



Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District
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1st Quarter Edition Newsletter January 2015

Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District
64th Annual Meeting
Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 6:00 pm
Rolling Hills Shrine Club
Dinner by: Rolling Pin Catering
Cost: \$12 per adult and \$6 per child (10 & under)

This event will reflect the work of the district staff and partners over the 2014 calendar year. Our featured speaker will be Kevin Cox. His program is about growing up on a farm and all that goes with it. His focus is on laughing at life with the challenge of MAKING A DIFFERENCE in the world! We look forward to having Kevin at our event and we're positive you will leave with an improved outlook after hearing him speak.

Tickets may be purchased at the Jennings County SWCD Monday thru Friday 8am – 4pm. We do need a RSVP for the meal by Thursday, February 19th. Please call us at 812-346-3411 X3 to make reservations. Please join us to see what your Soil & Water Conservation District office is doing in Jennings County.



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Conservation Plans Solve Problems on the Farm

While USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers financial assistance through conservation programs, the most valuable thing the agency offers may be free. The agency's Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program allows conservation planners to work directly with farmers to develop customized conservation plans on their farms.

According to NRCS District Conservationist Jenny Vogel, "We offer financial assistance to farmers to apply conservation practices, but we also offer the technical assistance needed to develop farm conservation plans for free. As a federal agency, NRCS utilizes its CTA budget to offer conservation planning at no cost to the landowner. It's a big part of how we meet our mission, which is *helping people help the land*," says Vogel. "And, by developing conservation plans now, farmers can move to the front of the line when conservation program funds become available."

"Farmers today are top notch managers and know production agriculture. At NRCS, it's our job to know natural resources and what it takes to apply conservation measures to farm land to solve natural resources issues," says Vogel. "We have broad experience in knowing which conservation practices can work to help farmers reduce erosion, improve soil and water quality, provide a place for wildlife, and continue raising good crops."

"When I meet with a producer on a farm visit, I am there to look at the whole picture or the whole system that is in place, not just a single facet. I am there to provide the best alternative not only for the farm and the resources, but also for that producer," Vogel said. "The field planning visits consist of critical dialog between the planner and the producer. That conversation allows the planner to understand what you are doing, what the issues are and where that producer wants to be in the long run. Without that information, we can only prescribe band aids," says Vogel.

In Jennings County, you can start the planning process by visiting NRCS at the local USDA Service Center in North Vernon, or by calling 346-3411 ext. 3. "A conservation plan is the key to addressing natural resource issues with solutions that fit your farm operation," says Jenny Vogel, NRCS District Conservationist. "And now is a good time to get started."

*****Upcoming Events*****

Shop Meetings

Tuesday, March 17 @ Nelson Ponsler's

Wednesday, March 18 @ Andy Maschino's

Larry Huffmeyer, CCSI Hub Farmer, discussion about never till, cover crops and herbicide resistance in cover crops

David Hicks, Sales Representative, Advanced Drainage, discussing about tile and drainage water management

Agency Updates from Josey Huffmeyer, ANR Educator, Jennings Co. Extension Service; Lacie Deputy, County Executive Director, Farm Service Agency; Jerry Hay, Business Program Specialist, Rural Development; Doug Kirby, Farm Loan Specialist, Farm Agency Service; Rob McGriff, DNR, District Forester; Bob Steiner, Executive Director, Jennings Co SWCD; and Jenny Vogel, NRCS, District Conservationist.

Please RSVP by Thursday, March 12 for a lunch count to 346-3411x3.

SEPAC BUSINESS OF AGRICULTURE SERIES

February 10, February 24, March 10, March 24

February 10; 6-9 PM; SEPAC
**Farm Bill Choices
and Decision Aids**

February 24; 6-9 PM; SEPAC
**Applied Research
on Your Farm**

March 10; 6-9 PM; SEPAC
**Forages and
Livestock Nutrition**

March 24; 9:30 AM – Noon;
Cox Livestock- Osgood, IN
**Livestock Handling
for Farmers and Law
Enforcement**



Please Register by February 7 or one week prior to session.

Purdue Extension-Jennings County

812-352-3033

This meeting is made possible thanks to our generous sponsors:



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that encourages agricultural producers to improve conservation systems by improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities and undertaking additional conservation activities. The Natural Resources Conservation Service administers this program and provides financial and technical assistance to eligible producers. CSP is available on Tribal and private agricultural lands and non-industrial private forestland (NIPF) on a continuous application basis.

CSP offers financial assistance to eligible participants through two possible types of payments. Annual payments are for installing and adopting additional activities; and improving, maintaining, and managing existing activities. Supplemental payments are for the adoption of resource-conserving crop rotations.

