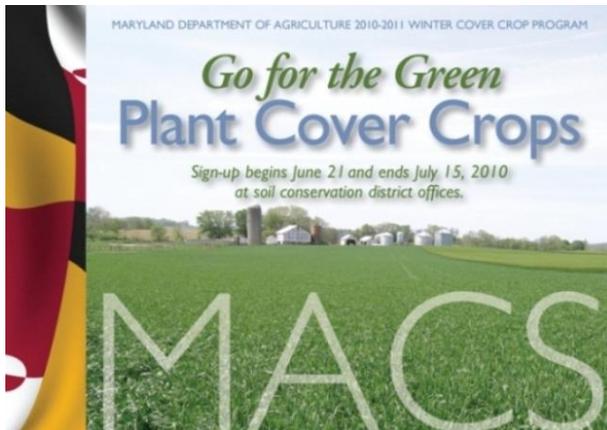


2010-2011 WINTER COVER CROPS



Farmers throughout Maryland have been using cover crops as one way to reduce the amount of nutrients that end up in the Chesapeake Bay. Cover crops, which are planted in the fall, usually consist of cereal grains like wheat, rye, spring oats and barley which continue to grow during the winter months. Once established, cover crops absorb excess nutrients in the soil and reduce erosion from rain, snow, and wind.

Sign-up for this year's program is June 21st - July 15th and it is on a first come, first serve basis. The MD Department of Agriculture has \$15 million allocated for the program this year. The base rate for traditional cover crops is \$40 per acre. Additional incentives are available based on planting method, previous crop, planting date and other factors. Farmers who harvest their cover crops under the commodity program will receive \$25 per acre. This year, there are no enrollment caps for either program option. There are increased incentives for planting rye and for planting fields which received manure. One change for this year is the kill down or harvest of the crop cannot occur before March 15, 2011. Please visit our office to sign up, or check out the details of the program on MDA's website- www.mda.state.md.us



2010 COOPERATORS DINNER

Please mark your calendars for the MSCD Annual Cooperators Dinner scheduled for **September 2, 2010**. It will be an evening of fun for the entire family, with wagon rides, conservation practices, pumpkin chunkin and great food. We are finalizing the location, which will be in the northeast part of the County outside of Laytonsville. An official announcement will be mailed out this summer. We look forward to seeing you in September and celebrating the great conservation and stewardship being practiced in Montgomery County.

EQUINE PASTURE WALK



The Montgomery Soil Conservation District, Maryland Extension and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service are hosting a Pasture Walk for everyone involved in the equine industry. The pasture walk will be held at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center, near Clarksville, Howard County. This University of Maryland facility has a well established Equine Rotational Grazing Demonstration area that provides examples of pasture management, rotational grazing techniques, forage species selection, vegetative heavy use areas, fencing and other conservation practices. **The pasture walk will be on Thursday, June 17, 2010 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.** Join us to learn more about how to assess and improve the vegetative cover in your pastures. Experts will be on hand to discuss tips on improving your pasture's forage stand. For information on the pasture walk or to register please contact Edith Silvius at esilviou@umd.edu or by phone at 301-405-5781.

PLANT INVADER OF THE MONTH:

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

Garlic mustard was first documented in the U.S. around 1868 in Long Island, New York. It came here from Europe where it is used for food and medicinal purposes. It now ranges from eastern Canada, south to Georgia, and west to Kansas. It thrives in various habitats including roadsides, floodplains, forest edges and interiors but does not tolerate highly acidic soils. Garlic mustard invades disturbed areas and may be aided in its distribution by the fact that white-tailed deer prefer to leave it untouched and eat other native wildflowers. Garlic mustard is an invasive because it displaces many native wildflowers and has also caused the decline of the West Virginia white butterfly because its leaves are toxic to the butterfly's eggs.



Garlic mustard is a biennial herb in the mustard family (Brassicaceae). Its life cycle lasts two years and dies back by the second June. Flowering plants are usually 1 to 4 feet tall. Crushed leaves and stems have a garlic type odor. The plant produces small white flowers in the axils of leaves along the stem. It spreads by producing hundreds of seeds which become scattered around the parent plant.

