

Spring 2013

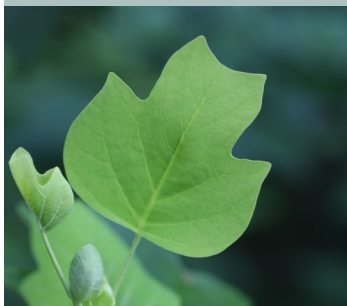


Photo by Brian Fox

WWW.RCGOV.US/RSWCD

Richland Soil and Water
Conservation District



Irrigation and Water Management Workshop draws statewide attendance



Nearly 60 people from across South Carolina attended the Irrigation and Water Management Workshop in St. Matthews on March 14th. The workshop was sponsored by the Richland, Calhoun, and Orangeburg Soil and Water Conservation Districts in partnership with USDA-NRCS through the Organic Richland program.

Paul Bristol, SCDHEC, explained the requirements of the Groundwater Use and Reporting Act. Under this regulation, "anyone withdrawing groundwater...in excess of 3 million gallons per month must monitor and report that use annually." Additionally, certain areas of the state are designated "Capacity Use Areas," and irrigators in these regions may be subject to additional regulations.

Kellee Melton and Yasmin Bennett, USDA-NRCS, described various irrigation efficiency measures for which producers may receive cost-share assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Eligible practices include microirrigation, low pressure center pivot systems, synthetic mulching, and variable rate irrigation. These systems can help producers conserve and protect

valuable water resources.

However, even the most efficient irrigation system is only beneficial if it is managed properly, and Dr. Jose Payero, Clemson University, spoke about the importance of scheduling irrigation for optimized crop yield.

In addition to choosing the best irrigation method and scheduling the irrigation to best meet a crop's needs, it is also important to monitor the quality of the irrigation water. Dr. Dara Park, Clemson University, urged irrigators to test their irrigation water regularly and suggested different management strategies depending upon the water's pH, nutrient, and mineral content.

Information about the workshop, as well as the slideshows from each session, are available online at www.rcgov.us/rswcd.



Workshop participants try out different methods to measure the pH of irrigation water under the supervision of Dr. Dara Park (left).

Contact Us

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District
2020 Hampton St., Room 3063 A
Columbia, SC 29204
www.rcgov.us/rswcd



James B. Atkins, Ph.D.
Chanda L. Cooper
Charlie Fisher

(803) 576-2082
(803) 576-2084
(803) 576-2080

atkinsj@rcgov.us
cooperc@rcgov.us
fisherc@rcgov.us

Second annual SC Organic Growing Conference held in Blythewood

The District was a proud sponsor of the second annual SC Organic Growing Conference in Blythewood on March 2, 2013. This premier event attracted over 200 producers, home gardeners, and agriculture professionals for a packed day of grower education and networking.

Attendees were offered more than 30 classes in nine different tracks, with course subjects ranging from Soil Fertility and Growing Season Extension to Heritage Hogs and Mob Grazing.

The Conference is one of the capstone projects of the SC Organization for Organic Living (SCOOL), a not-for-profit established to provide quality education in sustainable and organic agricultural practices in South Carolina. District sponsorship of the Conference was made possible through the Organic Richland program, a cooperative project with NRCS.

Lessons Learned

- The enemy of my enemy is my friend: To control garden pests, encourage pest predators such as spiders, parasitic wasps, ladybugs, and lacewings. Plantings of fennel and dill, as well as catalpa trees, may attract parasitic wasps which control tomato hornworms and other caterpillars. *-Eliza Lord, Appalachian Feet*
- Food safety matters: Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) promote food safety, and GAP certification can expand a farmer's market opportunities and reduce the risk of lawsuits related to food-borne illnesses. *-Weatherly Thomas, SC Department of Agriculture*
- Plan to succeed: The roles of a successful farmer extend beyond planting and harvesting to include business management, marketing,



District intern Katie Eisenhauer shares information about the District and its Organic Richland Program at the Organic Growing Conference.

and community outreach. Establishing a mission and goals through a farm development plan and defining a farm marketing strategy are important steps which may increase a farm's profitability. *-Eric McClam, City Roots Farm*

For more information about the SC Organization for Organic Living, visit their website at

<http://www.scorganicliving.com/>

or connect on Facebook at

<http://www.facebook.com/SC.Organization.for.Organic.Living>.

ORGANIC
Richland

Local • Sustainable • Organic



http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fennel_flower_heads.jpg
Fennel



<http://www.edenbrothers.com/store/organic-dill-bouquet-seeds.html>
Dill



<http://www.carolinanature.com/trees/casp.html>
Catalpa

Plantings of fennel and dill, as well as catalpa trees, may attract parasitic wasps which control tomato hornworms and other caterpillars. *-Eliza Lord, Appalachian Feet*

SC MarketMaker a resource for farm businesses

SOUTH CAROLINA MARKETMAKER™

MarketMaker is a national, interactive, online database of food producers and food buyers which promotes business connections and helps consumers locate sources of locally-grown produce, meat, and other agricultural products.

