

NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION NEWS

To all Cooperators and Farmers in New Castle and Kent Counties:
Save the Date! Soil Health Workshop on February 3, 2022 at the
Clayton Fire Hall from 6–10 p.m. More information coming soon!

FALL 2022

FALL 2022 COVER CROP ACRES AND COOPERATOR OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION

The Delaware legislature once again provided funding for the Conservation Cost Share Program. One of the most important parts of this program is financial assistance to farm producers to plant cover crops for soil health.

The NCCD Board has recognized three outstanding farm producers as Cooperator of the Year over the past three years. However, due to the pandemic, the Board was not able to present the recipients with their award plaque. Below are photos of our Cooperator of the Year award recipients.

Cover Crop Program - Fall 2022

57 Applications approved
7,173.18 unharvested acres
2,845 harvested acres

Cooperator of the Year

- 2019- Stewart Ramsey
- 2020 Bob Uniatowski
- 2021 - Willoughby Farms
- 2021 - Bellevue Farms



L to R: Bob Willoughby Sr. and Bob Willoughby Jr.



NCCD Ag Planner Mike Popovich with Bob Uniatowski.



Jere Barber from Bellevue Farms with son CJ.



Carl and Stewart Ramsey of Ramsey's Farm

DREDGING THE DELAWARE CITY CANAL

The District recently administered a contract to dredge a portion of the Old Branch Canal in Delaware City in the area of the boat launch for trips to Pea Patch Island. The bottom of the canal needs to be dredged to remove sediments that make the canal too shallow for most boats.



URBAN AGRICULTURE UPDATE



With the growing season coming to a close many of urban farmer and gardener grant projects are also finishing up. The Latin American Community Center's new intergenerational community garden is now open and Wilmington Friends School new greenhouse is up and running. In late September the Delaware Urban Farm and Food Coalition held their second annual Golden Gourd Awards event to celebrate the work done by community gardens throughout the county.



Several of this year's urban farmer and gardener grant recipients took home trophies in categories for Garden Hero (Robin Billy, The ORCHARD), Biggest Squash (Cecelia Rich, The Village Tree), Most Creative Use of Space (Odyssey Charter School), Prettiest Pollinator Space (Valerie Macneir, Bellevue Farms), Garden Sprout (Langston Armstrong), and Rookie of the Year (Katelynn Scott, The NEST).



Left top to bottom: new greenhouse at Wilmington Friends School, a shade cover over the wash area at Bellevue Farms, and the new garden at the Latin American Community Center.

Madi Walter presents Colleen Armstrong with the "Eat Your Garden Award and above is a group photo of some of the garden awards recipients from L to R: Patty Zaza, Katelynn Scott, and Colleen Armstrong and her three children.

AGRICULTURE COST-SHARE PROJECTS



Pasture renovation by drilling in new seed mixture into the existing pasture land.

A popular request for cost share program assistance is for pasture renovation and reseeded. In the photo to the left, a farmer near Blackbird State Forest recently drilled in seed to rejuvenate an existing pasture.

Many farms in New Castle County have fields that are not flat but sloped. Sometimes, erosion from rainfall causes gullies to form and they need to be repaired. One way is to regrade the eroded area and shape into a grassed swale which can safely transport water to a protected outfall.

Several gullies were repaired on farmland in the Bear area with the installation of grassed waterways. The waterway is seeded and covered in a straw matting.



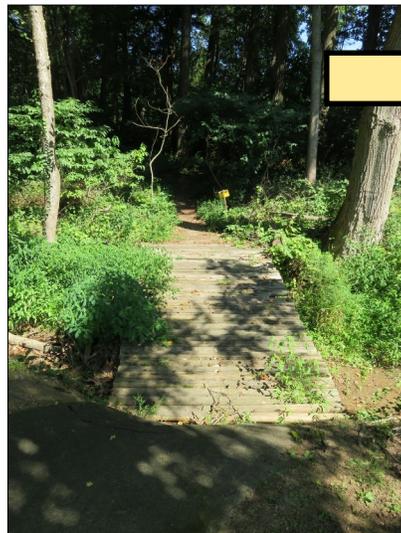
WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS



A deep ditch and eroding yard in Liftwood Estates was repaired. The area was re-graded and protected with riprap. The backyard was stabilized with topsoil, seed, and erosion control matting.



A backyard drainage system was installed behind several homes in Foulk Woods.



A deteriorating footbridge in Richards Lane was replaced with a new one.

L to R: An existing stormwater pond at Newark Charter Middle School was rehabbed and a drainage swale was installed in Commodore Estates.



NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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The New Castle Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program

 The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is encouraging all Delaware agricultural producers to apply today for conservation resources to improve the health and productivity of their agricultural land. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program can help Delaware farmers and landowners plan and implement conservation practices to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on eligible agricultural and non-industrial forest land. Popular practices include waste storage structures, heavy use area pads, high tunnels, energy, cover crops, irrigation water management, poultry windbreaks and more.

To apply for financial assistance, contact your local USDA Service Center. In New Castle County, call **302-832-3100, ext. 3**. Additional information on NRCS programs and services is available on the Delaware NRCS website at www.nrcs.usda.gov/de.



2023 Soil and Water Stewardship Week and educational materials will celebrate the importance of our watersheds. More information to come.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Charter School of Wilmington students down in the soil pit.

The 29th season of the Delaware Envirothon kicked off with soils and forestry training on October 8th. Twenty-eight students and advisors attended. Outreach at the farmer's markets ended in October. Two of the most popular booklets were the Mia the Mole Learns about soil coloring book for children and the Delaware Native Plants for Native Bees for adults interested in pollinator habitat.