Prevention and control of garlic mustard requires a long term commitment. Its seeds can remain viable for up to 5 years in the soil. Hand removal of plants is best for light infestations. Cutting of the plants low to the ground in the spring will prevent plants from flowering and producing seeds. Mature plants can be carefully removed by hand and bagged for disposal from June through August. A non-selective herbicide such as Roundup may be used to treat heavy infestations. It has also been found that several weevils and one flea beetle feed on garlic mustard.

Information in this article obtained from the USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For more information on garlic mustard or other invasive plants visit: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants

2010 ENVIROTHON



The Envirothon is a nationwide conservation competition for high school students carried out through local soil conservation districts. Students are trained and tested in five natural resource fields: soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics, and a current environmental issue. They compete progressively at the county, state, and international level. The teams receive training from natural resource professionals such as biologists, foresters, natural resource managers and soil scientists. Portions of the training are conducted outdoors in natural settings to provide students with a hands on experience. The program develops student's critical thinking, problem solving, communication, team-building and decision making skills using real life local environmental issues.

Twenty-four teams participated in the Montgomery County Envirothon this spring, all competing for a chance to go to the Statewide Envirothon being held in Prince Georges County June 24th and 25th. This year's winning team was Syzygy from Montgomery Blair High School. We would like to thank the Izaak Walton League/Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter, Honest Tea, MOM's Organic Market, Washington Gas, California Tortilla and Giant Food, Inc. for supporting this valuable program.



Congratulations to Syzygy
2010 Montgomery Envirothon Competition
Winners!!!

*Also pictured are Jim Hubbard and Butch Mezick
from the Izaak Walton League*



Montgomery Soil Conservation District 2009 Annual Report

With the county population nearing 1 million people, educating our citizens about conservation is one of the most important things the Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) can do to promote the future of agriculture.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH AGRICULTURE

MSCD provides this educational opportunity for students in conjunction with Maryland Cooperative Extension. This four week program involves about 2700 fourth grade students and 500 teachers and parents for a total of 3200 participants. Close Encounters represents a comprehensive agricultural learning experience for students from schools across the County. Many young people today are unaware of the benefits agriculture provides and of their responsibility to be good stewards of the land. Close Encounters with Agriculture creates a rare opportunity for these students to enjoy a hands-on learning environment, which can really have an impact on their lives. The children go home and teach their parents about the things they learned, increasing the benefits of the program even further.



With the assistance of the Farm Bureau, Master Gardeners, and local farmers the students experience interactive programs in nutrition, production agriculture and conservation. It is a fun day for everyone and the kids learn about topics not normally covered in their regular curriculum.

Tens of thousands of students have participated in Close Encounters with Agriculture over the years. Each child gains a better understanding of where their food comes from and how agriculture helps to protect our soil, water and other natural resources.

EQUINE SEMINARS – MSCD partnered with University Maryland Extension and Montgomery County DED Agricultural Services Division to continue the series of educational seminars being offered to the equestrian community. The goal of these seminars is to help educate participants on which combination of practices will provide the most successful pasture management. Seminars were held at the new Equine Rotational Grazing Demonstration area at the University of Maryland's Central Maryland Research and Education Center in Clarksville. These seminars highlight several important considerations for horse owners:

- Examples of proper pasture management and rotational grazing techniques.
- Selecting forage species based on nutrition and growth qualities.
- The value of heavy use areas and opportunities for establishing vegetative HUAs.



- Weed identification and management techniques.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Planning and Implementation - Fifty-five Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans were developed for Montgomery County landowners to protect 5,111 acres of land. The District continued to expand the availability of programs for the growing equestrian community. Providing cost-share programs and technical assistance to horse owners will continue to be a critical component of conservation efforts in Montgomery County.

Best Management Practices

Following is a list of the practices completed by MSCD Cooperators in 2009.

