

Conservation Matters



Montgomery Soil Conservation District
18410 Muncaster Rd
Derwood, MD 20855
301-590-2855

July 2017

Calendar

FSA deadline for ARC/PLC sign up
August 1

MASCD meeting
August 7-9

First day to plant winter cover crops for MDA Cover Crop Program
August 15

Montgomery County Fair
August 11-19

Cooperators Dinner
September 7

Teams Tie in Envirothon Competition



The Duck Gizzards display their closely won prize. finished in third place

Each year, teams of high school students test their environmental knowledge by competing against each other in five subject areas - aquatics, soils, forestry, wildlife, and a fifth environmental issue that changes yearly.

A team of five seniors from Montgomery Blair High School took home the top prize in the County Envirothon Competition which was held on April 27 at the Agricultural History Farm Park.

The "Duck Gizzards" and "Kraem of Krop" (both teams are from Montgomery Blair High School) tied for first place. We believe this was the only first place tie in the history of the County 's program.

There is a tie breaking process in place for just such a situation and it calls for the winner to be chosen using the high score on the soils exam.

The "Duck Gizzards" had

the higher score and went on to represent Montgomery County at the State Envirothon at Camp Pecometh in Queen Anne County.

While our team finished the competition tied for second place, they ultimately

due to the tie breaking category. What we are most proud of is that this year's State competition was historically close as only 3 points separated the top three placing teams. This is a testament of the quality of our local Envirothon Program.

Prior to the State Envirothon the "Duck Gizzards" not only finished their senior year but continued to prepare for the state competition. We are very proud of our team's achievement at this year's State competition. Competition at the state and national levels is fierce and all the students are advised to continue to study outside of the classroom in order to prepare.

In an effort to help the county contest winners to compete, MSCD and the partner agencies that help organize the local contest continue to provide the

county team with additional instruction even after the local contest is over.

We are always looking for resource professionals who wish to volunteer their time and expertise to the County program.

If you have an interest in volunteering to teach or help at next year's County Envirothon please let us know.

Call the MSCD office
301-590-2855
or Email

James.Harne@md.nacdnet.net

2017 North American Envirothon in our backyard!

The annual final competition is scheduled to be held at:

Mount St. Mary's University
Emmitsburg, MD
July 23 - 29, 2017



Remembering George Lechlider Longtime Local Agricultural Advocate Dies at 96

While June 6th will always be remembered as “D -Day”, the start of the offensive on the beaches of Normandy that liberated Europe from Nazi Germany; June 6th of this year, marked the passing of George Edward Lechlider.

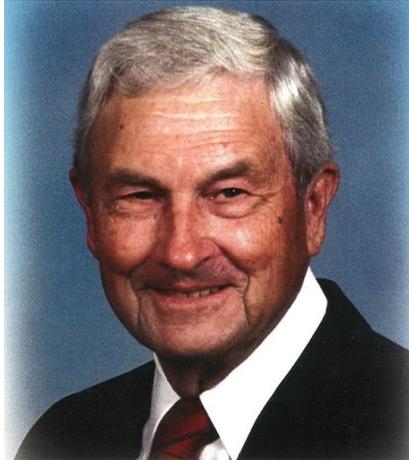
George was a man whose commitment, perseverance and dedication to agriculture will long be remembered in the agricultural community. He lived a very full and active life.

The accolades he received during his lifetime are too numerous to mention here. But there is one common thread that can be gleaned from these recognitions - George loved being a farmer and he was deeply committed to serving the farm community.

While owning, and operating “The Lech’s Farm”, a grain and livestock operation in Laytonsville purchased in 1946, George was a tireless and fierce advocate for the farm community.

He lent his knowledge and experience to help educate children about agriculture and agricultural vocation in association with the County’s 4H programs and as chairman of the Maryland Vocational Technical Education Council. He was a 4H leader for over half a century and since 1949 had served as the superintendent of the Swine Department at the Montgomery County Fair.

He represented the interests of the agricultural community by serving as president of the County Farm Bureau for 50 years. One of the many lasting legacies that he leaves behind was demonstrated by his leadership, commitment, and dedication to soil conservation, the improvement of water quality on farms, nutrient management and the efforts needed to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay.



He accomplished these things by serving on our District’s Board of Supervisors during periods of 1946 – 1958 and then again from 1981 – 2017, spending much of this time as the MSCD’s chairman and leader.

George was not only a mentor to me but he was also my friend. My association with George began on a summer’s day in 1990 when I attended my first Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCSD) meeting. George was then president of the MASCSD and it was in this meeting where I first heard him speak.

He started off his talk with a joke. George loved a good joke and I think it filled him with great joy to make others laugh. While the joke may have been intended to break the ice and to put his audience at ease, humor played an integral part in his presentations and it provided the bridge to a discussion of the issues impacting farmers and what was needed to move agriculture forward.

