

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC.



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FYI...

NYACD NEWSLETTER • JUNE 2006

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

The NYACD Board is requesting feedback from you by June 14, 2006, your feedback may be to your NYACD Division Director or to the NYACD office nyacd@nycap.rr.com or phone 518-629-7645 or fax 518-629-7646. On June 20, 2006 the NYS Soil and Water Committee will be meeting to vote on approving this policy agreement. Robert Aman is the NYACD voting member on this committee and we want to be sure that you have discussed this statement at your district board meetings. Your district manager should be able to provide for you background information on the former statement under which SWCDs have operated since the 1970s. For the most part we have been told that this agreement merely reaffirms the one from the 70s. Again any questions please be sure ask your district manager or the State Committee Staff member for your district.

Linda Coffin, NYACD President

DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

1. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) will not include the sale of balled and burlapped or containerized nursery vegetative materials as part of their local programs and will limit their sales of nursery trees and shrubs to bare-root stock.
2. In selling nursery vegetative materials, SWCDs shall make available varieties that will assist land occupiers within the SWCD to carry on operations upon their lands for the effective conservation and utilization of soil and water resources, prevention and control of soil erosion, prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, for the control and abatement of nonpoint sources of water pollution and for wildlife habitat and conservation purposes.
3. SWCDs are encouraged to promote the use of native species in their programs.
4. SWCDs shall adopt as operating principle and to the best of their ability implement recommendations of the NYS Invasive Species Task Force completed in November 2005. Additionally, as the Governor and NYS Legislature direct the Task Force to continue its work to identify and list specific invasive species, Districts shall take whatever steps necessary not to use or promote the use of these species.

Further, Districts shall develop and maintain a list of invasive species based on the location of the district. This list will assist those districts with the selection of species for their respective programs.

NYACD MISSION:

The NYACD provides leadership in the wise use of soil, water and related natural resources. This direction is provided through programs that support member Soil and Water Conservation District's scientific, marketing/outreach and financial work and that encourage networking and building alliances with outside groups that have related interests.

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COMPUTER SECURITY ISSUES

The following is a memo received from Krysta Harden, Executive Officer for the National Association of Conservation Districts.

During a recent New York Association of Conservation District's board meeting this issue was discussed. At the current time we are asking that you determine the extent of your district's dependency on the NRCS computer system. This background check requirement could impact your district employees and you need to be discussing this issue at your next district board meeting. Unfortunately we are being impacted by the actions of a few on 9/11, all federal agencies are expected to come under compliance with this requirement for computer security. If you have questions please feel free to contact us or an NRCS area office near you.

Linda Coffin, President NYACD

TO: Conservation District Officials

FROM: Krysta Harden, NACD

RE: Computer Security Issues

I am writing regarding an issue brought to our attention by NRCS regarding security issues with Common Commuting Environment (CCE) equipment.

As you are aware, since 9/11 there have been more security related precautions for non-federal government users of the federal computer system. A recent audit by the USDA Inspector General has uncovered a significant number of breaches on partner computers connected to the network. Districts are the largest non federal partner on the USDA system, and therefore currently the greatest source of problems in the system. While these breaches may not be considered major national security issues, they are troublesome and costly for the federal government, and steps are required to improve the security of the overall system.

As one step to mitigate the concerns, USDA is requiring all federal, partner, and contract employees, including all district employees involved connected to the USDA network to complete a minimum background check (called a NACI) through the federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The cost of the security clearance is \$97 plus \$20 for finger printing per impacted employee.

NRCS has been instructed that all background checks must be initiated and in progress by September 15, 2006. The NRCS state information systems security point of contact (ISSPOC) can provide further details on the process.

While this is not an ideal situation, NACD and districts must recognize the world as we knew it has changed since the attacks on our country in 2001. Additional protections must be in place for all federal programs and employees and since districts are a valued partner, some of these requirements cover our employees too.

All state conservationists were notified of this requirement on May 5th in a letter from NRCS Chief Knight. The letter instructs state conservationists to work with impacted districts regarding the timing of the process and other details. Some state conservationists will be able to help cover the costs of the security for district employees, and I encourage you to contact the state office as soon as possible to explore available funding and other assistance.

If your district is not currently on the USDA network, these requirements do not affect your employees and you can just ignore this communication. However some of you may in the future find this information helpful in managing your district's resources.

If you have additional questions, I will do my best to get answers. Thanks for your cooperation in this sensitive matter.

PROGRESS AND GRIDLOCK AT LEGISLATURE

My main focus during the past month has been our Legislative efforts. I have sent weekly e-mails on these efforts to the Legislative Committee and have had almost daily phone conversations with the Board.

On May 9, we held another group legislative day in Albany. Board member John Santacrose and District Managers Amanda Barber and Brian Wohnsiedler joined me in a total of ten legislative meetings plus an agency meeting. Included was the Assembly Agriculture Committee meeting at which our bill was approved. That day was the fifth and final group lobbying day for NYACD during 2006.

