

Conservation Commentary

Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District

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www.meigsswcd.com

Summer 2014

Seasonal High Tunnel Q & A

Funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

What is a seasonal high tunnel?

Seasonal High Tunnels, also called hoop houses or high tunnels, look like greenhouses and allow crops to grow in colder weather. A skeleton, made of metal, holds a plastic cover over the crop, trapping heat from sunlight. In warm weather, raising the plastic sides of the high tunnel lets air circulate.

How are high tunnels different from greenhouses?

Greenhouses have foundations while high tunnels do not. The sun heats high tunnels, while greenhouses also use other energy sources. Greenhouse plants grown in pots or other containers, usually set on racks or tables. The plants in high tunnels are grown in the soil under the high tunnel.

Can I put the high tunnel anywhere I want?

You can only put a high tunnel on land used to grow crops.

Can I plant in containers?

No, you must plant directly into the soil. You may use raised beds.

How long does the plastic on a high tunnel last?

The plastic lasts about five years. NRCS does not help pay for new plastic.

Can I put a heating or ventilation system in my seasonal high tunnel?

Yes, however, NRCS does not pay for these.

How much does NRCS pay for buying the high tunnel?

NRCS calculates the price per square-foot up to 2,160 square feet. If you want a larger high tunnel, NRCS will pay for up to 2,160 square feet and you will pay the rest. Contact NRCS for current payment rates. The payment is not intended to pay for the entire cost of the high tunnel.

How many local people are using high tunnels?

Eight landowner/producers have already constructed or are in the process of building or using high tunnels in Meigs County. They are used for a variety of produce.

For more information on seasonal high tunnels and the financial assistance that is available for them, contact Carrie Crislip USDA-NRCS District Conservationist for Meigs County at 740-992-6646.



'Conservation Corner'

returning to
Meigs County Fair

The Conservation Corner is excited to be back at the 2014 Meigs County Fair.

On Monday, Aug. 11 Carrie Crislip, NRCS, will be doing a presentation about the Farm Bill.

On Aug. 12, Doug Wynn will do a rattlesnake presentation with live snakes. Kids Crafts will also be Tuesday from 10am to noon. Wednesday August 13, Clint McCoy, ODNR Div wildlife, will be speaking about the potential impact of coyote and deer populations. All presentations will begin at 6pm at the Conservation Corner.

The Conservation Corner will also feature deer mounts from Meigs County with scores and values. The giant fish tank highlighting fish of Meigs County will be set up the entire week this year. Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks, Division of Forestry, and Division of Watercraft will have information available all week at their booths.

Be sure to stop by and learn how to improve the conservation of Meigs County's natural resources.



***"Treat the earth kindly my friends, and it will give you comfort, security and all a man may need.
"If you plant a flake of gold in the earth, will anything come of it? But plant a seed and it will repay you many times over."***

- Louis L'Amour (Comstock Lode)

The mission of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide assistance for the wise use of our natural resources for present and future generations.

Support our affiliate members!

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Interested in being a Melgs SWCD affiliate member? Do you want your business listed on this page? If so, contact the Melgs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

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Coming Together to Protect Water Quality 4R Tomorrow

Clean water is a cornerstone of our daily lives, not to mention important for Ohio's natural ecosystems and the wildlife. The Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD) launched the 4R Tomorrow program, with the assistance of the Ohio Soybean Council. The 4R Tomorrow program educates and promotes wise nutrient management to conserve water quality and soil health using the 4R nutrient stewardship principles and conservation practices-- right fertilizer source, right rate, right time, and right placement -- and backyard conservation practices.

Examples of these practices include:

- Always choose a fertilizer that is phosphorus-free, unless a soil test shows a need for this nutrient.

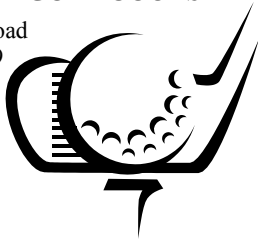
- Feed your lawn in the spring and fall when the grass is actively growing.
- Set your mower at the highest setting. Taller grass is stronger grass. It builds deeper roots that enables the plant to find water and nutrients and better withstand periods of heat and drought.
- Use a mulching mower, so that grass clippings and leaves can be returned to the soil where they will break down and add natural nutrients and organic matter to the soil.
- Sweep leaves, grass clippings, and fertilizer that land on driveways and sidewalks back onto the grass to help keep nutrients out of waterways.

