Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District

480 North Main Street
Canandaigua NY 14424
585-396-1450
info@ontswcd.cm
www.ontswcd.com

Spring 2017

A SUCCESSFUL SOIL HEALTH and NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

More than 175 farmers and other interested persons attended the Soil Health Workshop held February 16th.

Fred Lightfoote, Town of Gorham Supervisor and local farmer, welcomed the group and made opening remarks.

Steve Groff *(pictured above)*, a well-known farmer from Lancaster County PA, was keynote speaker. He has conducted extensive cover crop research trials on his 225 acre farm over the past two decades and has developed both an effective tillage radish cover crop, and a Cover Crop Coaching enterprise.

Using cover crops to protect fields after harvest of low residue crops such as corn and soy beans has many benefits. Increased organic matter, improvements in soil structure, stability, and increased moisture and nutrient holding capacity for plant growth have all been demonstrated.

Groff urged farmers to pay attention to the "underground herd" of soil organisms ranging from bacteria to earthworms and other animals that play an important part in maintaining topsoil health. Minimizing tillage was advocated as a means to reduce soil compaction and increase organic material.

Steve Groff : Cover Crop Coaching
Photograph: P J Emerick

Other speakers included Karl Czymmek, Cornell PRODAIRY, and Tom Eskildsen, Yates County SWCD, discussing winter manure spreading guidelines and how manure fits in with crop nutrient needs. Beth Meyers, American Dairy Association, offered ideas of how to best address community perceptions about dairy manure management. Paul Salon, USDA-NRCS, displayed a tabletop rainfall simulator that demonstrated the effects of rainfall on various types of soil covers.

A panel discussion allowed attendees to ask questions of the presenters and farmers who have instituted the practices presented at the workshop. Al Kraus of the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association gave closing remarks about the influence of farms on water quality in the lake.

The event was presented by Ontario and Yates County SWCDs and the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association.

Future workshops are planned to focus on agricultural best management practices and new trends and technologies.

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Soil and Water Conservation District

Providing Today, Protecting Tomorrow

480 North Main Street
Canandaigua, New York 14424
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2017 Fish Stocking Form

Name:_____ Phone:_____ Email:_____

Address:_____ City:_____ NY Zip:_____

Available	Species	Size	Cost (Sales tax incl.)	Quantity	Total
Spring	Catfish	6"- 8"	$4.00 each		
	Fathead Minnows	2"- 3"	$21.00 /150 fish		
	Yellow Perch	3"- 5"	$4.00 each		
	Rainbow Trout	3"- 5"	$4.00 each		
	Triploid Grass Carp	10"-14"	$22.00 each		
	Fish Food	5 lb.	$10.00 each		
► ***Order by May 19, Delivery Thursday, May 25.***				**Subtotal**	
Submit payment with order, payable: ***Ontario Co. SWCD*** ***480 North Main Street*** ***Canandaigua, New York 14424***					
			(Sales tax included)		

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation requires a special Permit to Stock Triploid Grass Carp identifying the specific pond and aquatic vegetation problem. 3-4 weeks advance application is necessary. The application may be found on the DEC website at http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/grasscarppermitappl.pd The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation "Application for Farm Fish Pond License" is required to stock any farm pond, and suffices for permission to stock a pond and/or take fish at a later date.

Applications may be obtained from our office, (585-396-1450), or from our website: www.ontswcd.com, DEC Farm Fish Pond License. Mail completed pond license forms to: Bureau of Fisheries, 6274 E Avon-Lima RD, Avon, NY 14414.

Please note: Pickup is Thursday, May 25, 10 am @ 480 North Main Street parking lot.

- If picking up grass carp, please bring DEC license (3 copies)
- Bring your own pond water and use the following guide:
- 2-4" - 100 fish per 30 gallons of pond water
- 4-6" - 75 fish per 30 gallons of pond water
- 6-8" - 50 fish per 30 gallons of pond water
- 10-14"- 5 fish per 30 gallons of pond water

WE ONLY ACCEPT CHECKS OR CASH

WORK ON HONEOYE INLET RESTORATION PROJECT CONTINUES

As part of FLCC Activities Day on March 28th, students from FLCC along with partners from the Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force and The Nature Conservancy lent a hand to help establish plantings along the newly created Honeoye Inlet channel.

