting trees helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleans pollutions, secures soil in place to prevent erosion and provides homes for a lot of biodiversity.

Appreciate the Earth by recycling, starting a compost pile, replace light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs and donate old electronics instead of throwing them away. Another way to celebrate earth day is by conserving water. Shut the water off while brushing your teeth, fix dripping faucets, water a plant or your pet with that 1/2 bottle or glass of water instead of dumping down the drain.

Renville County SCD will be celebrating Earth Day with MLS and Glenburn 4th grade students. We go to the schools and give a presentation about our natural resources, weather permitting we go outside and pick up garbage on the school grounds. For the students hard work, they each receive a Earth day T-shirt to remind them to celebrate Earth day every day.



Cows & Crops

By Jay Fuhrer, NRCS Soil Health Specialist

Livestock Integration into cropland to improve soil health. The next frontier and a possible key in jump starting our soil into a healthy system. The Soil Health foundation consist of five principles which are: soil armor, minimizing soil disturbance, plant diversity, continual live plant/root, and livestock integration. So why are animals important for building soil health?

Animals, plants and soils have played a synergistic role together over geological time. In recent years, animals are playing a reduced role due to being placed in confinement and fewer farms now include livestock as part of their overall operation.

Why do we want to return livestock to the landscape? Fall or winter grazing to convert high carbon annual crop residue to low carbon organic material; balancing

the carbon/nitrogen ratio and managing our crop rotation residue for no-till seeding. Spring or summer grazing annual and/or perennial plants with short exposure periods followed by long recovery periods; allows the plants to regrow and harvest additional sunlight and CO₂. Reduce nutrient export from our cropland and hay land fields. In lieu of transporting feed to a feed lot, we can reverse the roles and have the livestock graze the material in place. Recycling the majority of nutrients, minerals, vitamins, and carbon. Manage weed pressure by grazing in lieu of herbicide. Grazing cover crops and/or crop residues allow us to take the livestock off the perennial grasslands earlier in the fall. Extending the grass recovery period and providing a higher livestock nutritional diet. Grazing reduces livestock waste associated with confinement; helping manage our

water quality and nutrient management concerns. Allowing cattle and sheep to be herbivores by securing their energy needs from plants.

How do we return livestock to the landscape? Winter and fall grazing cover crops and annual crop residues. Summer grazing a full season cover crop, allowing adequate plant recovery, followed by a second grazing during the fall or winter. Winter feeding on hay land fields by rolling out bales or bale grazing. Seed rotational perennials, graze and manage as part of the crop rotation.





Wind Erosion Tools — Field Windbreaks

Weeds are defined as any plant growing where it is not wanted. As some trees get older and begin breaking down and as farm equipment gets wider, some of our field windbreaks turn into a farmer's "weeds." Hence we see many field windbreaks coming out all across North Dakota. To many of us, who don't see these as weeds, we see this as a travesty. And for some of us, we become anxious that the loss of these field windbreaks could only mean we are getting ready to repeat history.

Many field windbreaks were planted in the 1960s; which means many are over 50 years old and have outlived their lifespan. So yes, many are ready to be removed. But they did serve a purpose. Field Windbreaks are living snow fences. After late season crops come off, field windbreaks help to slow the wind crossing your field. They act as wildlife corridors from food & water sources and provide needed shelter and cover for many native birds, mammals, and reptiles. Beneficial insects use field windbreaks as their edge habitat along crop fields to overwinter. Not to mention, trees slow the wind down. Did you hear they slow the wind down?

Wind Erosion is thought to be controlled by no till and direct seeding practices; however, with some of our diverse crop rotations that don't get harvested until later in the fall we are still seeing soil movement from 10 mph winds. Another way to look at it, phosphorous and potassium attach to clay particles, which are the dust we are cleaning up in our houses, washing down the street in our cities, and the sediment washing into our streams and rivers. So by planting field windbreaks in the right locations with some compromises for the larger equipment, could prove to be highly advantageous for our future generations



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SCD Board & Staff

Randy Bryans ~Chairman
Brian Johnson ~Vice Chairman
Patrick Murphy ~Supervisor
Jeffrey Aalund ~Supervisor
Monte Bloms ~Supervisor
Dara Abernathey ~SCD Manager

NRCS

Lena Bohm ~ District Conserva-
tionist
Bruce Baska ~ Technician

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"Shop Talks 2019"

Why are the snow drifts black? What really does move when the wind blows? We lost how many nutrients with our topsoil? Join us for an informal interactive discussion in regards to wind erosion, crop rotation, and soil health. Featured speakers are Hal Weiser, NRCS Soils Specialist, Cody Clemenson, NDFS Forest Stewardship Specialist, and Dane Buysse, Conservation Programs Biologist.

*Join us on
Tuesday, March 26th, 2019*

10:00 AM

*Jason Overby's Shop
4150 99th St NW
Mohall, ND 58761*

Lunch will be served

Sponsored by Renville County SCD, NRCS, and Renville County Farmers Union