Currently our bill, S. 7053, was passed by the Senate Ag Committee as introduced and is on the floor of the Senate available for a vote. Our bill, A. 10332 B, was altered by the Assembly Encon Program & Counsel staff before approval by the Assembly Ag Committee. Unfortunately, the changes were not ones I, the NYACD Board, nor the CDEA employees liked. These changes introduced a specific list of activities which Districts could do and for which they could be paid with the new EPF money we hope to get. The concept of a list was fine, but the specific list which was added was way too limited. After discussions on our part, on May 16, we submitted a counter proposal, a broader list which I drafted. It both meets the concerns of the Legislature and represents better what Districts actually do. At the end of May, our expanded list was accepted. The bill will next

go to the Assembly Ways & Means Committee. With the Legislature scheduled to meet for only ten more days this Session, our bill will have to make its way quickly through the remaining steps.

Parallel with activity aimed at advancing our specific bill through the Legislature, we have been working on the Environmental Protection Fund. The coalition of non-profit conservation, farm, and environmental organizations which has been working on this has been effective in getting attention focused on the EPF, in getting the total budget increased, and in growing its own base to over 200 organizations. Being a part of that coalition has provided us with a continuous flow of timely information and has allowed us to be a part of a coordinated strategy to get the EPF passed. On May 16, I represented NYACD at a coalition press conference held at the Legislative Office Building in Albany urging the Legislature to pass the EPF. Currently the EPF still has not been passed. Along with other legislation, it is being held as a bargaining chip in the stand-off between the Legislature and the Governor over the full State Budget, the Governor's 202 vetoes, and the constitutionality of the Legislature's veto overrides. With the Session scheduled to end on June 22, we all hope that the differences will be worked out soon. If the EPF does not pass, Districts could get no State money in 2006. We continue to watch and to push.

By Gregory Bell, Executive Director, NYACD

Attention All SWCDs! Don't Throw Away That Empty Cartridge!

The Environmental Education Foundation has launched a fundraising project. Empty inkjet cartridges can be recycled and remanufactured. We will receive up to **\$4.00** for each cartridge turned in. This will directly benefit educational programs such as the NYS Envirothon and the 2007 Canon Envirothon not to mention it is great for the environment.

You can help! Any inkjet cartridge with a print head can be recycled, regardless of brand or type. Do you have an HP, Lexmark, Xerox, Compaq, Brother, Dell, Canon, or Apple printer? These empty OEM inkjet cartridges (placed in the original box that you would have thrown away to keep it safe from spills and damages, or a Ziploc bag) can be collected in a special box placed in your office, or we can send you a supply of individual postage-paid collection bags that can be dropped in the mail each time you replace a cartridge. For more information, or to have bags and boxes sent to you, contact Brenda Weaver at (518) 234-4092.

(Note: Epson cartridges cannot be recycled – they don't have a print head.)

Save Up To 80% On Cartridges While Raising More Funds For The Environmental Education Foundation!

InkSmile.com allows consumers to save money on overpriced cartridges and they have a **5% Rebate Program** where consumers can have 5% of their purchases donated to the Foundation. Just choose to have the Environmental Education Foundation (listed under Cayuga NY) receive the rebates.

Thank you for your Support!



Agricultural
Environmental
Management

2006 AEM Agriculture in the News Awards

WHO?

- All local AEM partner agencies such as County Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Bureau are eligible.
- The NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee and the Department of Agriculture & Markets are sponsoring the award.

WHAT?

- Awards will be based on quality of media coverage and quantity of press. Numerous awards will include:
A high-end digital camera - AEM embroidered all-weather fleece jackets - AEM fleece vests
- Any press that relays a positive message about New York or local agriculture, the AEM program, AEM key messages, or the benefits of agriculture to the environment is eligible.
 - Media coverage including your stories or quotes in newspapers, magazines, on radio, television and the internet.
 - Media efforts such as press releases, advisories, announcements for farm tours, press conferences and events.
 - Your editorials, columns, commentaries, and articles reproduced in professional media outlets.
 - Articles in 'membership-only' periodicals or in-house newsletters are not eligible.
 - Entries must include the issue date and official name of publication or broadcast program.
 - All entries must be published or aired in the media between May 1, 2006, and October 31, 2006.

WHEN?

- Entries must be mailed and postmarked by: November 3, 2006.

WHERE?

- Awards will be presented at the Annual AEM Training in November.

WHY?

- To recognize the success of AEM partners working to get local press on agriculture and continue the enthusiasm to foster public awareness of agricultural issues generated at the *Spring 2006 Working with the Media Workshops*.
- Your role promoting agriculture and supporting local farmers is of benefit to us all. Share your good news with us!
- Someone's going to win; why not you?