Volunteers braved the wet and muddy conditions to help harvest and plant alder and dogwood stakes that will grow to create a riparian corridor that will help to improve water quality and wildlife habitat in the area.

The creation of the winding 3,700 foot stream channel last autumn was an important and significant step toward constructing a nature-based aid to improve the water quality of Honeoye Lake.

This project is a partnership with NYS DEC, Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force, Finger Lakes Community College, The Nature Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Ontario County SWCD.

Photographs: Right –At Work:: Megan Webster
Below -Volunteers: Terry Gronwall

The next planting is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22nd from 1-3PM. We will be planting trees and shrubs provided through the NYS DEC Trees 4 Tribs Program.

Please join us and be prepared to get muddy as we help to restore the Honeoye Inlet! Please contact Megan Webster at 585-396-1450 or megan.webster@ontswcd.com for more information.

DEC ESTABLISHES OAK WILT PROTECTIVE ZONES IN THE TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced that Oak Wilt Protective Zones have been established in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Greenwood Heights, Kings County; the Town of Canandaigua, Ontario County; and all of Suffolk County.

Oak wilt is a devastating disease, killing trees rapidly in a single season. Protective Zones will help prevent spread of this deadly oak tree disease.

“Across the country, oak wilt has killed tens of thousands of trees, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in damages and economic loss,” said DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos. “New York is working strategically to prevent such devastating losses of oak trees in our state where oak is a widespread and valuable hardwood.”

The oak wilt fungus can spread from one oak to another even after the infected tree has died and moving potentially infected oak firewood, logs, and branch debris contributes to the spread of the disease.

To prevent this, the Oak Wilt Protective Zones prohibit the removal of any living, dead, standing, cut, or fallen oak trees or any portion thereof, including branches, logs, stumps, or roots, green oak lumber, and firewood (of any species) out of the Protective Zone unless it has been chipped to less than one inch in two dimensions.

Firewood, no matter the species, is a regulated material because it is difficult to distinguish oak from other species when cut into small pieces. Non-oak wood leaving the Protective Zone must be 29 inches in length or greater.

In special circumstances, DEC will allow the movement of unchipped oak wood from a Protective Zone through a special permit issued by DEC’s Division of Lands and Forests.

DEC continues to monitor infection sites for signs that oak wilt has spread. Testing for oak wilt must be conducted during the growing season when the fungus is active. Intensive sampling will begin this summer in June. Aerial surveys will begin in July when signs of oak wilt will be most apparent.

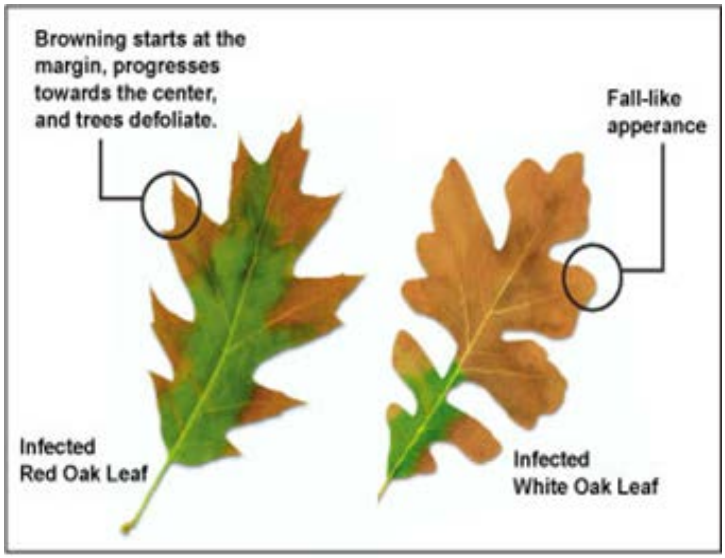
DEC is currently removing trees that have tested positive for the disease, but the full scope of management activities will be adjusted based on the extent of the infection sites. Isolated, small infection centers will be treated with the goal of eliminating the disease from the area while activities in larger infection centers will focus more on control and limiting its spread.

