Free soil testing during off-season begins April 1st

Soil fertility is essential for abundant crop yields and beautiful lawns. A soil test measures the chemical composition of the soil and also determines the nutrient content and pH level.

A soil test is the first step to managing soil health. Managing soil health means caring for the chemical, biological and physical quality of your land. Over-fertilization is not only a waste of money, it may also result in leaching of nutrients into the water supply.

Soil conservation techniques like crop rotation, use of cover crops, and no-till planting are used to improve soil health, prevent erosion, and protect the structural integrity of the soil. Such techniques also protect the microbial population in the soil.

These same principles can be applied to home vegetable gardens and lawns. Soil fertility, knowing what nutrients are lacking, and how to correct a soil imbalance will result in more vegetables and a thicker healthier lawn.

Stop by the Stanly SWCD office to pick up your soil test boxes.

*Peak-season fee is $4 per sample during December through March.
**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 non-point 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 Rebecca Brickner at rbrickner@stanlycountync.gov or call 704-986-3059.

**Important Dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, May 31</td>
<td>Agri-Civic Center is closed in observance of Memorial Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, July 5</td>
<td>Agri-Civic Center is closed in observance of Independence Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now available... Erosion Control Materials
For more information contact Rebecca Brickner
704-986-3059
rbrickner@stanlycountync.gov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Straw Double Net</td>
<td>8 ft. x 112.5 ft.</td>
<td>$28.00 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excelsior Single Net</td>
<td>4 ft. x 180 ft.</td>
<td>$38.00 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straw Wattle</td>
<td>12 in. x 10 ft.</td>
<td>$25.00 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Stake</td>
<td>1.5 in. x 24 in.</td>
<td>$0.75 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bundle of 25</td>
<td>$16.00 bundle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sod Staples</td>
<td>6” 1000/box</td>
<td>$30.00 box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**FSA Opens CFAP 2 Signup for Additional Enrollment; Updates Additional CFAP Provisions**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that signup has reopened for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) as part of the Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. The initial CFAP 2 signup ended on Dec. 11, 2020, but USDA has reopened sign-up for CFAP 2 for at least 60 days beginning April 5, 2021, for producers to apply or make modifications to existing CFAP 2 applications.

CFAP 2 provides direct financial relief to producers due to market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities – Price Trigger Commodities, Flat-rate Crops and Sales Commodities. Visit farmers.gov/cfap/commodities for a full list of eligible commodities for each category.

**Price Trigger Commodities**

Price trigger commodities are major commodities that meet a minimum 5-percent price decline over a specified period of time. Eligible price trigger crops include barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton, and all classes of wheat. Payments will be based on 2020 planted acres of the crop, excluding prevented planting and experimental acres.

For broilers and eggs, payments will be based on 75 percent of the producers’ 2019 production.

Dairy (cow’s milk) payments will be based on actual milk production from April 1 to Aug. 31, 2020. The milk production for Sept. 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2020, will be estimated by FSA.

Eligible beef cattle, hogs and pigs, and lambs and sheep payments will be based on the maximum owned inventory of eligible livestock, excluding breeding stock, on a date selected by the producer, between April 16, 2020, and Aug. 31, 2020.

**Flat-rate Crops**

Crops that either do not meet the 5-percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change will have payments calculated based on eligible 2020 acres multiplied by $15 per acre. These crops include alfalfa, extra long staple (ELS) cotton, oats, peanuts, rice, hemp, millet, mustard, safflower, sesame, triticale, rapeseed, and several others.

**Sales Commodities**

Sales commodities include specialty crops; aquaculture; nursery crops and floriculture; other commodities not included in the price trigger and flat-rate categories, turfgrass sod; pullets; goat milk; mink (including pelts); mohair; wool; and other livestock (excluding breeding stock), not included under the price trigger category that were grown for food, fiber, fur, or feathers. Payment calculations will use a sales-based approach, where producers are paid based on five payment gradations associated with their 2019 sales, and crop insurance indemnities, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), and Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) payments for crop year 2019.

**Applying for CFAP 2**

Visit farmers.gov/cfap for details on all eligible commodities, producer eligibility, payment limitations and structure and additional program resources.

Producers have multiple options to apply for CFAP 2, including through an online application portal and by working directly with the FSA office. Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance.

**Additional CFAP Payments for Beef and Row-Crop Producers**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, authorizes an increase in CFAP 1 payment rates for cattle. Cattle producers with approved CFAP 1 applications will automatically receive these payments and do not need to submit a new application since payments are based on previously approved CFAP 1 applications. Producers may be asked for additional information depending on how they filed the original application. Information on the additional payment rates for cattle can be found on farmers.gov/cfap.

*Continued on next page...*
This act also authorized additional CFAP assistance of $20 per acre for producers of eligible CFAP 2 flat-rate or price trigger commodities. FSA will automatically issue payments to eligible producers based on the eligible acres included on their CFAP 2 applications. Eligible producers do not need to submit a new CFAP 2 application.

**Additional CFAP Actions**

FSA has also begun payment processing applications filed as part of the CFAP Additional Assistance program in the following categories:

* Applications filed for pullets and turfgrass sod;
* A formula correction for row-crop producer applications to allow producers with a non-Actual Production History (APH) insurance policy to use 100% of the 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage -County Option (ARC-CO) benchmark yield in the calculation; and
* Sales commodity applications revised to include insurance indemnities, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments, and Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus payments.

