



# Conservation Quarterly

Summer 2015

CLARK COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## *It's Fair Time!*

The annual Clark County 4-H Fair will be held July 11-18, and the Clark County SWCD staff has been busy making preparations. The SWCD would like to invite you to stop by their Natural Resources Conservation Facility (located at the rear of the Fairgrounds), and enjoy the activities, view the demonstrations and displays, and visit with the guests scheduled to appear. The Natural Resources area will be open Monday through Friday evenings, July 13-17, from 6-9 p.m. We will be accepting canned food donations for the **Farmers Care County Food Drive** throughout the week. Please consider donating to help feed Clark County's hungry.



**Monday, July 13**

*Indiana Heritage Night*

**Visit with the Lincolns!** **Mary Todd and Abraham** will be touring our area throughout the evening. Come visit with them and take pictures. You may even get to hear Lincoln give the Gettysburg Address! Clark County Historian, **Jeanne Burke**, will also be on hand to answer your questions about Clark County's early history and its' ties to the Lincolns.

**Tuesday, July 14**

*Year of the Farmer—Agriculture Night*

We are joining with Dow Agro-Sciences and the Indiana State Fair Commission as they showcase the Past, Present, & Future of Hoosier Agriculture by dedicating the 2015 Indiana State Fair to the families that make it happen: The Year of the Farmer. **Chef Nancy Russman**, director of the Culinary Arts Department at Jefferson Community & Technical College, will be preparing recipes on the grill using farm fresh ingredients. Local beekeeper, **Mike Whisman**, will be with us to answer your beekeeping questions or introduce you to keeping bees.



**Wednesday, July 15**

*Chainsaw Carving Demo*

**Bear Paws Chainsaw Carving**, Brandenburg, KY, will be on hand to demonstrate the delicate skills of carving wood with a chainsaw. Carved items will be available for purchase or can be ordered.



**Thursday, July 16**

*Forestry and Wildlife Night*

A very popular guest at our 2014 fair, **Mark Booth of Take Flight! Wildlife Education**, will be back with his raptor presentation. Our **District Wildlife Biologist**, and **District Forester**, will be on hand to answer your forestry and wildlife questions. Learn how to create and monitor your own **Blue Bird Trail!**

**Friday, July 17**

No activities, SWCD exhibit building open

## Walnut Twig Beetle Detected in Indiana

The Walnut Twig Beetle (WTB), the insect involved in Thousand Cankers Disease of Black Walnut (TCD), has been detected in Indiana for the first time at a Franklin County sawmill. TCD is caused by a fungus that is transmitted by WTB.

The beetles bore into walnut branches, feeding on the tree's tissues and depositing the fungus that creates a canker, or



dead area, under the bark. Multiple feedings cause the formation of thousands of cankers under the bark and destroy the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. Gradually the tree dies.

The sawmill has been quarantined, and is working with DNR to destroy walnut material on the property to prevent movement of TCD from the property. Franklin county is not under quarantine because TCD has not been detected in a walnut tree in the county.

Movement of walnut logs, lumber and other walnut material within Indiana is not restricted, nor is movement into and out of Indiana.

More information on TCD can be found at [dnr.IN.gov/entomolo/6249.htm](http://dnr.IN.gov/entomolo/6249.htm).

## Soil Testing Service Offered

The Clark County SWCD is now offering soil testing services for homeowners seeking fertilizer recommendations for their lawn and gardens.

Soil samples may be brought to the SWCD office at 9608 Highway 62, Charlestown. Soil sample bags are available at no charge from the SWCD. Cost of a basic test is \$22; a more extensive test is \$32. Both tests provide suggested fertilizer recommendations for up to three crops (i.e. lawn, flowers, trees).

Samples delivered to the SWCD by the close of business on Thursday of each week will be analyzed and recommendations returned by the end of the following week.