Crop Rotation	2,187	Acres
Conservation Tillage	1,444	Acres
Cover Crops	7,182	Acres
Comprehensive Nutrient Mgmt Plans	57	Acres
Nutrient Management	4,784	Acres
Integrated Pest Management	3,379	Acres
Critical Area Planting	2.5	Acres
Residue Mgmt	227	Acres
Manure Transport	46	Tons
Waste Utilization	123	Acres
Waste Storage Structure	3	Structures
Heavy Use Area Protection	2	Acres
Grassed Waterway	3.8	Acres
Filter Strip	2	Acres
Forage Management	276	Acres
Fencing	1,981	Ft.
Watering Facility	7	Structures
Prescribed Grazing	12.5	Acres
Forest Stand Improvement	139	Acres
Wildlife Upland Habitat Mgmt	202	Acres
Riparian Herbaceous Cover	30	Acres
Riparian Forest Cover	15	Acres
Roof Runoff Mgmt	1	Structures
Sediment Control Pond	1	Structures
Water and Sediment Control Basin	4	Structures



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, the District strives to help famers protect their soil, water, and other natural resources.

MSCD staff assisted Cooperators in securing approval of considerable cost-share funding in 2009:

Federal – Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), et al.	\$110,296
State – MD Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS)	\$151,738
Cover Crop Program	<u>\$273,106</u>
	<u>\$535,140</u>

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 for 2009 are listed below:

- Envirothon-The MSCD has one of the largest county Envirothon Competitions in the state, with 21 teams (154 students) participating in the 2009 program.
- Volunteer Tree Plantings-MSCD staff assist the Montgomery Forestry Board with volunteer tree plantings at local schools. One project this spring involved over 75 students from Sandy Spring Friends School planting 50 trees to establish a school forest.
- Homeowners Drainage Issues-MSCD staff visit homeowners throughout the county that are experiencing drainage and water problems on their property.
- Workshops, Fairs, and Expos-The MSCD staff also contacted thousands of constituents through their participation in the County and State Fairs, Maryland Horse Expo, the Flower and Garden Show, Arbor Day and Earth Day Events.
- Newsletter-MSCD published 3 issues of our Conservation Matters Newsletter, which has a circulation of about 1000. The newsletter is sent to all local and state legislators.
- Cooperators Dinner-The purpose of the MSCD Cooperators Dinner is to recognize members of the agricultural community for their contributions to conservation, and to inform legislators about conservation practices being implemented in Montgomery County. Approximately 150 people attended the event, including the County Executive, Isiah Leggett.
- MSCD representatives serve on a variety of Workgroups – Montgomery Forestry Board, Horse Council, County Agriculture Advisory Board, Mid Potomac Tributary Team, Montgomery Water Quality Advisory Group, Patuxent Reservoirs Watershed Protection Group, Montgomery County Conservation Corps, Regional Agricultural Workgroup, Forest Conservation Advisory Committee.



Outreach to the Equine Community

- Assisted the University of Maryland in developing a Pasture Demonstration site at the Clarksville Farm facility. This site has been a tremendous resource for educating owners of equestrian facilities on a variety of management and conservation practices.
- Worked with local horse farm owners to establish Bermuda grass demonstration plantings to help exhibit the potential for using this grass in horse pastures and heavy use areas.
- Developed and administered an Equine Fall Pasture Renovation Incentive Program to help provide assistance for horse farmers whose pastures were impacted by the 2007 drought. The funding for this program was made possible by a grant from NRCS.
- Helped coordinate Equine Seminars focusing on conservation practices for horse farms and pasture improvement and renovation. Provided attendees with examples of different pasture planting techniques.

MSCD STAFF UPDATES

WELCOME ABOARD



Travis Gorleski is an MDA Regional Equine Planner, who is stationed in the Montgomery Soil Conservation District. Mr. Gorleski serves several Southern

Maryland counties in providing conservation plans for the equine community. He is a graduate of University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), where he received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science, with a focus on soil and water quality. He worked with the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management (DEPRM) as a field technician for two years, and raises horses and chickens on his family farm in Baltimore County. Please join us in welcoming Travis to Montgomery County.