In the Palmetto State, MarketMaker is supported by Clemson University, the SC Department of Agriculture, the SC Sea Grant Consortium, and the USDA-NRCS. The District also supports MarketMaker through the Organic Richland program and is working with Clemson University to develop a Midlands Food Guide using the MarketMaker platform.

Farmers, ranchers, and other local food producers can register their businesses for free at

<http://sc.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>.

Registration allows consumers and food buyers such as restaurants, schools, hospitals, and wholesalers to locate your product. This is a free, easy, and effective marketing strategy for agricultural producers.

Not a farmer? You can still use MarketMaker to locate local farms and retailers who sell local products. Use MarketMaker's search features to find farmers, ranchers, farmers markets, fisheries, processors, wholesalers, eating and drinking establishments, food buyers, and agritourism attractions such as orchards, hayrides, and even charter boat tours.

For more information about MarketMaker, contact Katie Eisenhauer at EisenhauerK@rcgov.us.



SC MarketMaker is an interactive online database which allows consumers and businesses to find and connect with local farms, including Cottle Strawberry Farm and City Roots Farm of Columbia. Photos from SC MarketMaker.

RSWCD joins Midlands Local Food Collaborative

As a founding member of the Midlands Local Food Collaborative, the District is working to build the local farm and food economy by:

- Supporting local farmers
- Promoting local farms and foods
- Advocating for farm-friendly policies
- Protecting farmland
- Engaging the community
- Educating consumers

Representatives from many of the organizations that make up the Local Food Collaborative participated in the recent Healthy Eating in Context Symposium hosted by USC's Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities. This Symposium's

mission was "to connect the diverse communities of South Carolinians who are interested in nutrition research to improve the health of our citizens, local economies, and treasured environmental resources."



Ryan Nevius of Sustainable Midlands and Ron Sebeczek of USC, members of the Midlands Local Food Collaborative, at the Symposium.



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA



Richland Soil and Water
Conservation District

Where does YOUR water shed? *Take a tour to find out!*



Ever wondered where the water goes once it leaves your home's sinks, toilets, and tubs? One cold December morning, Commissioner Mark Huguley (pictured in the photo above with Kevin Kirkpatrick, Richland County's Bio Solids Operator) joined District staff members on a tour of the Broad River Road Wastewater Treatment Facility to find the answer to this question. For more information about wastewater treatment in Richland County, or to schedule a tour of the Broad River Road Facility, contact the Utilities Department at 803-576-1380.

Arbor Day Student Contest results announced

Twenty-six students and two classes earned awards and cash prizes in this year's Richland County Arbor Day Student Contests, sponsored by the District and the Richland County Conservation Commission. Through the media of writing, videos, and bulletin boards, each entrant was tasked with demonstrating why trees, forests, and/or forest products are important. The entries were creative and diverse, arriving in the form of poems, songs, speeches, plays, newscasts, diaries, bumper stickers, and letters. For more information about the student contests and to view

a complete list of winners, visit www.rcgov.us/rswcd.

—
They give us oxygen
They give animals food
Don't the changing colors of the leaves
Just put you in a good mood?
-Excerpt from "Tree of Life" by Tyniah
Wilson, Harbison West Elementary
—
Photo: "The Parker Annex"
by Emily A. Hazelwood
—



K-12 Poster Contest: Where does your water shed?

The National Association of Conservation Districts 2013 Poster Contest theme is “Where Does Your Water Shed?” Richland County K-12 students may submit posters to the Richland District for judging in the local (County) competition. Local winners will progress to the state competition, and state winners will progress to the national competition.

- **Cash prizes for winning entries!**
- Local competition deadline: **August 15, 2013**
- Rules and guidelines:
www.nacdnet.org/education/contests/poster/2013
- Submit poster entries to the Richland District at 2020 Hampton St., Rm. 3063A, Columbia, SC 29204. Questions? Contact cooperc@rcgov.us.



← Click here for contest rules!

District funds Eagle Scout school gardening project at John P. Thomas Elementary



Boy Scout Daniel Davidson (lower right) and his Scout Troop installed raised garden beds and planted shrubbery at John P. Thomas Elementary School in Richland County School District One in March as a part of Daniel's Eagle Scout project. The District provided partial funding for the project following Daniel's presentation at a recent board meeting.

“Thanks to the support of my family, my church family, my scout troop, [and] the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District,” Daniel writes, “my Eagle Scout Project...was a huge success.”

Daniel and his team constructed four raised beds, lined them with weed barrier, and filled them with a mixture of top soil and mushroom compost. They also planted eight Japanese holly bushes surrounded with cedar mulch. Lastly, they raised funds to purchase child-sized gardening tools for the students at John P. Thomas Elementary School.

The District applauds Daniel's hard work and commitment to providing environmental education opportunities to local youth.