The grass roots and soil microbes act as a natural water filter to capture and break down pollutants. Grass, trees, and plants in your lawn and community landscaping also keeps the soil in place, preventing erosion and absorbing water. Healthy grass can absorb most of the runoff from roofs, patios, driveways, sidewalks, and streets that would otherwise go directly into storm sewers, lakes, and streams.

To learn more about 4R Tomorrow and the 4R nutrient stewardship principles go to www.4RTomorrow.org

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SWCD equipment for sale, rent

The following items are available for sale:

Marking Flags — \$.10 each
Topographical Maps — \$8 each
Meigs County Platbooks — \$20.00
Ohio Pond Management Handbooks — \$3 each
Digital Soil Survey CD—\$10 each
'Leading from the Past—Stories of Leading Creek' Book—
\$15

The following equipment is available for rent (subject to scheduling and availability):

John Deere No-Till Drill (10-foot)	\$90 min. plus \$9/acre over 10 acres	70 HP tractor min.
Tye No-Till Drill (7 foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	45 HP tractor min.
Brillion Seeder (8-foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	40 HP tractor min.
Lime Spreader	\$50 min. plus \$2/ton over 25 tons	60 HP tractor min.
Forester Tree Planter	\$25 per day	25 HP tractor min.
Planter Bars	Free with \$20 returnable deposit	
Box Trap	Free with \$30 returnable deposit	



**A \$100 delivery/
pickup fee will be
assessed for
equipment rentals
outside of the county.**

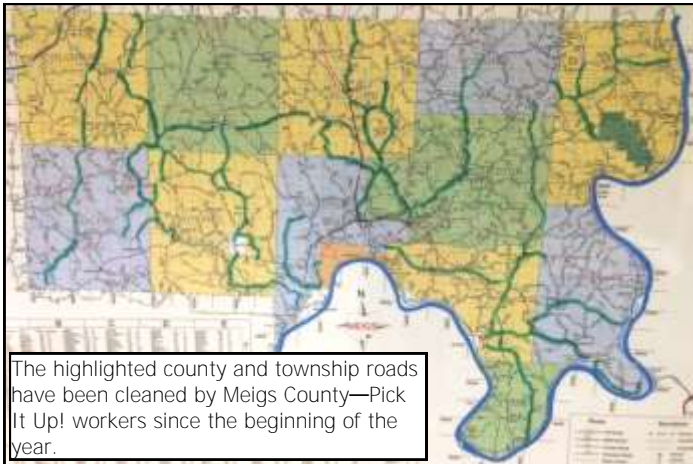
All equipment must be scheduled through the Meigs SWCD office at 992-4282 during regular business hours for delivery Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. **The minimum fee will be assessed if equipment is delivered and not used. A \$10 charge per month will be added to all bills after 60 days.**

Meigs County—Pick It Up!

Local residents working to beautify the county

Local residents are making a difference in their communities and across the county by participating in litter cleanup events organized by the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with the Meigs County Board of Commissioners and the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Solid Waste Management District.

First, as of June 30th county workers with the Meigs County—Pick It Up! program have picked up litter from along 168.1 miles of county and township roads in every one of Meigs County's 12 townships, picking up 769 bags of litter that would otherwise be left to adorn our roadsides.



In addition, Meigs County community groups can organize their own county and township roadside clean-ups through the Meigs SWCD's Meigs County – Pick It Up! Program. In that program, the SWCD provides logistical support including bags, gloves and pick-up service for groups wanting to do their own community service clean-up projects.

The Meigs County-Pick It Up! Program is limited to county and township roads only.

Also, nearly 50 people turned out to help with the 14th annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep, held Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area on New Lima Road.

The first 12 Leading Creek Stream Sweeps were held in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Leading Creek Improvement Project. Now it is held as part of a cooperative litter control project between the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District, Meigs County Board of Commissioners and the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Solid Waste Management District. Other sponsors include the Rutland Township Board of Trustees and the Meigs County Transfer Station.

This year volunteers collected enough plastic bottles, trash and other junk to completely fill the township's dump truck with some overflow into one of the SWCD's pickup trucks.

On Saturday, June 21st, the Meigs SWCD sponsored three locations for Ohio River Sweep. More than a ton of trash along waterways and roads was collected and properly disposed. Thanks go out to the partners and donors: Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), Home National Bank, Peoples Bank, Leading Creek Conservancy District, Jaymar Inc., the Village of Pomeroy, the Village of Racine, the Village of Syracuse, the Meigs County Transfer Facility, Pepsi of Athens, Fox's Pizza, Hill's Sunoco, and Par Mar Store.

