



TRADEWINDS

CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER

TALBOT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

215 BAY STREET

◆ EASTON, MD 21601

◆ 410-822-1577 EXT. 3

◆ FAX 410-820-8919

2008 / 2009 COVER CROP FALL CERTIFICATION

Within one week of planting the cover crop, the applicant must certify that they are in compliance with the eligibility requirements of the Cover Crop Program. Please bring in the following information to be submitted with the fall certification form:

- FSA aerial maps showing fields planted;
- Seed tags for purchased seed or seed tests for home grown seed;

- No invoices are required for purchased seed;
- Invoices will still be **required** for aerial application.

The Talbot SCD will perform spot-checks to verify compliance with program guidelines and complete documentation. At least **one farm** for each applicant will be spot checked by the Talbot SCD.

If your planting dates occur on more than one planting tier, you can call in



to certify the acres you have planted. When you are done planting, then come in to our office and fill out the fall certification form.

FROM THE TRACTOR CAB OF CHAIRMAN JOHN SWAINE...

On Wednesday, Sept. 3rd, the Talbot County Planning Commission voted against the proposal to increase the critical area buffer width from 25 ft to 60 ft. It is doubtful this will be the last of these kinds of proposals. The agricultural community is under much scrutiny on many issues; with this in mind it is imperative we as farmers strive to do the best we can to be good stewards of the land.

All farm land in the critical area (1000 ft. from mean high tide) is required to have a Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plan that is to be followed, not just a folder sitting in a file cabinet.

Plans are required to be updated every 10 years or sooner if there is a change in owner, operator or management. Best management practices (BMP's) are a key component of these plans and need to be implemented if called for. Cover crops, no-till farming practices, grassed waterways, filter strips, and nutrient management planning are all key to successful farm land management.

Both landowners and farmers need to be good neighbors in our ever increasing urban landscape being careful to minimize pesticide drift along roadsides and other field borders.

Please remember, if you are a participant in CRP, CREP, EQIP, WHIP or various other USDA-NRCS programs, you are required to manage noxious weeds. Maryland's noxious weed law requires control of Johnson grass, all types of thistle, shatter cane and multiflora rose before they go to seed. Many times these weeds go unchecked in non-cropland areas of the farm. We all need to do a better job with noxious weed control.

Please call the District office if you need help in conservation planning, BMP installation or any other natural resource concerns you may have.

FOOD, CONSERVATION AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008

While the new farm bill has been passed the rules are still being written. The new rules will take effect Oct. 1, 2009 which is the beginning of the new federal fiscal year.

Here's a summary of what we know so far about the new farm bill:

The adjusted gross income for eligibility in USDA programs has been reduced from the current \$2.5 million down to \$1 million unless 2/3 of the income comes from farm or forestry.

The former Conservation Security Program (CSP) has been renamed

the Conservation Stewardship Program. The old CSP will continue for existing participants but there will be no new enrollments or en-



hancements. The new CSP will run through 2017 with an annual enrollment cap of \$12,769,000 acres and an annual average payment

rate targeted at \$18 per acre.

The Environmental Quality Incentive program (EQIP) continues, but with a \$300,000 per applicant cap over 6 years. To simplify the paperwork EQIP will now pay a set amount per practice rather than a percent of the various flat rates used before.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) continues with the biggest change being participants must have at least \$1000 farm income reported on a Schedule F. Previously WHIP was open to non farmers on non crop land. The annual per applicant cap for WHIP is \$50,000.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 3

MEET OUR NRCS SUMMER INTERN: SABRINA ZINTER

This year's Natural Resources Conservation Services' summer intern, Sabrina Zinter, is required to complete a 240 hour internship before receiving her bachelors degree from Elmira College in Elmira, New York. Headed into her second year at Elmira College, Zinter is a valedictorian scholar majoring in Accounting. She hopes to pursue a master's degree after her graduation in the spring of 2011. Although, agricultural conservation is not Zinter's field of study, she expressed that the experience has taught her other valuable lessons. "Learning to sit through a productive eight hour work day was a big adjustment compared

to my brief one hour classes". Zinter stated as her biggest challenge, "Outside of the knowledge that I have gained from this internship I feel I will use many of the skills I gained during my summer at NRCS in my future endeavors."

Zinter has been active in both the Talbot Soil Conservation and Natural Resources Conservation Services Offices. She has joined experienced staff in the field observing tree plantings, shore line restoration and pond projects. Besides assisting staff members in the field Zinter has learned how to write conservation plans, and has done extensive work on organizing and

updating conservation plans by watersheds. Sabrina's work here has been much appreciated and we wish her the best of luck in her upcoming year at Elmira College.



Sabrina Zinter, NRCS Intern

NATIONAL CANON ENVIROTHON RESULTS: MARYLAND MADE IT INTO THE TOP 20

The Canon Envirothon was hosted by Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ. from July 28th through August 3rd. Overall there was a great participant turnout of 54 total teams, comprising of 45 State and 9 Province teams. Canon Envirothon is a competition comprising five testing stations and an oral presentation component. At the testing stations and the oral presentation, each team's performance is evaluated and scored by individuals with field ex-

pertise. Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and the fifth issue make up the testing stations. The fifth issue

conclusion of the competition, scores are combined for final ranking and award/prize distribution.



The Maryland Team from Harford County

Delaware took home the top prize outscoring the second place team of Missouri by 33.1 points. Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio round out the top 5 teams. Maryland came in at 20th this year.

Next year the Canon Envirothon will be held on August 2nd through August 8th at the University of North Carolina, Asheville. Good luck to all teams next year!

this year was Recreational Impacts on Natural Resources. At the con-

NEW PROGRAM: STATE COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE FOR CHICKEN HOUSE PADS

The Maryland Agricultural Cost Share Program (MACS) has opened up the eligibility for poultry pads to all farmers. The pads must address a potentially polluting condition and are not for convenience only. To be eligible the farm must have a manure building large enough for 180 days of manure storage. If a composter has been cost shared in the past it must be in use. The maximum size for each pad is 1600 square feet and there is a \$35,000 per farm limit for poultry pads. For more information contact the Talbot Soil Conservation District, or go online to www.talbotscd.com or www.mda.state.md.us/resource_conservation/.



Typical Poultry Pad, 40' X 40'

2007 FARM BILL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program will be back with \$15,000,000 per year targeted

to the 16 states with the lowest crop insurance participation which includes Maryland. We're still waiting to find out what practices the funds will be targeted for.

The new Chesapeake Bay Watershed program will channel additional money through existing programs. Funding levels are \$23M in '09, \$43M in '10, \$72M in '11, and \$50M in '12.



Talbot Soil Conservation District
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2008 FALL NEWSLETTER

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OF AGRICULTURE**