

# CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chairman: Clinton Ruppel  
Vice Chairman: Mark Reitzel  
Treasurer: Susan Jahn  
Secretary: Roger Eakins  
Member: Kenny Spooler  
District Manager: Paula Meier  
District Technician: Denise Yamnitz

Phone: (573) 243-1467, ext. 3



**June 2011**

**James T. Hunt**  
*NRCS District Conservationist*

**Ben Williams**  
*NRCS Soil Conservation Technician*

**Monica Barnfield**  
*NRCS Soil Conservationist*

**Brad Pobst**  
*Private Lands Conservationist*  
*Missouri Department of Conservation*

*Lend a Helping Hand to  
Conservation of Land*

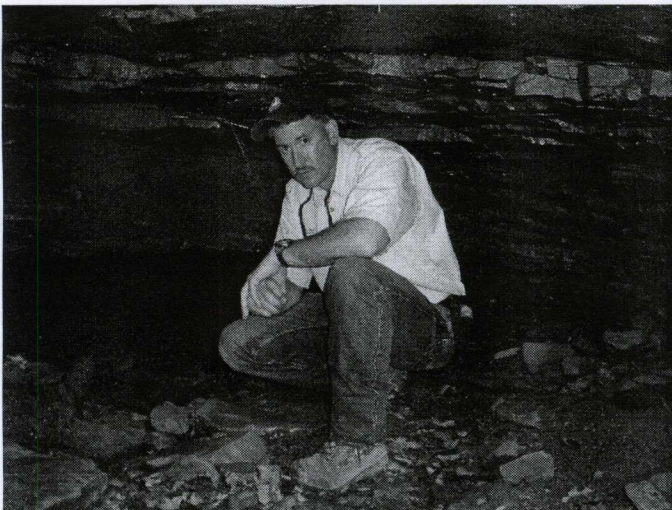
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# NEWSLETTER

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Person with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-8382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## New Private Land Conservationist



Brad Pobst is the new Private Land Conservationist for the Missouri Department of Conservation in Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties. This position became vacant after the retirement of Larry Heggemann who held this position since 2001. Brad has over 22 years experience with MDC mostly in the Fisheries Division. Over the years he has helped landowners manage their land for their fish, forest and wildlife resources. The last five years he has spent a good portion of his time underground in the caves of Perry County. He is a lifelong resident of Scott County and lives in Oran. Brad will be working out of the Cape

Girardeau County USDA office in Jackson and can be reached at 573-243-1467 ext. 123.



**W**ith input costs soaring and returns declining, problems on the farm seem to be getting out of hand. The business of farming is very complex and confusing at best. There are ways to reduce your input costs and increase your profits, while at the same time improving your soil conditions, plant and livestock health. It focuses on soil health and is called *biological farming*. It utilizes resources of both science and nature in a superior farming system. It works with natural laws, not against them, which is how things were designed to work. Biological farming improves the environment, reduces erosion, reduces disease and insect pressure, and alters weed pressure, and it accomplishes this while working in harmony with nature.

Let's share some ideas and suggestions for making farming more **fun** and **profitable**. Biological farming is a different **type** of farming – working with nature, feeding soil life, balancing soil minerals and tilling soils with a purpose. One can't credit any one thing for making biological farming successful – it is a whole-farm management *system*. There is no one right way; this is not an exact science.

No question about it, you can get high yields with lots of commercial fertilizers and synthetic chemicals for weed, insect and disease control. There are, however, some concerns and problems. Is this food production system *safe* and *sustainable*? At best we can only hope we are not creating more problems for the future. We do need to keep production up to help feed the people, however we can do that by working toward elimination of limiting factors to production. Once the soil's chemical (nutrients), physical and biological properties are in balance, you can expect optimum production, even in bad years. The main objectives are to provide a soil which is well drained, loose and crumbly, with lots of soil life, and mineralized with lots of essential elements. Select the proper sources of materials and manage the excesses as well as the deficiencies. That is what it takes to grow high-yielding, healthy crops/plants of any kind on all soils.

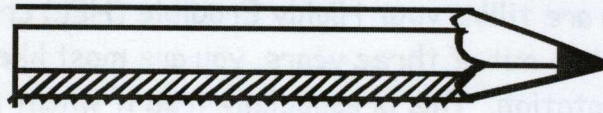
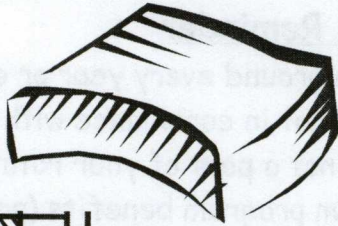
Building healthy mineralized soils takes time. The speed of correction has to do with soil types and present soil conditions. For most farms, it takes three to five years, which really is a short time considering how long it has taken to get the land in the shape it is now. Observation can clue you in along the way during transformation to healthy soils. Feed quality and insect pressure usually change first.