HOW?

- Include the *AEM Agriculture in the News Awards Application Form** with your submissions using these guidelines:
 - **Print**—Mail clippings of original publications or photo copies including:
 - All photos and captions; name of publications and dates issues.
 - Highlight your AEM messages and/or quotes.
 - **Television Broadcasts**—Submit on DVD or VHS videotapes
 - Cue videotapes to your section or include time code readings.
 - Include station information, program names and dates aired.
 - If you would like your videotapes returned, please provide a self addressed mailer.
 - **Radio Interviews / Announcements**—Provide on CD or audio tapes
 - Cue tapes to your section; include station information, program names and dates.
 - **Internet Coverage**—Provide printed copies and include the website addresses
 - Highlight your AEM messages and/or quotes.

Mail entries to: Barbara Silvestri, AEM Outreach Coordinator, 10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 1235

*For more information or an Application Form, email barb.silvestri@agmkt.state.ny.us or call 518-461-6843.

CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

By Ron Alvarado, State Conservationist, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

Recently there has been an increasing amount of misinformation on agriculture's role in polluting the Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed is a large ecosystem that encompasses six states: New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and West Virginia. In New York, approximately 3.6 million acres of the state drain into the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Only a portion of that land is in agricultural production. A large percentage of the land, 1.7 million acres, is forestland.

Different land uses have led to the conditions that threaten the present health of the Chesapeake Bay. It is not plausible to blame the Bay's health on one segment of society's actions. In many watersheds agriculture is preferred over suburban or urban land uses, as it provides less of an impact on water quality.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed continues to experience growth and development, which often converts forest and natural areas into paved areas to accommodate homes, stores, and roads. These paved areas and structures, known as impervious areas, take away the watershed's ability to filter pollutants that result from human activity and also increase the rate at which rain run-off reaches streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.

The New York staff of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) thanks those in New York's agricultural community who are voluntarily making a positive impact on working lands.

We appreciate the farmers throughout the entire Chesapeake Bay Watershed whom are taking steps toward conserving, enhancing, and sustaining natural resources. Ultimately, these creditable actions will help in the efforts to create a healthy Chesapeake Bay.

New York's agriculture community is modifying farming practices to improve the environment, not only in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, but throughout the entire state.

In the early 1990s, the people in the New York City Watershed made the commitment to support agriculture as a preferred land use over development because of the benefits to the water resources. Nine million people put their trust in agriculture to maintain their clean, unfiltered drinking water.

NRCS services are being used by New York farmers to write conservation and nutrient management plans, create wildlife habitat, install erosion control practices, improve water quality, and to preserve farmland from urbanization.

One way a farmer's stewardship is shown is through a continued interest and support of the many voluntary USDA Farm Bill programs and services that the NRCS administers. These services and programs are designed to help people help the land by improving the quality of soil, air, and water resources.

Though there is even more to be done, farmers are emerging as one of the leaders in environmental stewardship. NRCS is also committed to this role. We are a service-oriented agency that works side-by-side with farmers, communities, private organizations, and other state and federal agencies to help protect natural resources.

We have many services to offer farmers and encourage people to contact a USDA Service as they work toward a better environment. Cooperative conservation among the many good stewards in New York's agricultural community is promoting healthy watersheds throughout the state.

New York farmers, NRCS thanks you. Together, we are helping people help the land...and the Bay. For more information on NRCS, the agency's programs and to locate your local USDA Service Center, please visit the website at www.nrcs.usda.gov.

The following counties have land in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed:

- * Allegany (54,393 acres)
- Broome (405,609)
- Cayuga (459 acres)
- Chemung (238,592)
- Chenango (583,030)
- Cortland (299,342)
- Delaware (183,121)
- Herkimer (57,224)
- Livingston (8,493)
- Madison (196,628)
- Montgomery (8 acres)
- Oneida (28,144)
- Onondaga (32,495)
- Ontario (735 acres)
- Otsego (631,333)
- Schoharie (27,114)
- Schuyler (51,660)
- Stueben (383,595)
- Tioga (330,634)
- Tompkins (59,553)
- Yates (5,842)

PRIDE OF NEW YORK MARKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

2,006 in 2006: State's Branding Program's Membership Goal

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick H. Brennan recently recognized the 10th anniversary of the Pride of New York Program, the State's branding program for New York State agricultural and food products. Developed to create a preference for New York State products, the Pride of New York has developed synergies and increased sales for New York food producers and processors, retailers and restaurants.

"When the Pride of New York began ten years ago, there were only a handful of farmers enrolled in the Program," the Commissioner said. "A decade later, the Pride of New York has more than 1,600 members. The Program has also grown in scope to include not only growers, but food processors, vineyards and wineries, retail and foodservice industries, agri-tourism initiatives and other culinary and related trade organizations that support New York agriculture."