Payments will be made for conservation performance payments points estimated for each agricultural operation by the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT). Conservation performance points are unique for each agricultural operation and will be based on existing and proposed conservation activities.

Contracts cover the eligible land in the entire agricultural operation and are for five years. For all contracts entered into, CSP payments to a person or legal entity may not exceed \$40,000 in any fiscal year, and \$200,000 during any five-year period. Each CSP contract will be limited to \$200,000 over the term of the initial contract period. "Enhancement" means a type of conservation activity used to treat natural resources and improve conservation performance. Enhancements are installed at a level of management intensity that exceeds the sustainable level for a given resource concern. Those directly related to a practice standard are applied in a manner that exceeds the minimum treatment requirements of the standard.

The first step in applying for the Conservation Stewardship Program is to complete the Conservation Stewardship Self-Screening Checklist. This checklist addresses the three aspects of eligibility, including land eligibility, applicant eligibility, and the stewardship threshold requirement.

Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) questions for Indiana and a Conservation Activity List are available to help producers document their existing resource conditions and conservation activities. An applicant should complete these questions prior to meeting with NRCS personnel to complete the CMT.

Ranking of applications and payment level depend on the numerical value received after the applicant completes the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT). When the applicant has prepared answers to the questions, he/she needs to schedule an appointment with the local NRCS district conservationist at the nearest USDA Service Center to continue processing the application.

During the CMT interview, the applicant will decide which new conservation activities to undertake as part of his/her CSP contract. These conservation activities will factor into the CMT value received.

After the CMT is completed by the applicant and NRCS, a ranking score and conservation payment points will be evaluated for contract pre-approval. If the contract is pre-approved, an NRCS representative will conduct an on-site verification of the conservation activities reported by the applicant.

When all conservation activities have been field verified, a Conservation Stewardship Plan will be developed for the implementation of the additional conservation activities. At this point, the contract will be submitted for funding. If the contract is approved for funding, the Conservation Stewardship Plan is carried out according to schedule.

Contract payments will be made as soon as practical after October 1 of each year for contract activities applied. For questions about this program contact the office at 346-3411 ext. 3

Farm Family Safety Workshop

Join us for an event and meal to learn more about safety on the farm for the whole family.



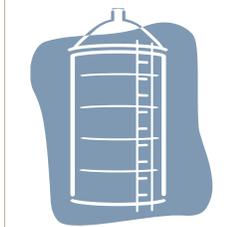
First Aid

Do you know how to help a family member if there was an accident? This session will inform you about a few first aid techniques that may come in use on the farm.



Emergency Preparedness

How will you react in the case of an emergency? This session will help you and your family plan and be prepared in the case of an emergency.



Grain Safety

Working with grain bins can be very dangerous. Do you know proper safety to keep your family out of danger? This session will cover the basics of grain safety.



ATV Safety

Many farm families use all-terrain vehicles on the farm. This session will provide families with demonstrations on how to use these vehicles on the farm safely.

WHEN: February 28, 2015, 9 AM – 12.

WHERE: Southeast Purdue Agricultural Center.

RSVP: Please register by February 26 with

Jennings County Purdue Extension at 812-352-3033

Lunch provided at the conclusion of the program thanks to our generous sponsors.

**Jennings County SWCD
2600 N. State Hwy 7
North Vernon, IN 47265**

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Return Service Requested

YOUR JENNINGS COUNTY CONSERVATION TEAM

SWCD Staff

*Robert Steiner, Executive Director
Kelly Kent, Administrative Assistant
Denise Dailey, Rule 5 Consultant*

NRCS STAFF

Jenny Vogel, District Conservationist

SWCD Supervisors

*Brad Ponsler, Chairman
Dan Megel, Vice-Chairman
Jerry St. John
Matt Branham
Nathan Burbrink
Associate Supervisor
Don Biehle
Rob McGriff
Tom Schneider*

Calendar of Events

**Feb. 24, 2015 Board Meeting 7pm @
USDA Service Center**
**Feb. 26, 2015 Annual Meeting @ Rolling
Hills Shrine Club 6:00pm**
**Mar. 17, 2015 Shop Meeting @ Nelson
Ponsler's Time TBD**
**Mar. 18, 2015 Shop Meeting @ Andy
Maschino's Time TBD**
**Mar. 26, 2015 Board Meeting 7pm @
USDA Service Center**

*Jennings County Soil and Water
Conservation District
Office Hours
Monday—Friday
8:00 am until 4:00 pm
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