## Rent our Equipment

**No-Till Drill - \$8 per acre**

**Outback S2 Guidance Systems -**

**\$10 per day**

**Call 812-256-2330, ext. 3 for scheduling**

**Stop by our office and sign an Equipment Rental Agreement**

### Dates to Note

- 7/2/15—Monthly Board Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 7/3/15—Independence Day Holiday, SWCD office closed
- 7/11-7/18/15—Clark County 4H Fair
- 8/6/15—Monthly Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 9/3/15—Monthly Board meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 9/7/15—Labor Day Holiday, SWCD office closed.

## Enter Our Photo Contest!

The Clark County SWCD is now accepting entries for its ninth annual Photo Contest. The contest is open to amateur photographers (those who make less than 50% of their income from photography). Youth (17 and under) and Adult (18 and over) divisions are offered. Entry categories are: *In the Garden, Farmers, On the Farm, Farm Animals*.

One winner will be selected in each division in each of the four categories. Each winner will receive an award and a certificate, as well as recognition in the District newsletter and website. Winning photos will be displayed during the Clark County 4-H Fair in the SWCD's Natural Resources Conservation Education Area. Entry forms and more information may be obtained by contacting the SWCD office at 256-2330, ext. 3, or by visiting [www.clarkswcd.org](http://www.clarkswcd.org).

## USDA Restarts Biomass Crop Assistance Program

USDA recently announced the agency will be restarting the Biomass crop Assistance Program (BCAP). BCAP provides financial assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and non-industrial private forest land who wish to establish, produce, and deliver biomass feedstock. BCAP offers two types of assistance:

- Matching payment for the delivery of eligible materials to qualified biomass conversion facilities. Qualified biomass conversion facilities produce heat, power, biobased products, or advanced fuel from biomass.
- Annual payments may be available for those who enter into an agreement with the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to produce biomass crops. These crops must be on contracted acres within BCAP project areas.

To learn more about the Biomass Crop Assistance Program visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/energy-programs/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/energy-programs/index).

## A Hedge against Drought: Why Healthy Soil is 'Water in the Bank'

While most look to the sky for drought relief, an increasing number of farmers are looking to the soil. And for good reason: Healthy soils capture and store much more water – which can come in handy during dry spells.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service is leading the effort to get more farmers and ranchers to adopt soil health management systems for a wide range of on- and off-farm benefits – including drought resiliency.

So what's the water-banking secret in healthy soil? Organic matter and living organisms provide the foundation for soil to function properly, allowing it to take in, store and deliver water to plants, among many other benefits.

Organic matter causes soil to form stable soil aggregates, or crumbs. With better soil structure, infiltration of water into the soil improves, which allows the entire soil profile to take in and hold more water when it rains. Healthy soil acts much like a sponge, with its ability to absorb and hold much of its volume in water.

In healthy soil, earthworms, arthropods and decaying roots create "macro-pores" into which water can flow to then be stored in the soil. Bacteria, fungi and other soil life build and stabilize smaller 'micro-pores' that further increase the soil's capacity to hold water.

Contrary to conventional thought, plowing or tillage actually **reduces** the capacity of the soil to receive and hold water over time. That's because tillage destroys soil aggregates and the biologically produced glues that hold soil aggregates together. This results in the collapse of those aggregates and the pores between them, which leads to compaction, crusting, increased run-off and downstream flooding, all of which decreases the amount of water that enters the soil profile to be stored and used by crops.

**DID YOU KNOW?** unlock the SECRETS OF SOIL

FOR EACH **1%** INCREASE IN **organic matter** U.S. CROPLAND COULD STORE THE AMOUNT OF **water** THAT FLOWS OVER NIAGARA FALLS IN **150 DAYS**

Like a "water savings account," healthy soils capture and store more water for plants to use when they need it.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service  
[www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

As soil health improves, so too does its hydrologic function. This graphic illustrates how much additional water could be stored in the soil of all U.S. cropland with the addition of 1 percent of organic matter.

