



Sand Creek Watershed Update

Volume 2

A Publication of the Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District

Issue 2

Pasture Walk Scheduled for September 6 at Clark Farm

The farm of Allen and Marcy Clark near Brewersville will be the site of a pasture walk on September 6, beginning at 5 PM. The Clarks raise Boer goats and the primary topic of discussion for the evening will be management of goat herds. However, goats can fill a valuable role in a cattle operation and that will be also be discussed.

Because of increasing demand for goats and the presence of a processing plant in Jennings County specializing in goats, the Sand Creek Watershed Steering Committee and the Soil and Water Conservation District felt that an educational meeting on the topic of goats would be beneficial to many landowners.

Speakers for the evening include Gil Myers of Magnolia, Kentucky. He is a livestock parasitologist and works as a private consultant providing service on parasite control and prevention. Robert Zupancic, Grazing Specialist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, will discuss the role of goats with cattle herds, pasture management and fencing. Donnie Brewer of Brewer Livestock at Lovett will discuss what makes an ideal market goat.

The Clark farm is located at 300 W County Road 580 N which is just south and west of Brewersville, and is about two miles northeast of the Jennings County 4-H fairgrounds. Anyone is welcome to attend this free event, but RSVP would be appreciated so that we can supply adequate amounts of handout materials. Also, plans are to have available a variety of goat food products for people to sample after the meeting. It would also be advisable to bring lawn chairs. For more information, contact the SWCD at 812-346-3411 X3.



Marcy and Allen Clark will host the pasture walk on September 6 at their farm in Sand Creek Township

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326 W Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (202)720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Conservation Tillage Increases In Jennings County

Since 1990, your Soil and Water Conservation District, in cooperation with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency, along with Purdue Cooperative Extension Service have cooperated to conduct tillage transects about every two to three years. This consists of driving a pre-determined route with over 200 points in the county and recording types of crops and the planting methods that were used to produce the crops.

This year's transect information is in and shows that conservation tillage, especially no-till, was used more than ever in the county. For 2007, 65% of the soybean fields were no-tilled and another 23% of the soybeans were planted with other forms of reduced tillage which left some residue on the surface of the soil after planting. By contrast, only 50% of the soybeans were no-tilled in 2004. Looking farther back, only 8% of the farmers used no-till for soybeans in 1990.

For the 2007 corn crop, 37% was no-tilled. This was also an increase over recent years. Another 7% was planted with other forms of reduced tillage. The 2004 transect showed only 28% of the corn was no-tilled. These numbers have grown from 1990, when only 11% of the corn was no-tilled.

It was somewhat surprising that there was such a significant increase in no-till considering that many fields were rutted due to wet conditions during the 2006 harvest. However, many farmers are taking advantage of the benefits of no-till such as fuel savings, time savings, and the need for less equipment. One of the most important benefits is the increase in soil quality that goes with no-till as well as the reduction in soil erosion which can be up to 90% less than with conventional tillage.

The steering committee of the Sand Creek Watershed is considering putting together a program this winter for the benefit of farmers who want to know more about no-till. If you have specific questions or topics you would like to see covered, let us know what they are.

Web Sites of Interest

No-Till Farmer

www.notillfarmer.com

Purdue's Pasture Management Page

www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/forages/rotational/pastures/pasture.html

Kentucky Goat Producers Association

www.kentuckygpa.com

Information for Small Scale Farmers in Indiana (applicable to farms of all sizes)

www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/smallscalefarmers.html

Cost-Share Funds Are Still Available

Cost-share funds are still available through the Sand Creek Watershed water quality improvement program. Conservation practices that contribute to erosion control and water quality improvement may be eligible for up to 75% cost-share assistance. Some common practices would include various livestock and pasture/hayland management practices, cover crops, filter strips, tree planting, and no-till planting. Sources of funding include a grant for the Sand Creek watershed, Lake and River Enhancement funds from the state, and federal programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP)

For assistance on determining what practices may be needed on your farm, contact the Soil and Water Conservation District office at 346-3411 X3. Bob Steiner, Watershed Coordinator, is available to visit your farm and help plan for needed practices and assist with selection of a possible cost-share program that may fit your needs.

Water Quality Monitoring Training Available

This past April, several volunteers were trained to do water quality monitoring as part of the volunteer Hoosier Riverwatch program. Since that time, we have had inquiries from others who are interested in getting the training. Recently we have learned that another training session may be available here in Jennings County in September or October. Anyone interested in getting the training should contact the Soil and Water Conservation District to let us know of your interest. We will provide more information as we get it for anyone who wants to take advantage of this free training opportunity.

Tree Sale in Progress

The Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District, in cooperation with the 4-H clubs of Jennings County is conducting a tree sale. Ten varieties of trees are available and include Red Sunset Maple, Thornless Honeylocust, Bur Oak, River Birch, Baldcypress, Pagoda Dogwood, Tulip Poplar, October Glory Maple, White Pine, and Kentucky Coffeetree. All of these are high quality container trees, grown at a central Indiana nursery.

These trees are two to five feet tall, depending on species, and are in 1, 3, or 5 gallon containers. They are being sold for \$25.00 each. Proceeds from the sales will benefit the Soil and Water Conservation District and the 4-H clubs of Jennings County.

Orders will be taken until Friday, August 31st. The trees will be ready to pick up on Friday, September 14th. Orders must be prepaid.

For more information, contact the Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District by

Check out our new web site at www.jenningsswcd.org. Also, let us know what kind of information you would like to see on the site and we will do our best to keep improving the content of the site.

Jennings County SWCD
2600 North State Highway 7
North Vernon, Indiana 47265-9109

Return Service Requested

Jennings County
Soil and Water Conservation District
Office Hours
Monday– Friday
8:00 AM until 4:00 PM
Phone: 812-346-3411 Extension 3
www.jenningswcd.org

Maximizing Your Fertilizer Inputs

Do you want to get all you can out of your fertilizer dollars?. To get the most out of your nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and other nutrients, pH must be at the proper levels.

As pH decreases below 6.5, phosphorus becomes less available. Only about 30 percent as much phosphorus is available when pH is below 6.0 versus when pH is above 6.5. Nitrogen and potassium start becoming less available below pH 6.0. Both are about 30 percent less available at pH 5.5 and 70 percent less available at pH 5.0. As pH continues to fall below 5.0, nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium become so unavailable that they are of little use to a growing plant.

When the pH is in the 4s, other nutrient levels will be high. This is because the nutrients are not available to be taken up by the plants, so they build up in the soil.

The most effective way to raise pH is to apply a good-quality agricultural lime. The two factors that determine quality of lime are the calcium and/or magnesium carbonate content of the liming material and how finely the lime is ground. The more finely ground the lime, the faster it will raise the pH of the soil.

Incorporating lime into the soil makes it react faster than if it is surface applied. However, applying lime whenever it is possible is better than not applying lime at all. If lime is needed, the sooner it is applied the better, since lime can take several months to react and raise pH.

The only way to know if and how much lime is needed is with a soil test. In addition to pH, a buffer index will be reported. This tells how much lime to recommend based on your soil type.

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement C9975482-03 to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use