



26032-C Newt Road  
Agri-Civic Center  
Albemarle, NC 28001  
704-986-3059



**2017 Agri-Civic Center Day**

The seventh annual Stanly County Agri-Civic Day, sponsored by the Friends of the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center (FACC), was held August 19<sup>th</sup> with attendance up from last year. Agri-Civic Day is a celebration of the county's rich agricultural heritage. Many local sponsors contributed to the success of this event. Children enjoyed the animal races, mule jumps, a straw bale maze, face painting, balloon animals, Smokey the Bear and pony rides. Adults also enjoyed livestock judging, goat and cow shows, food vendors, and of course the heavy equipment and farm machinery. Live entertainment was provided by the Hatley Family, Fox Branch Boys and Southern Express. The event brings attention to and gathers support for the facility that provides services to the residents of Stanly and surrounding counties. Thanks to the support of many sponsors, admission was free.

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**District Board Members**

<b>Terry Blalock</b>	Chairman
<b>John Pickler</b>	Vice-Chairman
<b>Jody Smith</b>	Secretary/ Treasurer
<b>Curtis Furr</b>	Supervisor
<b>Aaron Burleson</b>	Supervisor
<b>W. Chester Lowder</b>	Advisor



**District and NRCS Staff**

<b>Amanda Kirby</b>	District Conservationist
<b>Rita Little</b>	Admin/Education Coordinator
<b>Charles Dunevant</b>	Soil Conservationist
<b>Lin Taylor</b>	Civil Engineer Technician

## **Stanly SWCD 2nd Annual Soil Health Breakfast ...**

### **Cover Crops, the Secret to Soil Health**

Approximately 70 individuals gathered at the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center on August 16 for the annual Soil Health Breakfast. Sponsored by the Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District, John Pickler, Vice-Chairman welcomed everyone.

This year's topic was "Cover Crops, the Secret to Soil Health". Speakers were Will Mann of Fishing Creek SWCD in Halifax County and Nathan Lowder, USDA/NRCS.

"It is our job to improve our soils without reducing productivity. Carbon has the biggest impact, but calcium has an influence on the physical condition of the soil," began Mann.

Ideal soil is made up of 45% mineral, 25% air, 25% water, and 5% organic matter.

How is wealth created on the farm? Jon Frank of International Ag Labs has stated that it is the job of the farmer to use biology, moisture, and geological resources to transform solar energy into a sellable product.

Mann pointed to three properties of soil: physical, chemical, and biological. A soil's physical property is based on soil aeration and carbon. Aerobic soils allow air and water exchange, have lower root pressure, less nutrient uptake, and builds up carbon dioxide pools.

Carbon is the element that conveys life and determines sustainability, efficiency, and productivity. It also buffers the soil, improves soil structure, and nutrient holding capacity.

"Every day a plant is living it goes through some process of photosynthesis," Mann explained. Soil energy is a huge interest area.

"The crust of the earth has an electrical charge. Plants are the antenna," the soil specialist stressed. "If the current is too low, plants burn out. If it's too high, plants will overeat. Plants operate on an alternating current. A good soil must have an electrical flow-over."

The plant's DNA and RNA is based on sugar, protein, and phosphate. "Potassium regulates carbon dioxide and water levels in soil."

Concluding his portion, Mann related, "Soil health is moving all the time. Plant growth is independent of time."



*"It is our job to improve our soils without reducing productivity."*

*Will Mann*

## Cover Crops, the Secret to Soil Health...Cont.



Next Lowder gave a demonstration using a rainfall simulator.

"Water stored in soil is money in the bank. The number one pollutant in NC is sediment. Less erosion means more vegetation. Erosion is the effect of poor infiltration," he explained.

What is soil health? It's the continued capacity of the soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Healthy soil reduces inputs, retains moisture, and increases infiltration, soil carbon, and organic matter.

The soil health specialist then shared four secrets of soil health. 1) Minimize disturbance. 2) Maximize biodiversity. 3) Provide continuous living roots. 4) Maximize soil cover. He also added it is also good to integrate livestock when the grower has that ability.

There are three types of disturbance: physical (tillage), chemical (excessive inputs), and biological (overgrazing). Use diversity of plants to add diversity to soil organisms. Plants interact with particular microbes in the soil, trading sugar from root exudates for nutrients N,P,K and others made available by soil biology.

Can soil be rejuvenated? When soil is not tilled, soil pores remain continuous, soil aggregates form and are not destroyed, and weed seeds are not planted. Soil fungi and earthworms increase.