Richland Two teacher earns SCACD recognition

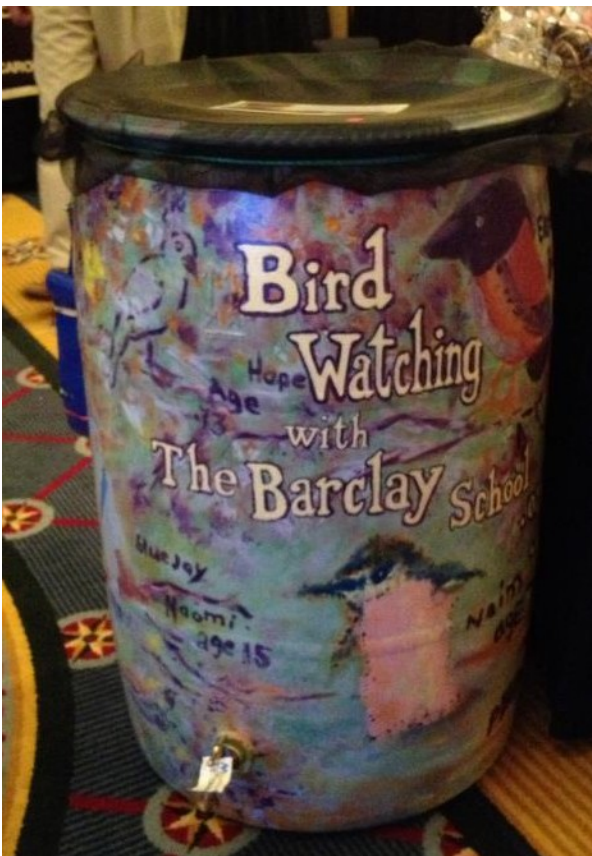


The South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD) recognized Mrs. Vikki Pasco, science lab teacher at Catawba Trail Elementary in Richland County School District Two, as South Carolina's Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Pasco was presented with the award at the SC Conservation Partnership Conference in February and was honored with a proclamation by Richland County Council in March.

Above left: Chanda Cooper, District Educator; Sterling Sadler, SCACD President; and Vikki Pasco at the SC Conservation Partnership Conference. Above right: Vikki Pasco, Councilwoman Julie Ann Dixon, and Commissioner Kenny Mullis at County Council.



Partner Spotlight: The Barclay School



Students at The Barclay School in Richland County decorated a rain barrel and donated it to the SC Conservation District Employees Association's Silent Auction to raise money for the Association's programs in support of conservation in South Carolina.

The barrel was auctioned off for **\$75.00**, making it the **highest-earning item in the auction!** Thanks to the support of our Commissioners and Associates, Richland District was the top bidder on the barrel, and we now have the colorful barrel to use in future water conservation campaigns.

The Barclay School is located on the campus of Columbia College and serves students with unique learning styles. The school has a strong environmental focus, and students and staff cultivate school gardens, curate wildlife habitat, compost, recycle, and are masters in the Art of Creative Reuse. For more information about Barclay, visit www.thebarclayschool.org.



Support the District: Become an Affiliate

Affiliate Members are a vital part of our conservation team. The monetary support given annually by Affiliates helps us carry out our conservation and stewardship programs within the County. Please support our efforts by becoming an Affiliate Member today! Contributions are tax deductible.

Membership Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail address: _____

☐ \$25—Affiliate Member

☐ \$50—Silver Affiliate Member

☐ \$100—Gold Affiliate Member

☐ \$250—Platinum Affiliate Member

☐ Other: _____

I prefer to receive RSWCD Newsletters via (check one):

___ US Mail ___ E-mail

Please return this form and a check made payable to Richland Conservation District to the address below:

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District
2020 Hampton Street
Rm. 3063A
Columbia, SC 29204

2012-2013 Affiliate Members

Gold Members

Colliers International

William Cate

Ed Eargle

Piggly Wiggly

Silver Members

Clothing World

Michael Davis

Margaret Gardner

Raymond Hendrix

Lizard's Thicket

Al & Linda McNeil

G. P. Monroe

Mason and Ann Summers

Affiliate Members

Mary Burts

Jason Carter

Cooper Family Farms

Jeff Laney

Thank you for your support!



Richland Soil and Water
Conservation District
2020 Hampton Street, Rm. 3063A
Columbia, SC 29204
Phone: 803.576.2080
Fax: 803.576.2088
E-mail: soilandwater@rcgov.us
Website: www.rcgov.us/tswcd
Facebook: www.facebook.com/tswcd



About the Richland District

Conservation districts are political subdivisions of state government under the local direction of a five-member Board of Commissioners. Three Commissioners are elected in the General Election; two are appointed by the SC Department of Natural Resources. These Commissioners volunteer their time and services to help improve natural resources conservation. There are 46 conservation districts in South Carolina whose jurisdictions conform to county boundaries. The Richland Soil and Water Conservation District promotes the wise use and care of natural resources for the benefit of the citizens of Richland County.



Conservation Practices

The District promotes conservation practices such as no-till agriculture (pictured above). Low-cost rental of a no-till drill is available through the District.



Youth Education

Conservation District employees provide a variety of conservation-themed programs for youth and mentor school conservation projects such as outdoor classrooms and school gardens.



Public Awareness

The District strives to raise awareness about conservation issues in Richland County.