

NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION NEWS

The 28th year for the Delaware Envirothon kicks off with the 2022-2023 school year. Support this premiere environmental competition for high school students with your financial donation. Visit www.delawareenvirothon.org for information. The Delaware Envirothon is a program of the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts and supported by conservation partners and individual donors.



SUMMER 2022

SIGN UP FOR COVER CROP COST-SHARING FUNDS NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 7TH

The Conservation District is offering cost-share assistance for cover crops to be planted this fall. Fields must be located in New Castle County. Annual rye, cereal rye, wheat, triticale, barley, oats, forage radishes, and crimson clover or hairy vetch with rye are approved.



Soybeans growing in a stand of grain left standing to on farm off Gum Bush Road

The cost-share rate for unharvested cover crop is \$60 per acre. Cost-share for cover crop harvested as grain or straw is \$40 per acre. Aerial seeding adds an additional \$5 per acre cost-share at a maximum of 400 acres.

The sign-up deadline is October 7th at 4:30 p.m.

The planting deadline is October 31st. Homegrown seed must be tested for germination.

Sign-up will continue until all funds are obligated. For more information, please call the office at (302) 832-3100, extension 3. You can download the application form from our website at <http://newcastlecd.org>.



Cereal grain near Route 9 and daikon radish in field north of Middletown

NEW SOIL HEALTH WEBSITE AVAILABLE FOR USE



A new website at www.delawaredigshealthysoils.com is now available for your use. You can read about current research, upcoming soil related events and workshops, conservation partner news, articles, and much more.

URBAN AGRICULTURE UPDATE

Throughout the summer season our urban ag team has been busy conducting a “Community Agriculture Resource Review” to better understand how our urban/community agriculture network is (or isn’t) currently working by documenting the numerous urban gardens and farms in our area and the programs that assist them. This will help strengthen support for these types of projects including access to financial assistance programs, build networks of other urban growers, and help inform partnerships to improve urban/community agriculture in our county. To date they’ve visited over 72 gardens and 5 farms and will continue to work throughout the fall. Those who want to learn more about the project (or get involved) can do so by going to deuffc.org/review.

Other seasonal urban agriculture activities continue as this year’s urban farmer and gardener grantees continue working on their projects. The NEST (Middletown Church of the Nazarene’s community garden has successfully added additional infrastructure to their garden, including rain barrels, trellising, and improved ground covering. They will be promoting this garden during the Middletown Peach Festival. Odyssey Charter School has completed their new food learning lab, and the garden at the Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Newark, known as the ORCHARD, has finished building their new shed.

Our Urban Agriculture Coordinator, Madi Walter, was invited to be a panelist to discuss urban agriculture at the International Leadership Alumni Conference held in Annapolis, MD at the beginning of August. Madi will also be presenting as part of an upcoming permaculture design certification course and speaking as part of two breakout sessions at the 2022 NACD Northeast Regional Meeting. In Cambridge, MD.



Learning Lab at Odyssey Charter School, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (ORCHARD) garden storage shed and placing Urban Ag Survey information on fence at the Peace Garden,

NEW MANURE STRUCTURE AT CAROUSEL PARK



Old manure structure shown in 2019.



New manure structure completed in July 2022

The District stepped in to administer the contract and supervise the construction of the new manure storage building and concrete pad at Carousel Park. The District provided the majority of the funding for the USDA-NRCS designed building that increased needed manure storage capacity to Carousel’s well-known equestrian program. The District conservation planning staff have offered to provide pasture management

recommendations to reduce soil erosion and improve the forage quality of the Park’s pastures.

WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS



Eroding ditch piped behind homes in Piermont Woods. Severe drainage issues caused by surface seeping springs captured with underdrain system in Rockwood Woods.



Busy beavers constructed a dam on the Pencader Tax Ditch below the Adams Run community stormwater pond outfall. The beavers were trapped twice and the dam removed twice.



Drainage and erosion issues from an embankment resolved with a pipe and catch basin system at Brandywine Condominiums. The contractor encountered major rock areas which had to be jackhammered out over a period of several weeks in order to lay the pipe.



Drainage system in Carpenter Woods

Drainage system in Boothurst



Eroding channel protected with riprap for landowner on Old Kennett Road using cost-share program funds.

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BRINGING BACK BOBWHITES TO DELAWARE



Before their decline, the distinctive sound of the northern bobwhite was a familiar one. Landowners are key to bringing them back to Delaware. The **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners build and manage quail habitat. Interested landowners should contact their local NRCS field office for details.

EQIP also offers farmers and landowners technical and financial assistance to address a wide range of natural resource concerns to deliver environmental benefits on agricultural lands. Producers are encouraged to apply now. Early applicants will have the opportunity to be evaluated for the first round of funding for fiscal year 2023 which begins October 1st.

During the process, a conservation planner will discuss ways for you to meet your conservation objectives, improve the resource concerns on the land, and offer technical and financial options through NRCS programs and services. Interested landowners should contact their local NRCS field office for details. New Castle NRCS is located in the same building as NCCD.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

During the summer months community outreach was held at the following events:

- Glasgow Park Farmers Market.
- Bellevue Farms Farmers Market.
- Delaware State Fair Conservation Partnership Exhibit “Soil Your Undies” soil health display.
- Charter School of Wilmington Team placed 14th at the NCF Envirothon in Ohio. Well done!