"Worms are nature's plows. They cycle soil through their bodies to form castings later to become aggregates. This process leaves a tunnel into the soil to allow for more infiltration and porosity. Make good decisions when using pesticides. Mites, spiders, and lady beetles that act as predators are also present in the soil that could be impacted by that pesticide resulting in an unbalanced soil food web that can effect nutrient cycling."



Lowder recalled, "Growing up, I thought soil was a medium, but it should be a viable living ecosystem. We must view the soil as a habitat for living organisms. We are looking for a soil profile that looks like coffee grains. It is an aquatic community. Set goals for cropland. Look to woodlands to set your goals that have lots of organic matter that is steady and sustainable."

# It's Contest Time Again!!



2017-2018

Contest Theme:

*“Water...the Cycle of Life ”*

Deadline

Dec. 13, 2017

Winners will advance to the Area competition for cash prizes.

All contests are sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

For more information email: [rlittle@stanlycountync.gov](mailto:rlittle@stanlycountync.gov)

To view the complete contest rule book, visit the NCDA&CS website:

<http://ncagr.gov/SWC/educational/contests.html>

**Poster Contest 3rd and 5th grade – Must be titled: “Water...the Cycle of Life”**

- Must be original work
- No larger than 24” x 36”

**Essay Contest 6th grade – Must be titled: “Water...the Cycle of Life”**

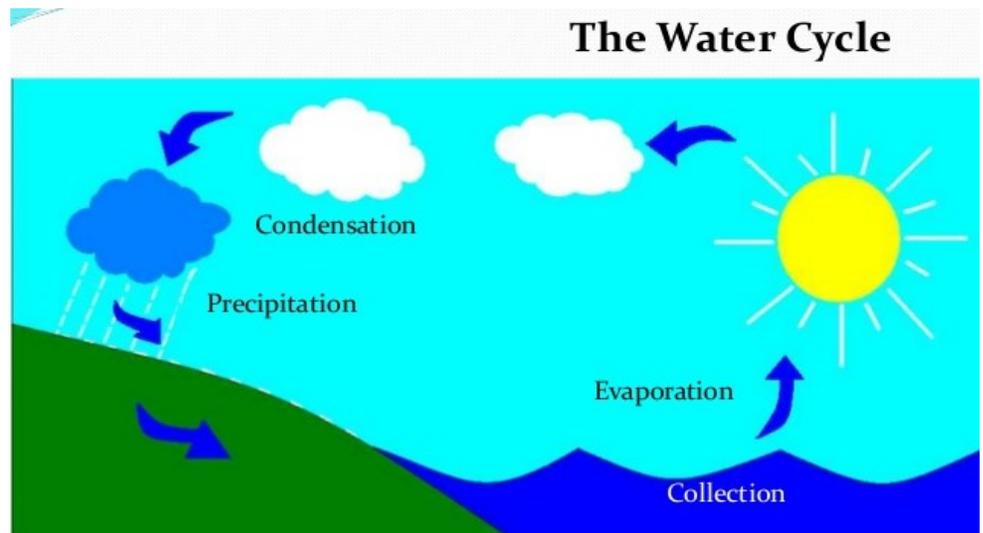
- Should contain 300-500 words
- Use letter size paper (8.5 x 11)

**Slide Show (PowerPoint) Contest 6th grade – “Water...the Cycle of Life”**

- Maximum of 15 slides
- May use animation and sound
- No video
- Submit electronically to [rlittle@stanlycountync.gov](mailto:rlittle@stanlycountync.gov)

**Public Speaking Contest 7th and 8th grade – “Water...the Cycle of Life”**

- 4-6 minutes
- Do not use personal info in speech





## **Area VIII Fall Meeting**

*The Area VIII Fall Meeting was hosted by Union Soil and Water Conservation District on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Anson, Cabarrus, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union Counties make up Area VIII.*

*The meeting was held at the Union County Agriculture and Conference Center in Monroe. Following breakfast and a time for networking, the business meeting was called to order by David Smith, Second Vice Chairperson. The minutes of the spring meeting were approved and Tommy Houser presented the treasurer's report and 2018 budget.*

*Other items of business were a report from the nominating committee, resolutions, Environment report and introduction of new employees.*

*The following agencies presented their reports: NC Association of SWCD, NC Division of SWCD, NC Commission for Soil & Water, NRCS, NACD, NC Foundation for SWCD and the NC Conservation District Employees Association.*