In addition, the third **County-Wide Clean Up Day** will be held Saturday, Sept. 6 at the Meigs County Fairgrounds beginning at 9 a.m. *County residents (with ID) will be able to dispose of a variety of items like furniture and household items and passenger vehicle tires (10-tire limit), electronic items, toys, etc. However no refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, bulbs or ballasts, paint or chemical will be accepted. No household garbage, i.e. food, diapers or other "smelly stuff."*

The Clean Up Day is sponsored by a variety of county agencies including the Meigs County Board of Commissioners, Meigs SWCD and the Meigs County Health Department. Funding is through an Ohio EPA grant administered through the Meigs County Grants Office.

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Bill and Joe Foley, Meigs County—Pick It Up! workers, are shown here with what we now call the Pick It Up! Truck.

Thank You!

The Meigs SWCD publicly thanks county commissioners Mike Bartrum, Tim Ihle and Randy Smith for their support and dedication to our conservation efforts in Meigs County.

Their continued financial support at the county level draws matching funds from the state of Ohio which enables the Meigs SWCD to assist Meigs County residents with conservation assistance, information and education.

Keep up with what's new at the Meigs SWCD! Like us **on Facebook at "Meigs SWCD Conservation Area" and "Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District" or** visit us at www.meigsswcd.com

Scenes from 2014 Leading Creek Watershed Camp

The 2014 Leading Creek Watershed camp took place June 11-12 at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area.

Around 30 campers arrived each day, ready for new adventures. With a diverse group of presenters, the campers learned a great deal of information through hands on activities! Some of these presentations included birds of prey, exploring the species in the wetland, soils, outdoor photography, electro-fishing, acid mine drainage, geocaching, and many more!

The campers and Meigs SWCD staff would like to thank the local business that donated to help keep the camp free to all campers. Rutland Department Store, Powells Foodfair, Twin Oaks, Rutland Bottle Gas, Ridenour Gas, Court Street Grill, Par Mar, Save A Lot. We really appreciate your support!

Lots of discoveries were made during Camp! It was an exciting few days at Camp and we look forward to next year!



2014 Annual Meeting and Banquet

The Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its annual meeting, banquet and election on Tuesday, September 30 at 7 p.m. at Meigs High School. Voting for two supervisors begins at 6 p.m.

Candidates for the board are generally selected by a board nominating committee, but anyone who is a legal resident of Meigs County and is at least 18 years of age can run for the board. Candidate petitions are available at the Meigs SWCD office and must be submitted by August 22, 2014.

The Meigs SWCD, established in 1943 is a legal subdivision of state government that provides natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government. The district is funded by the Meigs County Board of Commissioners, and county funds are supplemented by funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The district is governed by a five-member board of supervisors, all county residents. Board members serve staggered three-year terms. The SWCD Board determines the policies that set the direction for the work that the SWCD staff carries out in the county. They also determine the need for additional staff and work with local and state governments to obtain funding for the programs they feel are necessary.

Voting will take place 6-7 p.m. the night of the banquet at Meigs High School. Residents or landowners, firms and corporations that own land or occupy land in Meigs County and are 18 years of age or older may vote. A non-resident landowner, firm or corporation must provide an affidavit of eligibility which includes designation of a voting representative prior to casting a ballot.

There are three ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot: at the annual meeting, at the SWCD office before 2 p.m. on September 30, or via absentee ballot. Absentee ballots can be requested at the Meigs SWCD office at 113 East Memorial Drive, Suite D, Pomeroy OH 45769 after September 9th and must be received no later than 2 p.m. on September 30.

The dinner begins at 7 p.m. Annual Meeting registration costs are \$14 per person this year and must be purchased by Sept. 23. Another way to get free banquet tickets is to become a Level 1 or 2 Affiliate Member.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Meigs SWCD office at 740-992-4282, or contact any district employee or supervisor.

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Conservation Commentary is a biannual publication of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District.

To subscribe or unsubscribe from Conservation Commentary, contact the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 740-992-4282.

Meigs SWCD Calendar of Events

Regular meetings of the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors are generally held at 11:30 a.m. the fourth Thursday of each month at the SWCD office, 113 E Memorial Drive, Suite D, Pomeroy. Dates and times are subject to change.

- July 24 - Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors regular meeting
- Aug. 11-16– Meigs County Fair
- Aug. 28 Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors regular meeting
- September 1– Labor Day– Office Closed
- September 6– Clean Up Day 9-2
- September 25– Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisor regular meeting
- September 30– Annual Meeting and Banquet

