

Lafayette County SWCD  
120 W 19th Street  
Higginsville, MO 64037

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# Lafayette SWCD News Link

## SOIL HEALTH MEETING

The annual soil health meeting will be held in Concordia, Mo at the Concordia Community Center on February 13th, 2020 starting at 9AM. The meeting will have several topics on soil health. We will have presentations on Diversity of mixes, Economics, and more; With lunch provided. This is an informational forum to promote and provide information on soil health. If you wish to attend the soil health meeting please RSVP to Sara Cowherd by email [sara.cowherd@swcd.mo.gov](mailto:sara.cowherd@swcd.mo.gov) or call the office at (660)584-8732 ext. 3 (Please

## SOIL EROSION IN MISSOURI

Due to the efforts of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Program, Missouri has saved more than 177 million tons of soil over the past 30 years. Of Missouri's 44.6 million acres of land, 14.8 million are considered cropland. With almost half of Missouri's cropland soil classified as highly erodible, controlling and minimizing erosion is a significant challenge for Missouri's farmers. Erosion can cause problems by washing away the productive topsoil, which adversely affects local and national food supplies and economies. Soil erosion caused by storm water runoff carries fertilizers away from the fields and into the waterways. The soil entering the waterway can cause water quality problems that continue far downstream. Eroded soil settling along the shores and beds of streams, lakes and rivers can lead to the destruction of valuable aquatic habitat such as fish spawning areas. Soil and contaminated water entering drinking water supply systems each year can increase water treatment costs, which raises utility bills for Missouri households. Revenues from the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax have resulted in Missouri having the greatest soil erosion reduction rate of any other state with more than 10 million acres of cultivated cropland.

(<https://dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub2166.pdf>)

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 1st 2020—Office Closed for New Years Day
- January 20th—Office Closed for Martin Luther King Jr.
- January 23rd—Native Warm Season grass Management Workshop in Sedalia, MO
- February 13th - Soil Health Meeting
- February 17th—Office Closed for Presidents Day
- March 12th—Open house

## OPEN HOUSE

The districts open house will be March 12th in Higginsville. Please Look for updates !

### STAFF

Ralph Collins—SWCD  
Sara Cowherd—SWCD  
Tori Dean—SWCD  
Nikki Grimpo—SWCD/FOSA  
  
Tony Bittiker—NRCS  
Theresa Feil-Erskine—NRCS  
Scott Slusher—NRCS  
Scott Paterson—ACES

## DISTRICT PHOTO CONTEST

The District is now accepting entries for the district photo contest which is open to 7th–12th grade students in Lafayette County. Photos may cover a wide range of topics; conservation practices, nature, and ag/conservation across the county. Contest categories and guidelines are available at <http://nacdnet.org/education/contests>. The Photo contest ends February 21st, 2020. Lafayette County schools have the opportunity to participate.

## Importance of Soil Health

Our soil is one of the most important resources (if not the most important) we have. Soil is the very framework that grows most of the food we as humans eat and filters the water we drink.

A healthy soil should hold both water and nutrients and keep them readily available for plant uptake.

Organic matter is one of the most important aspects of soil health. Crop residue plays an important role in providing organic matter to

the crop fields. Organic matter provides food for nematodes, fungi, worms and many insects. These all help break down the organic matter and aerate the soil.

How can I make my soil healthy? We can start by making simple changes like avoiding compaction on our fields. Compaction reduces air space in the soil allowing for less water to absorb. All that moisture we receive must go somewhere and if it isn't absorbed it runs off the field. This runoff then causes erosion, which brings me to the next thing we need to avoid. Avoid as much erosion as possible.

So, your soil is already compacted from years of tillage, harvesting when wet, plus you may have erosion issues. What can be done to reverse the damage already caused and get headed in a positive soil health direction? Consider the following suggestions mentioned below.



Reduce the use of pesticides by scouting fields and spraying once thresholds are met.



Reduce the use of tillage by going No-Till. No-Till isn't just using a No-Till drill or planter, it's leaving the disk and all those tillage implements in the shed, (even those that you have been told just fluff the soil).