I think most everyone who knew George would agree, that he was not shy about telling others how he felt about farmers and agriculture. He stood up for the agricultural community that he both served and loved. Through his association with the Montgomery

Soil Conservation District and the Federal and State partner agencies, he was keenly aware of all of the voluntary conservation work farmers were doing on their farms to help clean up the bay and he made sure everyone he communicated with knew about it!

He worked tirelessly alongside legislators at the National, State and local level as well as in numerous other forums debating with the critics of agriculture and making sure that the proper story of what farmers were doing was being not only told but understood.

It goes without saying that George will be greatly missed, few have dedicated their lives to such an important cause as he did. How then do we move forward and honor the memory of a man that gave so much of himself for the betterment of others?

We must channel the “George Lechlider” that resides in each one of us. We must stand up and use our voices to make sure that those who are uninformed do not cause irreparable harm to our agricultural heritage, livelihood and way of life. We must carry the torch that is ablaze with the flame ignited by the lifetime of work and effort George put into everything that he did. We must embody the same level of leadership, commitment and dedication to serve the agricultural community to keep our way of life alive.

By doing so, we will in the most glorious way, honor the memory and legacy of a man that up until his very last moments, held in his heart the things he loved most in life- his wife, his family and the community he so loved to serve and watch over.

John Zawitoski,
MSCD Acting Director

MSCD 2016 Annual Report

Close Encounters with Agriculture

Montgomery County's population now exceeds more than one million people. The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) Board and staff have made educating that growing population a top priority



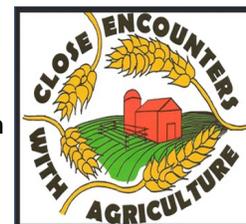
MSCD Chairman, Robert Butz teaches a group of students about water quality.

in order to help promote the future of agriculture in our county.

Many young people today are unaware of the benefits agriculture provides to them and the ways in which they can become good stewards of the land. Close Encounters with Agriculture creates a rare opportunity for these students to enjoy a hands-on learning experience that could have a real impact on their future. Students often take the lessons learned home with them and help to educate their families.

The Close Encounters with Agriculture Program provides an educational opportunity for students of all backgrounds. Each year this 2 ½ week program, presented jointly by University of Maryland Extension and MSCD, provides approximately 3,700 Fourth Grade students and 500 teachers and parents from across the county with a comprehensive agricultural learning experience.

The program includes not only Extension and MSCD staff but also receives assistance from the Farm Bureau, local farmers, and members of the Master Gardeners program, who present programs in nutrition, production agriculture and conservation. Each group has a full day of fun activities that provide a great opportunity to learn about things not usually covered in their regular school curriculum.



Cost-Share Funding for Landowners



Leveraging private investments in conservation with government sponsored cost-share funding provides additional opportunities for landowners to implement practices that will improve water quality. Financial incentives represent an important link in the efforts to clean up our local streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

By offering landowners a combination of state, federal and local cost-share, MSCD strives to help farmers protect their soil, water, and other natural resources. By pairing USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service funding through EQIP and Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) assistance through the MACS program, we were able to assist Montgomery County farmers in securing over \$1 million in conservation funding in 2016.

One example of leveraging funds for conservation projects is the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Cover Crop Program. Cover Crops are one of the most important practices for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, and Montgomery County farmers have consistently increased their participation in this valuable conservation program.

In 2016, Montgomery County farmers planted 17,843 acres of cover crop resulting in cost share payments of \$870,270. This also means that farmers invested considerable amounts of private capital in conservation in their efforts to help restore the Chesapeake Bay.

MSCD 2016 Annual Report

Agricultural Conservation Programs

Planning and Implementation— Thirty-six Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans were developed for Montgomery County landowners to protect 3,112 acres of land. There are currently 54,457 planned acres in the county. The District continued to expand the availability of programs for the growing equestrian community. Providing cost-share programs and technical assistance to horse owners and the growing organic farming community will continue to be critical components of conservation efforts in Montgomery County.

Best Management Practices

Following is a list of the practices completed by MSCD Cooperators in 2016.

Agrichemical Handling Facility	1	Structure
Baseline Assessments	3	Operations
Conservation Crop Rotation	1234.8	Acres
Cover Crop	17,713	Acres
Critical Area Planting	.1	Acres
Critical Area Planting Construction	.1	Acres
Diversion	200	Linear Feet
Grassed Waterway	1.5	Acres
Heavy Use Area Protection	.2	Acres
Lined Waterway or Outlet	377	Linear Feet
Livestock Pipeline	560	Linear Feet
Mulching	.1	Acres
Residue and Tillage Management	257.5	Acres
Residue and Tillage Management	165	Acres
Riparian Forest Buffer	5	Acres
Roof Runoff Structure	1	Structure
Streamside Fence	3255	Linear feet
Underground Outlet	650	Linear Feet
Watering Facility	1	Structure



MSCD 2016 Annual Report

Conservation Education Programs

The MSCD provides a variety of educational opportunities for landowners, students, and the general public. Educating the citizens of Montgomery County about agriculture and conservation is one of our most important initiatives. Some of our educational programs conducted in 2016 are listed below:

Envirothon— The MSCD has one of the most competitive county Envirothon programs in the state, with 15 teams and more than 75 students competing in 2016. The winning 2016 Montgomery County Team placed 3rd at the Maryland Statewide Envirothon Competition.

