

October—December, 2023

Newsletter



VAN WERT

Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter

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Cows and Plows

As the new school year begins we are very excited to be in the schools once again. Education coordinator, Tammy Campbell, has a wide variety of educational programs that she teaches to students in Van Wert County. Our most recent event was “Not Just Cows and Plows” that is put on at the Van Wert County Fairgrounds for all area 4th graders.

-The SWCD, in cooperation with Crestview Local Schools, Lincolnview Local Schools, St. Mary’s Parochial and Van Wert City Schools presented a day-long session for students to acquaint them with the primary industry in the county, AGRICULTURE. While some of the students do live on farms, most of them do not have an opportunity to experience what modern-day farming is all about. More important is that the field trip reinforces the social studies and science state standards and curriculum for this age group.

-Local supporting agencies for the event include: Ag Credit, Cooper Farms Cooked Meats, 4-H Council, TruLand Equipment, Maumee Wa-

tershed Conservancy District, Ohio State University Extension Office, Save-A-Lot, Van Wert County Fair Board, Van Wert County Farm Bureau, Van Wert Soil & Water Conservation District, and the Van Wert County Foundation.

-The speakers cover a broad range of topics, including livestock, crops, marketing and production of agricultural products, soil basics, water, and equipment with an emphasis on how technology has changed the way we farm and how agriculture effects our daily lives.

A huge thank you to the presenters for taking time out of their busy schedules to teach our local students. Also, to the sponsors for supporting this event and understanding the importance of teaching our youth.

Thank you to everyone who made this day successful!

Pictures from Cows and Plows



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Special points of interest:

- ✧ *Help save the Monarch Butterfly's by saving milkweed plants*
- ✧ *Cows and Plows*
- ✧ *Water Testing*

Annual Meeting

The Van Wert SWCD held their 74th Annual Meeting by co-hosting with the Van Wert Farm Bureau at the Ag Banquet on Tuesday, August 15 at Life House Church, Van Wert, OH. A SWCD election was held for one supervisor position on the SWCD Board of Supervisors five member Board. Dave Kemler was elected to serve a three year term commencing January 1, 2024.

Dinner was provided by Streetlight Catering.

Hanna Scaggs was the SWCD Scholarship recipient.

Renner Family Farms was recognized by the SWCD and received the Conservation Farmer Award. This award is given to honor individuals for their conservation achievements. Farm Bureau honored their scholarship recipient.

Farm Bureau presented Membership Ag Awards. The Van Wert Ag Hall of Fame Award was presented to Bruce Kennedy for his many agricultural accomplishments.

The SWCD staff gave updates on programs and Farm Bureau went over their year in review. Ag Credit provided centerpieces of flower arrangements that were given as door prizes.

Sponsors for the evening were: Farm Bureau, the Van Wert Soil and Water Conservation District and Ag Credit.

We would like to thank everyone that attended the meeting and are looking forward to next year's meeting.



Renner Family

Conservation
Farmer
Award

Bruce Kennedy
along with his wife
Julie

Ag Hall of Fame
Recipient



Statewide Milkweed Pod Collection Runs Sept 1 –Oct. 31

Due to the drastic decline in monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) populations, the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) and local Soil & Water Conservation Districts are again seeking public involvement to collect common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) seed pods from established plants September 1 through October 31. This is an annual event and we hope you can participate !

The seeds will be used to establish new plantings and additional habitat for the monarch butterfly throughout the buckeye state. These future plantings will increase the food source for the caterpillar stage. Seed pods from common milkweed should be collected **ONLY WHEN THE PODS ARE DRY AND BROWN-GREY** in color. If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, they can be picked. The seeds in green pods will not be viable and won't be able to be used. Be patient and don't collect too soon !

It is best to collect pods into paper bags. Avoid using plastic bags because they can allow mold to develop. It is recommended to wear disposable gloves when picking the handling pods. Ideally, it is recommended to leave at least 50 percent of the seed crop at a given site to allow for natural regrowth of the native population the next growing season. There are situations where total collection can occur. For example: If the field or area will be mowed completely or the area will be converted for crop or development. A collection container is located outside the door of the Van Wert SWCD, 1185 Professional Drive, Van Wert.