FAREWELL TO A CONSERVATIONIST

For thirty years MSCD Resource Conservationist, Brian Taylor, dedicated his time and energy to improving our environment and cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. Throughout his career with the University of Maryland, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Montgomery SCD, Brian has helped hundreds of landowners improve and protect their natural resources, and educated thousands of students about environmental issues.



Throughout his 20+ years with MSCD, Brian worked closely with cooperators to implement conservation plans and practices to improve both the environmental and economic value of their operations. Brian also administered the Envirothon Program for 15 years, helping thousands of high school students to improve their understanding of soils, forestry, water quality, wildlife and other natural resource issues.

We would all like to thank Brian Taylor for his years of dedicated service and wish him all the best in his retirement.

CALL BEFORE YOU COME

Like many businesses and organizations, MSCD has been impacted by budget cuts, staff reductions, furloughs, and other cost saving measures. With these changes have also come scheduling challenges for field staff, in particular their availability in the office for drop-in customers. Our current situation has created an environment where staff will be in the office less and there may be times when the office must close for several hours or in some cases for a whole day.

This condition is a direct result of the current economic climate and we apologize for any inconveniences it may cause our clients. **In order to avoid a situation where a cooperator drops by the MSCD office for assistance only to find staff are in the field or on furlough, we strongly urge all clients to call in and make an appointment before coming to the office.**

FAREWELL TO EXTENSION DIRECTOR

After more than three decades of providing educational information to the citizens of Montgomery County, Mr. Douglas Tregoning, Principal Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources & County Extension Director will be retiring on July 1, 2010. Doug's Contributions to the agricultural community and to the citizens and students of Montgomery County are tremendous, and he leaves a legacy of programs and achievements that will provide benefits for years to come. His knowledge, wisdom and common sense have guided the Montgomery Extension Office through three decades of transformation and development with a final goal of helping all the citizens of the county.

Doug has been instrumental in developing the Montgomery County Grain Marketing Club, which has helped many grain producers to improve their marketing skills. Tens of thousands of 4th graders have learned about agriculture through Doug's efforts with Close Encounters with Agriculture, a program that he created. The MSCD staff wants to thank Doug for all his years of service and his dedication to sharing the positive story about agriculture in Montgomery County. We wish him all the best in retirement and his future endeavors, including volunteering for Close Encounters.

Montgomery Soil Conservation District
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20855-1421



Montgomery Soil Conservation District
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20855

(Please tri-fold, seal and return)

Let Us Know If We Can Help You!

The Montgomery Soil Conservation District provides technical assistance for a variety of conservation practices free of charge. In addition, the Maryland Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS) may pay up to 87.5% of the installation cost of these practices for qualifying landowners:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ Waste Storage | _____ Grassed Waterway |
| _____ Riparian Buffer | _____ Winter Cover Crop |
| _____ Diversion | _____ Field Border |
| _____ Heavy Use Area Protection | _____ Filter Strip |
| _____ Roof Runoff Mgt System | _____ Stream Fencing |
| _____ Trough or Tank | _____ Strip Cropping |
| _____ Nutrient Mgt Consultant | _____ Stream Crossing |
| _____ Spring Development | _____ Critical Area Planting |

(fold)

If you would like to see if you qualify for cost share, want more information on these or other conservation practices, need help with developing a conservation plan for your property or updating an old plan, please mail or fax this form to us and we will contact you.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Fax to 301-590-2849

Montgomery Soil Conservation District

18410 Muncaster Road
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Phone: 301-590-2855
Fax: 301-590-2849
<http://www.montgomeryscd.org>

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Register for our email group by calling
301-590-2855 or emailing to
Karen.Walker@montgomerycountymd.gov

Montgomery Soil Conservation District

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J.G. Warfield, District Conservationist
Karen Walker, Administrative Aide
Melbaliz Santiago, Soil Conservationist
Paul Meyer, Engineering Technician
Eddie Franceschi, Equine Resource Conservationist
James Harne, Conservation Planner III
Travis Gorleski, Regional Equine Planner

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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.