Additional payments for swine producers and contract growers under CFAP Additional Assistance remain on hold and are likely to require modifications to the regulation as part of the broader evaluation and future assistance; however, FSA will continue to accept applications from interested producers.

**USDA Encourages Completion of Cash Rents and Leases Survey**

You may have received a *Cash Rents and Leases* survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). This survey provides the basis for estimates of the current year’s cash rents paid for irrigated cropland, non-irrigated cropland, and permanent pasture. Please complete your Cash Rents and Leases survey by June 21. This survey can be completed and returned by mail, over the phone, or at agcounts.usda.gov.

Information from this survey is used in the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as an alternative soil rental rate prior to finalizing new rates each year. Survey responses from as many localities as possible help calculate more accurate rental rates. Completion of the survey ensures cash rental rates accurately represent your locality. Survey results will also give you a useful tool in negotiating your rental agreements, and financial planning for your agricultural operation.

In accordance with federal law, survey responses are kept confidential. Survey results will be available in aggregate form only to ensure that no individual producer or operation can be identified. NASS will publish the survey results on August 27 at quickstats.nass.usda.gov/.


**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).
**American Rescue Plan Socially Disadvantaged Farmer Debt Payments**

USDA recognizes that socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers have faced systemic discrimination with cumulative effects that have, among other consequences, led to a substantial loss in the number of socially disadvantaged producers, reduced the amount of farmland they control, and contributed to a cycle of debt that was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, socially disadvantaged communities saw a disproportionate amount of COVID-19 infection rates, loss of property, hospitalizations, death, and economic hurt.

To address these systemic challenges, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 provides historic debt relief to socially disadvantaged producers including Black/African American, American Indian or Alaskan native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian American or Pacific Islander.

USDA is now reviewing and working to gather feedback to implement the Act, and more guidance will be forthcoming for socially disadvantaged borrowers with direct or guaranteed farm loans as well as Farm Storage Facility Loans. As information becomes available, it will be provided directly to socially disadvantaged borrowers and stakeholder groups representing socially disadvantaged producers, posted here on farmers.gov, and shared through our social media channels, email newsletters, and the media.

**Who qualifies for this debt relief?**
Any socially disadvantaged borrower with direct or guaranteed farm loans as well as Farm Storage Facility Loans qualifies. The American Rescue Plan Act uses the 2501 definition of socially disadvantaged, which includes Black/African American, American Indian or Alaskan native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian American or Pacific Islander. Gender is not a criterion in and of itself, but of course women are included in these categories.

**I qualify as socially disadvantaged under the American Rescue Plan definition, but I am not late on my payments. Do I still qualify?**
Yes. Any socially disadvantaged borrower with direct or guaranteed farm loans as well as Farm Storage Facility Loans qualifies.

**When will qualified borrowers begin to see a loan pay-off or other payment in response to the American Rescue Plan?**
USDA is now reviewing and working to gather feedback to implement the Act, and more guidance will be forthcoming for socially disadvantaged borrowers with direct or guaranteed farm loans as well as Farm Storage Facility Loans. For borrowers in arrears, the moratorium established on January 26th to stop all debt collections, foreclosures and evictions for all borrowers, including socially disadvantaged producers, remains in effect.

Producers who have worked with USDA’s Farm Service Agency previously may have their ethnicity and race on file. A borrower, including those with guaranteed loans, can contact their local USDA Service Center to verify, update or submit a new ethnicity and race designation using the AD-2047. Find your nearest service center at farmers.gov/service-locator.
To learn more about USDA’s work to implement the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, visit www.usda.gov/arp.

**The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.**
(Franklin D. Roosevelt)
#Plant2021 Campaign

This planting season, let USDA showcase your operation by participating in the #Plant2021 campaign. We’ll share your story on social media and farmers.gov. Here’s how:

1. Using your smartphone or digital camera, take photos of what’s happening on your operation during planting season. Videos may be too large to email as attachment, so you can email them to us via mail drop (iPhone), Google Photos (Android), or any other file sharing service. A few ideas:
   - If you’re comfortable, we’d love to see you and the people that make it happen set against the backdrop of your agricultural operation.
   - Take a photo from inside the cab of your tractor (while parked, of course) so that we can see what you see.
   - Photos at sunrise or sunset are always beautiful!
   - Behind-the-scenes photos showing us the amount of planning and preparation it takes to have a successful planting season are welcomed.

2. Submit the photo(s) along with the following information to us at SM.FP.Social@usda.gov:
   - Your name, if you’re comfortable sharing.
   - Location of your operation.
   - Information about what’s in the photograph(s) and the crop(s) you are planting.
   - Your thoughts about this year’s planting season.
   - Your operation’s Facebook/Twitter/Instagram account, if you have one and want us to tag you.

Please note that by submitting your photo/video, you are granting USDA permission to use these materials for outreach and education purposes.

Jennifer L. Almond  
County Executive Director  
Stanly County

Farm Service Agency  
United States Department of Agriculture

26032A Newt Road  
Albemarle NC  28001  
704-982-5114, ext 2 (office)  
980-581-3737 (direct line)  
844-325-6908, fax (toll free)  
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/North-Carolina/index

For Farm Loan information please visit: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/index

Receive timely FSA information via GovDelivery. To subscribe to FSA GovDelivery emails visit http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe or to subscribe to text message alerts by texting NCStanly or NCAnson to FSANOW (372-669). Standard text messaging rates apply.
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.