Government Agricultural Tours -MSCD staff help coordinate tours for government officials. These tours allow local, county and state officials to meet many of the District's cooperators and gain a better understanding of the variety of farming operations in the area. In 2016 this included participation in the Maryland Department of Agriculture Ice Cream Trail Tour and organization of a Fall Legislative Tour.



Cooperators Dinner—The 2016 Cooperators Dinner was held on September 8th, 2016 at the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA), Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter located at 20601 Izaak Walton Way in Poolesville, Maryland.

Approximately 124 people attended the dinner, including several local and state policy makers. The focus of the evening was to showcase the agricultural industry and conservation in the County.



Workshops, Fairs and Expos - The MSCD staff also contacted thousands of constituents through their participation in the local workshops, The County and Maryland State Fairs, Maryland Horse Expo, the Flower and Garden Show, Arbor Day and Earth Day Events. MSCD, University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County Farm Bureau and the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture joined together to create a booth named the Best Agricultural Display at the 2016 Montgomery County Agricultural Fair.



It's Agricultural Census Time Again

“Why should I complete the Ag Census Form that I have received?”

The Agricultural Census tells the story of U.S. agriculture. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data for every county in the nation. The data are valuable to those who serve farmers and rural communities, including federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations, extension educators, researchers, even farmers and ranchers themselves.

Census results help shape farm programs and boost services for communities and the industry. The Census of Agriculture is a farmer or rancher's voice, future, and opportunity. Through the Census of Agriculture, producers can show the nation the importance of agriculture, and they can help influence the decisions that will shape the future of American agriculture for years to come.

By responding to the Census of Agriculture, producers are helping themselves, their communities, and all of U.S. agriculture.



“Why is input from the Census Important to Montgomery County Farmers?”

The information contained within the results of the Ag Census is loaded into the Chesapeake Bay Model and from those inputs, the results show how much work the agriculture sector has done and potentially how much more work is needed to be done to reach the 2025 goal of a clean Chesapeake Bay.

If information is not adequately collected and represented, it could have a negative effect on farmers who are mandated to meet certain water quality protection goals. By completing and submitting the Census form, you will help to provide credible data that can be entered into the Chesapeake Bay Model and in turn be reflective of the good work farmers in Montgomery County are doing to address soil conservation and water quality on their farms.

**Take the time to accurately complete the Census;
it's more important than ever before!**

MSCD Milestones

30 years

**Robert Stabler has served on the MSCD Board for 30 years.
He was reappointed to a new term in April, 2017**

Robert & his son, Randy, operate Pleasant Valley Farm raising corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and cattle on 2,650 acres. He has been a active proponent of conservation for many years.

Newly Appointed

Robert Butts was appointed to the MSCD Board on June 16.

Robert has overseen all aspects of his family's farm for 40 years. Waredaca is home to a well known equine facility and also a popular farm brewery.

**Charles Thomas Linthicum Jr., was appointed to be an
MSCD Board Associate Member**

'Tom' and his family operate Seneca Ayr Farm in Laytonsville -Where they grow hay, corn, soybeans, and wheat and also raise hogs.

New and Pending Changes to the Cover Crop Program

There are several changes to the program this year:

1. The Commodity Cover Crop portion of the program discontinued.

Participants are encouraged to report all cover crop acres because the decision to harvest does not have to be made until the spring of 2018.

2. Radish planting date extended to October 1

3. Homegrown seed samples submitted by October 1

Applicants using home grown seed should have samples to the Maryland Seed Testing Laboratory by October 1. Applicants should allow several weeks for the results.

4. Certification of current nutrient management plan required in 2018

Beginning with the application period for 2018-2019 cover crops, all applicants will be required to provide proof that they have a current nutrient management plan

District staff will also be using a new web-based reporting tool developed by Towson University.

We encourage all applicants to make an appointment prior to coming into the office to fill out an application.

FSA 2017 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with Farm Service Agency (FSA) program eligibility requirements, producers are encouraged to visit the Montgomery FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Montgomery County:

June 15, 2017	Tomatoes
July 15, 2017	Beans (Limas only), all other crops
August 15, 2017	Beans (all types except Limas)



The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th. Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

The annual cooperators dinner
has been scheduled for
September 7, 2017 5-8 pm
at
Waredaca
4015 Damascus Rd.,
Laytonsville, MD

For reservations contact
Karen Walker
301-590-2855
Karen.Walker@md.nacdnet.net



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**MONTGOMERY SOIL
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

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Karen.Walker@md.nacdnet.net

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The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.