By farming using soil health principles and practices adapted to each local production system, such as reducing tillage, growing cover crops and diversifying rotations, farmers are actually increasing microbial activity, building organic matter and sequestering more carbon in their soil. They are improving its ability to take in and hold 'water in the bank.' They're even creating wildlife and pollinator habitat—all while decreasing risks from extreme weather and harvesting better profits and often better yields.

All of us can take those soil health benefits to the bank!

## Clean Water Indiana Funds Now Available for Conservation Practices

The Clark, Jackson, Jefferson, and Scott County SWCD's jointly applied for, and received, a 2015 Clean Water Indiana grant. This grant provides \$75,000 to be used over the next three years in the four counties. The purpose of the grant is to reduce sediment and nutrients from non-point sources in an effort to improve water quality.



Participants of this incentive project, will be required to complete a soil test, consult with an industry professional on the soil test recommendations, utilize a no-till cropping system, and plant cover crops. Buffer practices may be installed as needed. The combination of these best management practices can have a significant impact on farming practices both in the present and future years.

Once these tasks are completed according to Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) specifications, participants are eligible for an incentive payment of \$20/acre on the applied acres. Participants may receive payments for up to 100 acres (per calendar year) upon completion and verification of the practices. Contact the Clark County SWCD at (812) 256-2330, ext. 3, or visit the SWCD website at [www.clarkswcd.org](http://www.clarkswcd.org), for an application and more information.

9608 Highway 62  
Charlestown, IN 47111  
812-256-2330, ext. 3  
Fax: 855-391-1921 (toll free)



**CLARK COUNTY  
SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

**Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Charlestown, IN  
Permit No. 6**

*SWCD Supporters....we thank you!*

*Clark County Farm Bureau  
Dan Cristiani Excavating  
Farm Credit Mid-America  
Huber Orchard & Winery  
TGJE II  
Kruer Grading-Seeding, Inc.*

*Jim O'Neal Ford  
Memphis Meat Processing  
New Washington State Bank  
Wright Brothers Implement Sales  
Sanders Farm Service—Pioneer Seed*

## **Indiana Limits Bird Movements to Protect Against Avian Influenza**

INDIANAPOLIS (27 May 2015)—To protect Indiana's poultry from potential exposure to H5 avian influenza virus, the members of the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) have ceased all bird movements to events in the state that allow commingling of birds from different locations. This includes shows, exhibitions and public sales (such as flea markets, swap meets, sale barns). This prohibition will stand until further notice, likely through the end of 2015.

The action does not apply to private sales between individuals.

"This was not a decision made lightly," said Indiana State Veterinarian Bret D. Marsh, DVM. "The spread of the H5 viruses has been unprecedented, and our goal is to protect the health of small, backyard poultry flocks as much as our commercial industry from this disease."

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), while deadly to domestic poultry, does not present a food safety threat. Further, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention has stated the virus poses little risk to human health.

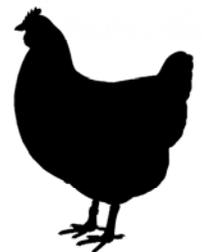
Sixteen states, primarily in the Upper Midwest, have had diagnosed cases of HPAI, resulting in the deaths of more than 40 million birds. Indiana had a single, backyard flock diagnosed earlier this month.

Dr. Marsh explained that BOAH plans to open a public comment opportunity in June to receive input from poultry owners and others about strategies to reopen public shows and sales. "We are looking for ways to restore our public bird events in a way that will reduce or eliminate opportunities for disease to spread and threaten backyard flocks statewide.

Poultry owners who notice illness in their birds consistent with avian influenza are encouraged to call the Healthy Birds Hotline at 866-536-7593 to speak with a state or federal veterinarian.

***Hoosiers who notice five or more dead feeder-type wild birds should contact the Indiana Department of Natural Resources at 812-334-1137.***

More information about Indiana's response to HPAI is online at: [www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm](http://www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm).



*District activities and programs will be made available to all citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, marital status or disability.*