For more information on milkweeds refer to this video!

<http://u.osu.edu/beelab/milkweed-seed/>



Adventure on Lake Erie Sept. 2023

The Van Wert SWCD hosted a trip to Lake Erie on September 11. We had the best weather and an amazing time! Our group toured Gibraltar Island, listened to presentations about Algae Blooms, walked through Stone Lab and Aquatic Visitor Center and enjoyed boat cruises. We want to thank everyone who joined us on the trip and hope to do this again in the future.



Cover Crops Roundtable

Paulding County Extension will be hosting an informal roundtable discussion series focused on cover crops. This series will be a place for growers to network, share ideas, and problem solve with one another about the benefits and issues that utilizing cover crops can bring. Roundtables will be geared toward growers with experience utilizing cover crops but are open to anyone from novice to master. Each date will be a stand alone topic, so attendance of all dates is not required. Topics will be determined prior to each month's roundtable to allow for selection of timely issues. This series will *not include* sales presentations. Hosted on Tuesday's each month from 6:30-8:00 pm at the Paulding County Extension office. A light snack will be provided. There is no cost to register and open to producers in Paulding County and beyond. To register, call the extension office at 419-399-8225 or email Rachel Cochran at: Cochran.474@osu.edu. To register online, visit: go.osu.edu/Roundtable23. Meeting dates are as follows: 9/12, 10/12, 11/28, 12/19, 1/9, 2/6.

H2Ohio Update

Crop Year 2023 is completed, and current producers are in the process of verifying their practices. If you are enrolled in the H2Ohio program currently and have not gotten your practices verified, please contact Kady as soon as possible.

H2Ohio is currently enrolling producers for up to a 2-year contract (2024 and 2025 crop year). There has been updates and changes to the program's practice guidelines. One big change for the H2Ohio program is it has now moved to an online format call MyFarms. This will allow us to keep better track of producers' Best Management Practices and improve the organization of the program.

If interested in enrolling, please set up a meeting with Kady Fuhrmann to discuss what the H2Ohio program has to offer and

if it is the best fit for your farming practices. The new practice standards are posted on our website, or you can contact Kady to learn more.

<i>Practice</i>	<i>Cost-Share</i>
Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan Development	\$5/Ac Per Year
Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan Implementation	\$10/Ac. - Basic \$15/Ac. - Precision
Subsurface Phosphorus Placement	\$20/Ac.
Manure Incorporation and Utilization	\$35/Ac. – Poultry Litter and Solid Manure \$60/Ac. – Liquid Manure
Overwintering Cover Crops	\$40/Ac.

Water Testing

The Van Wert SWCD will once again be partnering with Heidelberg University to offer at-home water testing kits. Nitrate, phosphate, and bacterium test kits will cost \$25 dollars. You may pick up a kit at the SWCD office the week of 10/23-10/27 from 7:30-4:00. The sample drop off day will be 10/30. If you have any interest, please contact the Van Wert SWCD or stop in during the week of October 23 to pick up a kit.

The Van Wert SWCD is also now offering pesticide test kits for homes or ponds. The kits are for sale at our office for \$15.

Van Wert S.W.C.D.
1185 Professional Drive
Van Wert, OH 45891

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Noel Morris—Soil Conservation Tech
Jeff Carlson—PF Farm Bill Biologist

Upcoming Dates and Events

<i>October 9</i>	<i>Columbus Day—Office Closed</i>
<i>October 11</i>	<i>SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am</i>
<i>November 5</i>	<i>Daylight Savings Time ends</i>
<i>November 8</i>	<i>SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am</i>
<i>November 10</i>	<i>Veteran's Day Observed—Closed</i>
<i>November 23/24</i>	<i>Thanksgiving—Office Closed</i>
<i>December 13</i>	<i>SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am</i>
<i>December 25</i>	<i>Christmas—Office Closed</i>
<i>January 1</i>	<i>New Year's—Office Closed</i>

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<https://www.facebook.com/www.vanwertswcd.org>