*Service awards and the Outstanding Conservation Farm Family presentation followed lunch. The afternoon session included Supervisor and Commission updates and information from the Catawba Lands Conservancy. After door prize drawings, the meeting was adjourned.*

*Important Soil & Water Dates to remember:*

*SECDEA Annual Conference—November 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>—Pigeon Forge, TN*

*NCASWCD Annual Meeting —January 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>— Sheraton Imperial RTP*

*NCAD Annual Meeting—January 27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>—Nashville, TN*

*NCASWCD School of Government—February—UNC Chapel Hill*

*Area VIII Spring Meeting—March 7<sup>th</sup>—Davidson County*

### **Dates to Remember...**

*The AgriCivic Center will be closed the following days:*

*November 10 Veterans Day*

*November 23-24 Thanksgiving Holidays*

*December 25-26 Christmas Holidays*

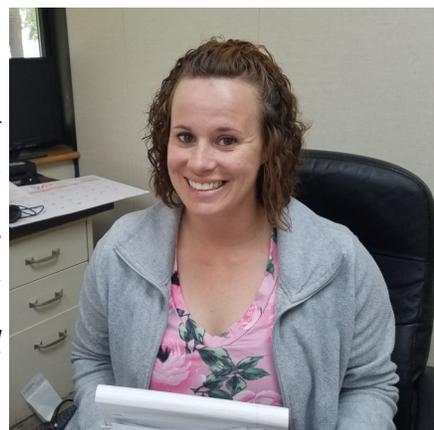
## **Stanly Soil & Water Welcomes New Cost Share Technician**

*Congratulations are in order for Amanda Kirby, new Cost Share Technician for Stanly Soil & Water Conservation District.*

*She is currently working on her Master's Degree in Wildlife Management and is excited to start her career with Stanly Soil and Water.*

*Amanda is looking forward to working with residents and landowners in Stanly County.*

*She can be reached at 704-986-3059*



## Ag Cost Share Programs Available

Soil and Water Conservation Districts implement four cost share programs, all of which share a common goal of increasing water quality. These programs include the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP), the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The District accepts applications year round for each of these programs. Applications are ranked based on various criteria and conservation concerns. The highest ranking application is considered for assistance to install best management practices.



**ACSP**-The major cause of water quality problems in the area is non-point source pollution. Damage to our water resources comes from soil erosion, excessive fertilizer use, animal waste contamination, and improper use of agricultural chemicals. The Agriculture Cost Share Program helps address nonpoint source pollution.



**AgWRAP**-The Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program was recently created in order to address water quantity issues. Producer concerns include water to be used for cropland irrigation, and livestock watering. Multiple best management practices are available to help producers increase their water use efficiency, availability and storage.



**CREP**-The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is available to protect environmentally sensitive cropland and marginal pasture land long term. This is accomplished through 10, 15, and 30 year conservation easements.

For more information on the services and how to apply come by our office, email Amanda Kirby at [a.kirby@stanlycountync.gov](mailto:a.kirby@stanlycountync.gov) or call 704-986-3059



## USDA Non-Discrimination Policy

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Stanly SWCD prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communication at (202) 720-2791. To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 1-800-245-6340 (Voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD).

## Erosion Control Materials Available



Landowners and producers are encouraged to take advantage of another service provided by the Stanly SWCD. Erosion control materials are now in stock and available for purchase.

“Erosion control blankets are effective in controlling erosion on slopes and stabilizing soils long enough for re-vegetation seeding to establish on the site. They are designed to be used on gradual to steep slopes, with low to high velocity flow channels, and are available for both short term biodegradable applications, and long-term soil stabilization.” [protecherosionsupply.com](http://protecherosionsupply.com)

8' x 112.5' Single Net Straw Blanket	\$25.00 each
8' x 112.5' Double Net Straw Blanket	\$28.00 each
4' x 180' Single Net Excelsior Blanket	\$38.00 each
6" x 1" 11 gauge Sod Staples	\$30.00 box of 1000



“Our wattles are 100% Certified Weed Free Wheat Straw bound into a tight tubular roll. When wattles are placed on the face of slopes, they intercept storm water runoff, reduce its flow velocity, release the runoff as sheet flow, and provide removal of sediment from the runoff. By interrupting the length of a slope, the wattle can also reduce erosion. Wattles are designed to stop sediment and other debris from entering retention ponds, lakes and other water bodies.” [Protecherosionsupply.com](http://Protecherosionsupply.com)