In addition to establishing the Protective Zones, management activities may include removing and destroying infected trees, removing surrounding un-infected oaks to create a buffer, trenching to sever root connections between oaks, and treating infected stumps to kill the roots.

Oak wilt is caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*. The fungus grows in the water-conducting vessels of host trees plugging up these vessels and preventing water transport. As water movement within the tree is slowed, the leaves wilt and drop off, killing the tree rapidly.

DEC requests that the public be on the lookout this summer for oak trees that suddenly lose their leaves during the months of July or August. These occurrences should be reported to DEC’s Forest Health Information Line toll-free at 1-866-640-0652 or via email foresthealth@dec.ny.gov. Submitting pictures of oaks showing symptoms of oak wilt is encouraged.

For more information about oak wilt or the emergency orders, please visit DEC’s website.



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLLINATORS

Pollinators of all types are in difficulty. Colony Collapse Disorder has been widely publicized as honey bee colonies have experienced severe losses nationwide. Official estimates of hive loss in New York reached 50% in 2015-2016.

Likewise, the decline by approximately 90% of the population of monarch butterflies in the past decade has alarmed people who enjoy watching these insects in their gardens and track their migrations.

Although scientists are still investigating the multiple causes of pollinator deaths, several factors have been noted.

Habitat loss due to conversion of hay meadows and idle field to crop land has severely impacted food supplies – pollen and nectar - for insects. Systemic herbicides and pesticides are commonly found in the digestive tracts of honey bees, bumblebees, native bees, butterflies, beneficial beetles and flies.

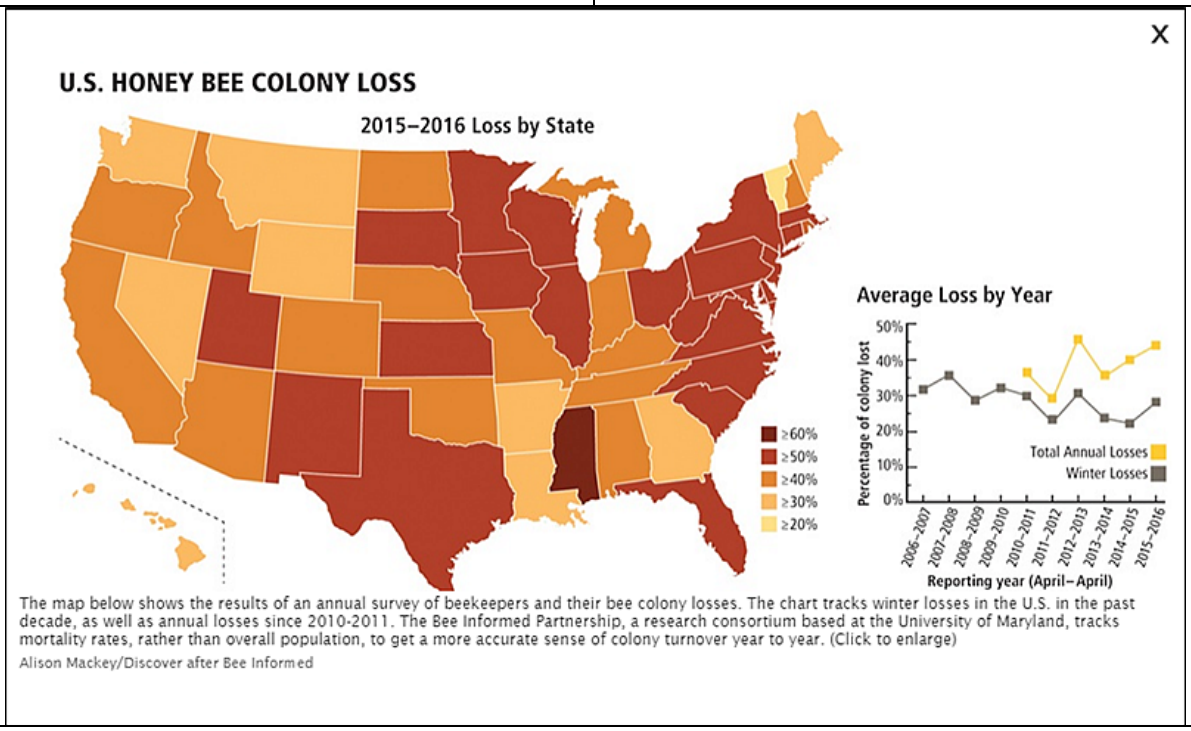
In the case of honey bees, sub-lethal doses of some pesticides prompt disorientation, preventing some bees from finding their hive after foraging, and disrupting the wiggling dance the bees perform to communicate flower location to their hive mates. Worker bees have shortened life spans, as do the queens.

