



No Till Gardening

The community garden in Beulah had a little different look this year, two of the plots have gone no-till. Bruce Schmidt, SCD Technician started the trend using District weed barrier material and one producer is using a local store weed fabric. Both the no-till plots and the traditional plots are doing outstanding due to timely rains, but weeding the no-till is very minimal 10 minutes total for the season. Note the photo of the no-till onions next to traditional plot filled with weeds.



The plot was prepared by laying the weed barrier over the existing grass, no chemical was used. The fabric was stapled down to hold it in place. Several days later openings in the barrier were made; seed and transplants were placed, making sure good soil contact was maintained. As the vegetables have grown some opening in the fabric have needed to be expanded, but overall the maintenance has been very minimal. Fall cleanup has also been a breeze. If you want more information on No till gardening, contact the MCSCD office.



Richau's selected as "Conservation Achievement of the Year" winners at NDFS 2015 Trees Bowl

Kenneth and Lila Richau of Golden Valley were recognized as the 2015 Conservation Achievement of the Year Trees Award winners at the Trees Bowl and Ceremony held in Fargo. They have planted several miles of windbreaks and living snow fences on their property. Ken & Lila take great pride in keeping these plantings mowed and weed free. They are concerned about keeping the trees healthy through care and maintenance to enhance habitat for wildlife in the area. The award is presented by the ND Forest Service.



Trees!!

It's time to start thinking about your 2016 tree planting and hand plant orders. If you plan on having the district plant trees for you next year, stop in the office before **November 30**. Cost share opportunities may be available!

Hand plant orders need to be submitted by **April 1, 2016**. Hand Plant Order Forms are included in this newsletter. The earlier you submit your order the easier it is to get the trees you need. Taller stock is available for most varieties if orders are received before November 30. Please stop in or call the office at 873-2101 ext. 3.



Bruce Schmidt Moving On

Bruce Schmidt submitted his resignation as District Technician effective July 31. He accepted a job as an Administrative Pastor for a church in the Bismarck area.

Schmidt stated "I've enjoyed working with the area agricultural industry and Mercer County producers in the past year, but an opportunity has come that I just couldn't pass up. The Conservation District Staff and the Board have been great to work with and a great employer."

Before joining the district, Schmidt was Senior Pastor at Faith Community Church in Beulah for 11 years. Prior to that, he served as NDSU Extension Agent for 20 years working in Barnes, Ward, Pembina, and Mercer counties. He and his wife, Renae, have two daughters that currently reside in Bismarck, and a son teaching in the West Fargo School District.

North Dakota Forest Service Cost Share for Windbreak Renovations



Many planted shelterbelts and farmstead windbreaks in North Dakota have deteriorated due to age or disease and are no longer functional. Through the North Dakota Statewide Windbreak Renovation Initiative, the North Dakota Forest Service (NDFS) will offer technical and financial assistance to private landowners to restore, protect, and enhance this deteriorating resource. NDFS and partners will assess wind-break condition and provide a written plan for renovating the windbreak to restore functionality. Through a grant from the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund, this initiative will provide cost-share to landowners to implement their written windbreak renovation plan.

Interested landowners will complete the Windbreak Renovation Questionnaire located on the NDFS web-site. This questionnaire also serves as the pre-application. Pre-applications will be accepted on a continuous basis. Deadlines will be used to group

applicants into pools. Upcoming pool deadline is March 15, 2016.

NDFS will review the information provided on the landowner questionnaire to determine if the project is eligible to participate. If eligible, a forester or technician will work with the landowner to develop a Windbreak Renovation Plan. There is no cost for this service and no obligation for the landowner to implement the plan. If the landowner desires to implement the plan, the forester or technician can assist in applying for cost-share.

Applications for cost share will be reviewed, ranked, and approved or denied based on funds available. Successful applicants will sign a cost-share agreement with NDFS. The landowner will have two years to complete the windbreak renovation as described in the Windbreak Renovation Plan. When the renovation is complete and inspected, the landowner will be reimbursed for 50% of the actual cost of implementing the plan, subject to project-specific practice and payment limits as described in the cost-share agreement.

Please visit the NDFS website (www.ndsu.edu/ndfs) or contact our office for more information, 873-2101

Spring Creek Riparian Cost Share

Riparian areas in the Spring Creek Watershed now have more cost share available to them. The Mercer and Dunn County Waterboards have offered to pay an additional 40% for filter strips in riparian areas. The Spring Creek Watershed will cover the other 60%. If you own or operate land adjacent to a creek or tributary in the Spring Creek Watershed we would like to assist you with filter strips, riparian plantings, and fencing. Our goal is to improve riparian areas and improve runoff into spring creek. If you are interested, please call Kasha at 873-2101 ext 3.



Poor ↑ Riparian Area **Healthy** ↓



The Mercer County & Dunn County Soil Conservation Districts and Water Resource Boards are very excited to announce a grant for the Spring Creek Watershed Phase II was received. In July, the project was awarded \$450,000 for a four and a half year grant. The funding is handled through the ND Department of Health.

The focus of the Spring Creek Watershed is to improve water quality in the watershed and priority areas on the Spring Creek that are impacting water quality. Water samples are taken at three locations on Spring Creek and three locations on Goodman Creek. E. coli has been recorded at high levels throughout the year.

There are many practices to improve riparian areas and water quality depending on the need. A riparian area is the land that starts at the water's edge and continues up to the prairie/field edge. Practices we cost share include: tree planting, grass or hayland plantings, filter strips, pipelines, tanks and many more. We will also assist you in proper grazing management.

If you are in the watershed and interested in implementing conservation practices stop by the office or call 873-2101 ext 3 or if you are in Dunn County contact the Killdeer field office at 701-764-5646 ext 3.



Noxious Weed Scholarship

Calvin Aichele is the 2015 recipient of the \$500 Mercer County SCD Noxious Weed Scholarship. Calvin is a 2015 graduate of Beulah High School. He plans on attending North Dakota State University majoring in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.

MCSCD is taking applications for 2016 Noxious Weed and Water Quality Scholarships. The scholarships are open to high school seniors and college students who are residents of Mercer County, North Dakota and intend to or are currently pursuing an agricultural/natural resource management/environmental or related field at a two or four year university in the state of North Dakota. Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$500.

Interested applicants are required to complete the application form and compose an essay of no more than 500 words. Applications and essays are due to the Mercer County Soil Conservation District office by April 1st 2016. For more info or applications, please contact the office.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Deadline is October 16, 2015

Cost Share Is Available For:

Cross Fencing, Pipelines, Tanks, Portable Windbreaks
Tree Renovations & Establishment
No Till
Cover Crops
Critical Area Plantings
Range Plantings, Hayland Plantings
Well Decommissioning and much more!



Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – Grasslands

A new CRP-grasslands general sign up is available to interested producers. CRP-grasslands assists landowners protect grasslands: including rangeland, pastureland, and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as land.

- *Haying (1 out of 5 years) and/or grazing is allowed
- *Cost Share available for cross fencing and water developments
- *Only land with existing grassland is eligible
- *Sign up Deadline is November 20, 2015
- *FSA provides annual rental payments in an amount this is not more than 75% of the grazing value of the land

For Any Questions contact

or your local FSA Office: