

DAVIDSON

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Davidson County Agriculture Center - 301 East Center Street
Lexington, NC 27292
Telephone: (336) 242-2075

CONSERVATION Update

Published quarterly to provide information to the land users.

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Volume XXVIII, No. 1

Winter, 2015

Soil Health – The Key to Protection and Profitability

On December 9th the District working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service hosted a Soil Health Workshop featuring NRCS Agronomist Ray Archuleta. Mr. Archuleta is nationally recognized for his work demonstrating how improving soil health not only improves and protects the soil, but also how better soil health results in improved profitability for the farmer. Through a series of demonstrations and reviews of on farm results, Mr. Archuleta showed those in attendance how quickly changing to a production system that mimics natural systems produces positive results for the soil and for the farmer.



Ray Archuleta shows the results of a rainfall simulation



Cover crop mixture

Improving soil health revolves around minimizing soil disturbance, increasing the amount of organic matter that is returned to the soil and, keeping a living root in the soil as close to year round as possible. The use of crop residues and a variety of cover crops are vital to “feeding” the ecosystem in the soil that helps to makes the soil more resistant to erosion, increases water infiltration and holding capacity, reduces weed and disease pressure, and reduces chemical inputs necessary to produce a profitable crop.

Russell Hedrick, a new farmer from Catawba County, reported to the group on his experiences using Mr. Archuleta’s soil health principals. He related how following the tenants of a soil health management system greatly reduced the amount of inputs required to produce a good crop and how this improved his profits. Mr. Hedrick uses a no-till system of corn and soybeans that incorporates multiple species of cover crops between the corn and soybeans.



Results from rainfall simulator test.

NRCS Agronomist, Steve Woodruff, demonstrated a rainfall simulator to show how management and soil health impact the infiltration of rainfall and the water holding ability of the soil. The most dramatic demonstration showed how a sample that mimicked conventional tillage with no soil health management did not allow water to move into the soil. After applying the equivalent of a one-inch rain, the sample was wet at the surface and completely dry less than one-half of an inch deep.

Dana Ashford-Kornburger State Conservation Agronomist, discussed various methods for terminating cover crops, including chemical and mechanical means.

NRCS District Conservationist Kay Anderson, and District Resource Specialist Lloyd Phillips, worked diligently to make this event a success. The Workshop was sponsored by Lake Phelps Grain, Carolina Farm Credit, and Center Seed.

~ Reminders ~

All programs and services provided by the Davidson Soil and Water Conservation District are available to you at no cost.

Soil Conservation is easy if you do it with a Plan, One Step at a Time.

Pick up an application in our office to become a member of the Voluntary Agriculture District.

Thank you for your interest in soil and water conservation.

For more information, call our office at 336-242-2075

Wetlands are Wonderful

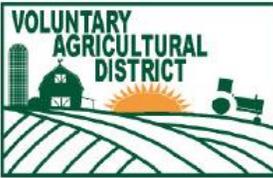
2014-2015 Essay and Poster Contest Winners

County Essay Contest Winner – **Taylor Williams** – Tyro Middle School
 County Poster Contest Winner – **Ashley Godwin** – Ledford Middle School

Essay Contest Winners	Poster Contest Winners
Central Davidson Middle School..... Hylton Baker	Central Davidson Middle School..... Abby Houser
E. L. Brown Middle School..... Kendall Fussell	E. L. Brown Middle School..... Adam Gilbert
Ledford Middle School..... Jordan Byrd	North Davidson Middle School..... Abby Craver
North Davidson Middle School..... Ethan Byrd	Oak Grove Middle School..... Emily Bowen
Oak Grove Middle School..... Reagan Wilder	South Davidson Middle School..... Madison Austin
South Davidson Middle School..... Jacob Pope	Tyro Middle School..... Kara Henrickson

NOTICE: We are required by The North Carolina Department of Revenue to collect and remit 7% Sales and Use Tax for renting our no till drill. We will need your tax exemption certificate if you are exempt from sales tax. Please bring your tax exemption certificate with you when you come to pick up our Truax No-Till Drill.

"The Nation that destroys it' soil destroys itself." Franklin D. Roosevelt

 <p>Voluntary Agricultural District</p>	<p>Davidson County Farmland Protection Plan</p> <p>The vision of the Davidson County Voluntary Agricultural District Farmland Protection Plan is "To enhance the economic viability of Davidson County's working lands in a manner consistent with community character, the County's development needs, and industry growth requirements, while protecting key agricultural assets." Your support of Davidson County Farmland Protection Plan is important to the continued success of agriculture and forestry in Davidson County.</p>	<p>Soil is More Than Just Dirt!</p> <p>Soil is "The Wealth Beneath Our Feet". Soil makes up the outermost layer of our planet. Topsoil is the most productive soil layer. It has varying amounts of organic matter (living and dead organisms) minerals and nutrients. An average soil sample is 45% minerals, 25% water, 25% air, and 5% organic matter.</p>
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Help Conserve natural resources, energy, water, soil, native plants and wildlife.

WHAT HARMS THE SOIL - EROSION

Erosion is the wearing away of the earth's surface by wind or water. Erosion happens anywhere the soil is left unprotected. Three types of erosion caused by water are sheet erosion, rill erosion, and gully erosion. Erosion begins with the first rain drop falling on bare unprotected soil, which loosens soil particles. When enough rain falls, runoff water carries soil particles away. Most erosion today is caused by uncontrolled water runoff. The Dust Bowl Era is the best example of how wind erosion can affect people. During the 1930's drought, harsh winds and poor farming practices led to one of the greatest natural disasters in our nation's history. Wind storms blew the topsoil off fields from the Midwest through Texas destroying crops and devastating farms. Eroded soils filled the skies, and in some places, from two inches to one foot of topsoil were lost. We can protect the soil from wind or water erosion by using Best Management Practices which helps keep the soil productive and healthy. Good conservation practices protect our soils for the future.

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For more information about anything in this newsletter, call us at 336-242-2075 or check us out on the Web: www.co.davidson.nc.us

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