12" x 10' Straw Wattle  
\$25 each



24" Wood Stake 1.5" x 1.5"  
\$16/bundle of 25  
or 75¢ each



## *Agriculture Awareness Days*



*Ag Awareness Days 2017 was held October 10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> at the Ag Center.*

*The event was held for 3rd graders and 12 stations were available for their instruction. These included soybeans, bees, livestock, soil & water, forestry, aquaponics, corn, wheat, local foods, nutrition, cotton and poultry. What a great way to learn!!*



## *Neighboring District Celebrates 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday on August 4*

*Congratulations to Stanly SWCD's neighbor, Brown Creek Soil and Water Conservation District. On August 4, 1937 it became the first conservation district established in the United States. Dr. Hugh Hammond Bennett, a native of Anson County, played an important part in founding the Brown Creek District. He is considered to be the "father of soil conservation".*

*Out of the long list of nature's gifts to man, none is perhaps so utterly essential to human life as soil.*

*~ Hugh Hammond Bennett*





### **Environmental Review Required Before Project Implementation**

*The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider all potential environmental impacts for federally-funded projects before the project is approved.*

*For all Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs, an environmental review must be completed before actions are approved, such as site preparation or ground disturbance. These programs include, **but are not limited to**, the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program and farm loans. If project implementation begins before FSA has completed an environmental review, this will result in a denial of the request. There are exceptions regarding the Stafford Act and emergencies. It is important to wait until you receive written approval of your project proposal before starting any actions, including, but not limited to, vegetation clearing, site preparation or ground disturbance.*

*Remember to contact your local FSA office early in your planning process to determine what level of environmental review is required for your program application so that it can be completed timely.*

*Applications cannot be approved contingent upon the completion of an environmental review. FSA must have copies of all permits and plans before an application can be approved.*

### **Census of Agriculture Countdown Begins for America's Farmers and Ranchers**

*America's farmers and ranchers will soon have the opportunity to strongly represent agriculture in their communities and industry by taking part in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the census, to be mailed at the end of this year, is a complete count of all U.S. farms, ranches, and those who operate them.*

*The Census of Agriculture highlights land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, and other topics. The 2012 Census of Agriculture revealed that over three million farmers operated more than two million farms, spanning over 914 million acres. This was a four percent decrease in the number of U.S. farms from the previous census in 2007. However, agriculture sales, income, and expenses increased between 2007 and 2012. This telling information and thousands of other agriculture statistics are a direct result of responses to the Census of Agriculture.*

*Producers who are new to farming or did not receive a Census of Agriculture in 2012 still have time to sign up to receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture report form by visiting [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) and clicking on the 'Make Sure You Are Counted' button through June. NASS defines a farm as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year (2017).*

### **It is time to report 2018 grass crops (hay and grazing acres)**

*In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Stanly County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. November 15, 2017, is the deadline for grass certification*

*For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Stanly County FSA office.*

## **More FSA News...**

### **Producers Are Urged to Consider Risk Protection Coverage before Crop Sales Deadlines**

*The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to review available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the crop deadline.*

*Federal crop insurance covers crop losses from natural adversities such as drought, hail and excessive moisture. NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.*

*Producers can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by visiting <https://webapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/actuarialinformationbrowser2017/CropCriteria.aspx>.*

*NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production, with higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers.*

*Federal crop insurance coverage is sold and delivered solely through private insurance agents. Agent lists are available at all USDA Service Centers or at USDA's online Agent Locator: <http://prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/AgentLocator/#>. Producers can use the USDA Cost Estimator, <https://ewebapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/costestimator/Default.aspx>, to predict insurance premium costs.*

*For more information on NAP, service fees, premiums and sales deadlines, contact the Stanly County FSA office or visit the web at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap).*

### **Farm Storage Facility Loans**

*FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.*

*The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.*

*Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement and loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 may require additional security. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.*

*Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.*

# Gun Raffle

Henry Goldenboy 22 LR Farmer Commemorative



Browning A5 Hunter 3" 12 gauge



Ruger American 270 with Scope



**Tickets: \$20 each or 6 for \$100**

\*Only 1,200 tickets will be sold and drawing to be held January 9, 2018 at the NCASWCD Annual Meeting.

Tickets on sale at Stanly Soil & Water Conservation District at the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center (Checks only please)

Stanly Soil & Water Conservation District is a member of the NCASWCD and the NCCDEA.



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[www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water](http://www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water)

Mission Statement

The mission of Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide education, information and technical assistance to citizens of Stanly County for the conservation of our soil and water resources.

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