Making a place for pollinators to thrive can help stem the loss of these essential insects. The specific reliance of Monarch butterfly larvae on milkweed is well known. Unfortunately, milkweed is easily killed by glyphosate herbicides. Growing milkweed in your garden or any space away from farm fields and roadside ditches that may be sprayed with glyphosate can give these larvae a sanctuary.

Native flowers that do not require pesticide use are not only beautiful, but thrive because they are adapted to local soils, local climate and local pests.

Although some of the plants have the unfortunate last name of “weed” *(e.g. Joe Pye Weed pictured below)* they are a lovely option to support those essential pollinators that help to produce fruits and vegetables.

Planted in a rain garden, native flowers have the added virtue of filtering runoff before it enters groundwater or surface waters.



MEET (AND ENCOURAGE) YOUR NATIVE BEES

There are approximately 4000 native bee species in the United States. Most of them are less well known than the non-native European honey bee brought to North America by early settlers.

Native bees are extremely efficient pollinators and although they do not produce honey for human consumption, neither are they likely to sting. Many will not even protect their nests should you happen to disturb the site. Bumblebees may sting if you happen to step on their small nests. Female carpenter bees sometimes defend their nest sites.

Native bees range in size from very tiny (.08 inch) to the largest carpenter bees (1 inch long). They also vary in shape, life styles, nests, flowers they visit and seasonal activity. They are mostly unnoticed, but provide valuable services to all kinds of flowering plants, pollinating everything from wild flowers to important crops.

Some native bees build their nests underground. Mason bees and leaf cutter bees use hollow stems or holes in trees. Mason bees seal eggs laid in the stems with tiny plugs of clay. Leaf cutter bees seal their eggs with small circles cut from leaves (which doesn't harm the plant). They do not sting.

Miner Bee nests

Miner (ground) Bee

Mason Bee sealing egg cells with clay plugs

Mason Bee

Carpenter bees use their powerful jaws to make holes in wood. Nests are always carefully chosen for the right conditions: sunshine, size, and absence of flooding threat.

Nests and colonies of these native species are small or may contain only one female and her eggs. Miner bees may nest close together, as the illustration shows, but only one bee uses each nest. Only the fertile queens will over-winter.

Bumblebees are particularly good pollinators as they engage in "buzz" pollination: grasping the flower parts in their jaws and vibrating their flight muscles rapidly. They carry large amounts of pollen on their fuzzy bodies as well.

Bumblebees have been proposed for endangered species status due to a pronounced drop in numbers. Diseases have spread into wild from bumblebees, originally from North America, that were imported to Europe for greenhouse pollination, then re-imported to North America for greenhouse use. The limited genetic stock of the re-imported bees seems to have decreased their disease resistance.

Scientists analyzing pollen found on greenhouse bumblebees say that these insects actually collect the majority of their pollen from plants outside of the greenhouses. Wild bumblebees visiting the same flowers as the domestic stock have picked up the diseases.

Native bee houses are a popular garden addition and encourage presence of these valuable insects.