Rotate field crops, Continuous corn or beans isn't a rotation.



Increase organic matter. This can be done by following all the things mentioned above, as well as adding in cover crops to keep a living plant on the soil as much as possible.



Attend a Soil Health meeting. They are everywhere including one being held in Lafayette

Some **Monarch butterflies** fly as far as

**3,000 miles** to reach their winter home

<https://dnr.mo.gov/education/index.html>

### FLAGS & RENTAL EQUIPMENT

#### Staking Flags for Sale

- \$10/bundle of 100

#### Truex 8' Drill Rental

- Minimum fee of \$100
- \$10/acre fee over 10 acres

#### Silt Plow Rental

- \$100 in county rental
- \$125 out of county rental

MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
THE OFFICE

There are over  
**20,000**  
different species of bees  
<https://dnr.mo.gov/education/index.html>

## DISTRICT POSTER CONTEST

the annual poster contest for 4th and 5th grade students in Lafayette County. This years theme is “Where would we bee without pollinators?” Pollinators form the foundations of a healthy and sustainable future for food and the environment, but in recent years, they have shown

concerning signs of decline. It’s important that we work to help them prosper by enhancing native pollinator habitats and protecting against pollinator declines. The Poster Contest ends February 21st, 2020. Lafayette County schools have the opportunity to participate.

### Cost-Share Policy

The district is finalizing the new cost-share policy, The policy is going to address some rules and implementations that will go into place to better serve the landowners and operators in Lafayette County. Due to finalization of this policy it will be available for viewing on the district website at a later date.

### STAFF CORNER BACK FOR ROUND TWO

My name is Scott Slusher and I have lived and farmed in Lafayette County since 1982. I began my soil conservation career here in this office in 1984 working until 2001 as a District employee. Due to family issues I struck out to take a Federal Technician job in Cass County working there for a year then transferring to Jackson County, where I served until taking this position opened when Scott Siegfried went to Warrensburg Wetland office.



I have 4 daughters who are grown, married, and mostly live in the local area. The 5<sup>th</sup> daughter is a Junior at Linden Wood College in St. Charles and will be graduating in May of 2020, so empty nesting has arrived. Being blessed with 6 wonderful Grandchildren and another on the way. Farming 650 acres of row crops, raising meat goats, chickens, and produce will help pass the time.

I am truly grateful to the landowners and staff of this county and am looking forward to serving your needs any way I can. For the younger farmers I am sure that I have worked with your Dads and even Grandads in the past.





### QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER


The newsletters will have upcoming events, any new information, updates and more. We want to be able to provide information to you through these newsletters in a cost effective way. We are providing the future newsletters electronically via email. To provide this newsletter I am in need of email addresses. Also providing your email will enable us to inform you of information that may come available between newsletter releases. If you wish to receive the newsletter please send me an email at [sara.cowherd@swcd.mo.gov](mailto:sara.cowherd@swcd.mo.gov) if you wish to receive a paper copy of the newsletters please contact the office at 660-584-8732 ext. 3.


# Winter Driving Tips

Winter is now upon us with the winter comes winter driving here at few tips when traveling this winter: Remember during the trip driving with temperatures around 32 degrees is the most dangerous

Before leaving check the road conditions and make sure your vehicle is equipped with some emergency supplies such as:

 A flashlight  A first aid kit  Blankets  Water

 Extra winter gear (Coat, Gloves, etc.)

 Small tools or equipment (small shovel, jumper cables, pliers, etc.)

The Lafayette County Soil and Water Conservation District was formed May of 1950. It was formed to assist landowners in conserving and improving soil, water, woodland and wildlife resources; to recommend and provide assistance in the planning and application of conservation measures; and to provide technical assistance for erosion control practices. The district is considered a local unit of government without taxing authority. The Lafayette County Soil and Water Conservation District works in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service which provides technical assistance to the district.

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Non-profit Organization

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Higginsville, MO

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