The six main principles to achieving a balanced soil are:

1. Keep the soil covered by having a plant growing the year round (plant cover crops in the "off-season")
2. Grow as many different species of plants as practical (diversify the crop rotation and cover crops)
3. Manage plant residues (avoid burning)
4. Manage for active biological functions below the soil (earthworms)
5. Disturb the soil as little as possible (avoid excessive tillage)
6. Limit physical, chemical and biological disturbances (tillage, fertilizer, pesticides, overgrazing)

By altering cropping, grazing or pasture maintenance practices, soil health can be restored. By altering management practices and restoring soil health, the use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers can be greatly reduced and production yields will maintain if not increase due to a vital nutrient supply from the practice of continually building organic matter. A healthy soil will produce long term consistent yields at a lower cost. The two most powerful things you can do for your soil is to provide a living root the year round and manage for earthworm activity. By diversifying the species of plants growing you can better provide what the soil needs. Alternative practices such as cover crops, interseeding, compost, diverse crop rotation, manure application and reduced or no-tillage farming will all create additional organic matter and stabilize the soil structure for better drainage and improve water holding capacity.

Follow the series for more tips and techniques for managing for improved soil health. NRCS will soon be offering financial assistance directed toward improving soil health. For more information, please contact your local NRCS office at 480 West Jackson Trail, Jackson, MO 63755 (Phone: 573-243-1467 Ext 3) or visit us online [www.mo.usda.gov](http://www.mo.usda.gov).



## **ANNUAL CAPE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ESSAY CONTEST**

### **REQUISITES:**

- \* Applicants must be a graduate of a Cape Girardeau County High School and a Cape Girardeau County resident at the time of graduation from high school.**
- \* Applicants must have completed a minimum of 60 hours of college level course work toward an undergraduate degree.**
- \* Applicants must be enrolled in a four year degree program that falls into one of the following subject matter categories: Agriculture, Agriculture Business, or Natural Resources.**
- \* Applicants must have a GPA of a least 2.5.**

**Applications may be picked up at the office at 480 West Jackson Trail, Jackson, Missouri.**

**Applications for the \$500 essay contest are due Friday July 15, 2011. Please contact the office at (573) 243-1467 ext 3 if you have any questions.**

## Conservation Compliance Reminder

If you are tilling your Highly Erodible (HEL) crop ground every year or even every two out of three years, you are most likely not in compliance with your crop rotation. This is especially true if wheat is not a part of your rotation. HEL Compliance is required to be eligible for farm program benefits (payments) received from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) or the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Annual compliance status reviews are completed every year in June on randomly selected tracts throughout the county. Crop residues that are left in the field after the crops have been harvested are



important for many reasons. They are good sources of plant nutrient, they add organic material to the soil, and they reduce erosion. Therefore, the more crop residue left on the surface throughout the year, the better your chances of not losing soil to erosion.

## Missouri State Women In Ag Conference to be held in Booneville

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual State Women In Ag Conference will be held in Booneville, September 12 - 14, 2011. The conference will include workshops on How to Prepare Your Child for the Future Forest Management and Your Economic Returns, Honey Bees, Health Issues, and How to Stay Safe Growing Your Own Herbs. The conference will also include a tour of Warm Springs Ranch and a tour of a Christmas Tree Farm. Guest speakers at the conference include Charlie Hopper with the Department of Ag and Senator Jean Carnahan. For more information please contact the Soil & Water Conservation District at 573-243-1467 ext. 3.

## FARM DAY 2011

On April 27<sup>th</sup> Denise Yamnitz (SWCD), Paula Meier (SWCD), James Hunt (NRCS), and Brad Pobst (MDC) had the privilege of speaking to local third graders about soil conservation and streambank erosion. They participated in Farm Day 2011, along with over 800 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, parents, and teachers at Flickerwood Arena, sponsored by the SEMO Cattleman's Association.

Students traveled from one station to another to listen, answer questions, and participate in activities about forestry, pork, beef, poultry, corn, dairy, conservation, bees, soybeans, and received a snack made from some of the products listed above. At the soil conservation stop, Denise, Paula, and Brad demonstrated with stream tables, borrowed from the Missouri Department of Conservation, the effect that running water can have on soil. They constructed ponds and streams and showed students effective ways of conserving soil.

Farm Day has been very educational for many children the past 16 years, and we look forward to helping continue this benefit by participating in Farm Day 2012.

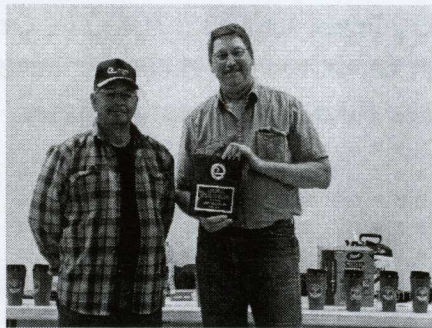
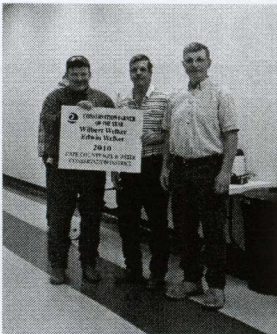