Bumblebee

Leaf cutter bee

EXAMPLES OF HOUSES FOR FRIENDLY GARDEN INSECTS AND ANIMALS

Including some animal dormitories in your gardening plans may result in better pollination and a more interesting diversity of garden visitors. ***The inclusion of these photographs does not indicate or imply an endorsement of any particular product. They are shown as examples of what is available on the market or for a crafty gardener to make.***

Mason Bee or Leaf Cutter Bee house

Beneficial insect hotel… bee tubes and butterfly slots

Butterfly House

Two toad shelters – one is an inexpensive model

A GROWING SUCCESS: 2017 TREE AND SHRUB SALE

The Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District sold over 9,000 bare root seedlings through the 2017 Annual Tree and Shrub Program.

If you are one of the many customers who pre-ordered, be sure to pick up your purchase on Friday, April 21st from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or on Earth Day Saturday, April 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to noon at the Ontario County Fairgrounds Dairy Barn.

If you need directions or have any questions call or email Tad Gerace at 585-396-1450 or tad.gerace@ontswcd.com

Dairy Barn: Ontario County Fairgrounds
2820 County Road 10, Canandaigua

A healthy seedling, ready to plant and thrive.

Photograph Credits: Left: Tad Gerace
Below: Megan Webster

Tad Gerace with a happy customer.

SMART SPRING LAWN CLEANUP – BE GENTLE ON YOUR WATERWAYS.

If the advent of spring inspires you with thoughts of running barefooted through lush grass, you have a lot of company. Before the joy of grass underfoot, however, there are often chores to accomplish. Spring lawn cleanup is on that list.

When removing winter debris from your lawn, please keep the health of the water around you in mind.

Blowing or raking leaves or throwing brush into a gully or road ditch means that the nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) contained in the debris will eventually reach a stream and then a lake. Nutrients in the water support the growth of algae and water plants.

Far worse, pet owners facing a winter's grim accumulation of dog droppings in their yard may rake the feces along with leaves into a nearby gully or road ditch.

Dog feces are rich nutrient sources. They also carry an extremely heavy load of bacteria and often contain parasites and other pathogens that pass easily to humans; our species having lived together for a very long time.

Unfortunately, our local water bodies are already stressed with too many nutrients, as recent algae and cyanobacteria blooms attest. Leaves, sticks and feces are biodegradable, thereby adding more nutrients to those already in the water. This is highly undesirable.

So – what can you do with the leaves and brush?

1. Shred leaves with a lawnmower –they decompose quickly and feed your grass.

2. Compost leaves and small woody debris. Compost bins range from simple wire cages to large commercial products. They all work.

3. Bring the debris to a town transfer center for deposit on the brush pile. It will be converted into mulch.

And - what can you do with the pet poo?

1. Put it in the trash.

2. Bury it in the yard about 5 inches deep where soil organisms can break it down.

3. Consider installing a dog toilet. These are special buckets with holes in the bottom placed into the ground on a bed of stones. Some makers advertise an enzyme supposed to break down feces quickly. When the bucket is full, water is poured into it to flush the broken down materials into the soil. These are placed as far away from wells, water bodies and vegetable gardens as possible.

4. Dog feces can be composted, but the compost <u>should not</u> be used on vegetable gardens.

Shoreline residents:
Raking debris into the lake
(as pictured)
directly feeds more algae
and water weed growth
in the summer!

Ontario County SWCD Staff Directory

Senior District Manager:
- Patrick J. Emerick – CPESC, CPSWQ, CMS4S
  - Administration
  - Soil Erosion Control
  - Streambank Stabilization
  - Water Resources Council

District Clerk/Treasurer/Secretary
- Elaine Borgeest
  - Fish Stocking Program

Senior Conservation Technician
- Megan Webster

Conservation Educator
- Edith Davey
  - Education & Training Programs
  - Website & Newsletter

Conservation District Technician
- Tad Gerace
  - Onsite Wastewater Systems
  - Tree and Shrub Sale

Water Resources Technician
- Tucker Kautz- CCA
  - Ag Environmental Management
  - Drainage & Farm Assistance

Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspector
- George Barden - CPESC
  - Onsite Wastewater Systems
- Jamie Noga
  - Administrative Assistant

AEM

Farmers interested in the Agricultural Environmental Management Program are urged to contact
Tucker Kautz
Ontario County SWCD 585-396-1450
The Tier 1 assessment form may be found on our website: www.ontswcd.com or obtained at the SWCD office.

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