## Cape County Women In Ag Tour

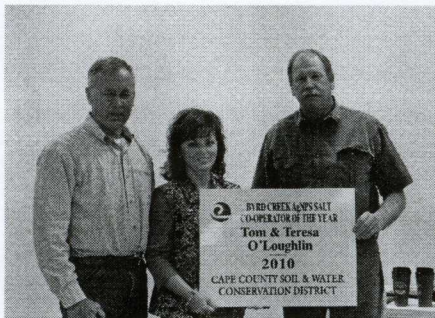
On May 27<sup>th</sup> approximately 45 women participated in the Cape Girardeau County Women In Ag Tour hosted by Cape Girardeau County Soil & Water Conservation District. The ladies started the day at Larry & Judith Allen's Farm. James Hunt (NRCS) explained to the group the need for grazing systems, benefits provided from having a grazing system, technical aspects of a grazing system, and the funding available for grazing systems. Larry also answered questions from the ladies regarding how his system is working for him and his part in the implementation of his system. Next, was a tour of the historic Bollinger Mill. The group enjoyed a guided tour through the mill and learned the history of the mill. Our next stop was at the University of Missouri Extension for a delicious lunch, catered by Heuer BBQ, and attendance prizes. Our final stop of the day was Performance Blenders. Gerry Shinn and his son, Geoff, gave us a guided tour of their facility and described their feed mill operation and livestock marketing program. Each of our stops showcased different type of agribusiness but also showed how important each is to the industry.



## 2010 AWARDS GIVEN AT MARCH OPEN HOUSE



The Cape Girardeau County Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank everyone that attended and helped to make our Open House on March 23<sup>rd</sup> a success! During the Open House a presentation was given on Ponds by Brad Pobst, Private Land Conservationist with Missouri Department of Conservation. The Current Issue Team from Jackson FFA also presented their debate topic for state competition. Awards were given for Conservation Farmer of the Year, Wildlife Conservationist of the Year, and the Byrd Creek Watershed Cooperator of the Year. Accepting the award for Conservation Farmer of the Year (top left) was Wib Welker and Ed Welker presented by Mark Reitzel. Accepting the award for Wildlife Conservationist of the Year (top right) was David & Phyllis Schwab presented by Larry Heggemann. Tom & Teresa O'Loughlin were the recipients of the Byrd Creek Watershed Cooperator of the Year (bottom left) that was presented by Kenny Spooler. At the end of the presentation of awards James Hunt presented Gerald Bryan (bottom right) with a plaque of

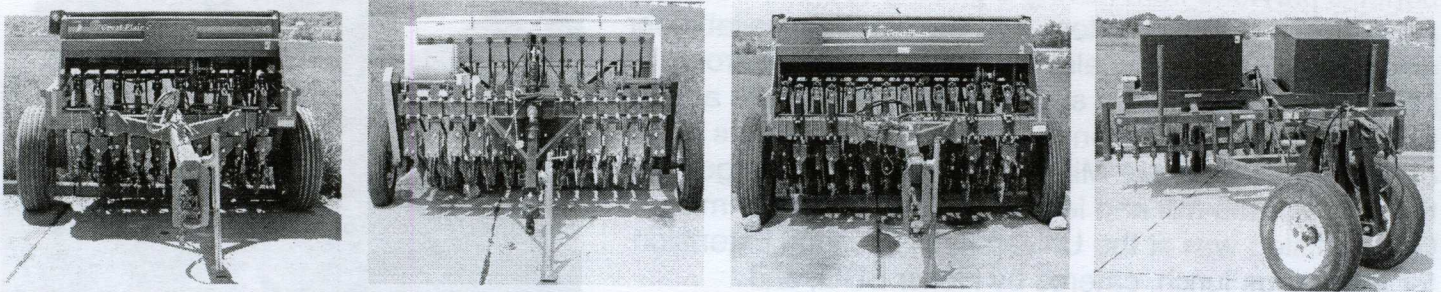


appreciation for his 30 years of service on the SWCD Board. Larry Heggemann also received a plaque from the Cape County SWCD, presented by Clinton Ruppel (top center), for his years of working, in conjunction with the district, on various projects assisting the landowners of Cape County. Congratulations to all on all of their hard work and a special thanks to Gerald and Larry for their years of dedicated service.



## FOR RENT NO TILL DRILLS & PASTURE RENOVATOR

The SWCD would like to remind everyone the District has a 10' Great Plains Drill and a 7' Great Plains Drill for rent along with a 8' Truax Drill (warm season grasses). The District also has a Rhino Pasture Renovator also available for rent. The 10' drill rents for \$8/AC, the 7' drill rents for \$7/AC, the 8' drill rents for \$10/AC, and the renovator rents for \$6/AC. If you would like to schedule either the drills or the renovator, please call 573-243-1467 ext 3.



## WILDLIFE WAYS DID YOU KNOW.....

That slime you feel when you handle a fish is a type of mucus secreted from the skin that's very important to a fish. It's a coating that provides protection against parasites and diseases, covers wounds to prevent infection, and helps fish move through the water faster.

Non Profit Rate  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Jackson, MO  
63755  
Permit No. 78

Cape Girardeau  
Soil and Water Conservation District  
480 W. Jackson Trail • Jackson, MO 63755  
Return Service Requested