"As a way to mark the 10th anniversary of the Pride of New York, we're working to grow membership to 2,006 in 2006."

The Program has expanded its membership 700 percent in the past five years. By executing multi-media campaigns, building relationships and offering greater access to Pride products, the Program has been successful in raising the awareness and demand of New York grown and processed products among consumers. To further grow membership, the Pride of New York Program will expand upon its successes over the past ten years.

Advertising

The Pride Program debuted its first television commercial in 2001, which touched on the historic origins of New York State agriculture. In 2002, a second commercial was produced which demonstrated New York State agriculture across a broader and diverse geographic area. The Program's newest commercial features a variety of Pride products, reflecting on the Program's growing visibility in restaurants, markets and other retail outlets across the State.

Television campaigns have been supported with radio and print advertising, as well as a full range of point-of-purchase and other promotional materials. In 2003, two new print campaigns were launched. "Portraits in Pride" features members describing the pride in their products. The other was a cooperative print campaign highlighting specific producers and their products.

Other ongoing marketing efforts include billboards, public service announcements, various direct mail campaigns and cooperative advertising. The Pride Program will work to develop additional cooperative marketing opportunities to allow members to advertise and promote their products at reduced rates.

Matching Grant Program

The Pride of New York offered two rounds of matching grants that assisted members in marketing their products. Grant monies were awarded to nearly 50 members, which doubled their resources for their marketing campaigns, and resulted in increased sales of New York products and improved consumer awareness of the Pride.

Retail Promotions

In 2004, the Program began to develop promotional partnerships with major retailers. The promotions featured locally grown produce and some included cross-merchandising with other Pride products, including meat and dairy products, baked goods, sauces, pastas and other Pride products carried by the retailer. This year, the Program will focus its attention on restaurants, as well as retail outlets to further increase consumer visibility of Pride products.

Restaurant Recruitment and Participation

The Program also reaches out to the foodservice industry to promote the concept of "farm to table." By helping chefs, buyers and restaurant owners source locally produced or unique items, the Program assists in developing new distribution channels for Pride food and wines. Many restaurants and chefs change their menus weekly to offer specially prepared dishes made from locally available New York items such as heirloom varieties, organic fruits and vegetables, grass-fed meats and artisan breads and cheeses.

(Continued on Page 7)



PRIDE OF NEW YORK (CONTINUED)

Tradeshows and Events

The Pride Program has been actively involved in numerous events to allow members exposure to larger audiences. New York Farm Day in Washington, D.C. and New York City, the Pride of New York Harvest Fest in Albany, and the Finger Lakes Wine and Food Festival are just a few of the tradeshows Pride has offered discounted booth space and promotional signage for members who wish to participate.

On a larger scale, the Pride Program offers members opportunities to achieve broader exposure and increase retail sales at major national and international trade shows such as National Restaurant Association Show, Produce Marketing Associations' Fresh Summit International Convention & Expo and the Food Marketing Institute Showcase. By supporting a large Pride of New York pavilion, the show is accessible and cost-efficient for members to attend and gain national and international exposure to potential new markets and buyers.

The Pride of New York Program is the state's agricultural marketing program that identifies and generates demand for New York food and agricultural products. Its more than 1,600 members include growers and food processors, wineries, foodservice and retail outlets, agri-tourism initiatives and other organizations that support New York agriculture.

For more information on the Pride of New York Program, please visit www.prideofny.com.

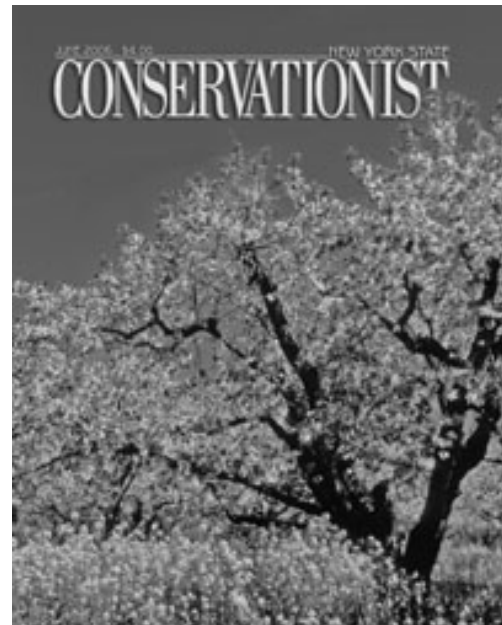
CONSERVATIONIST MAGAZINE

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation publishes a beautiful, well-designed bimonthly magazine called, *New York State Conservationist*. It contains articles about the wildflowers and wildlife of New York, campgrounds, lakes, and streams.

A recent month's issue gives a typical selection, with articles on:

- invasive insects,
- Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology,
- small animal skulls,
- the wildflower etchings of Ryland Loos, and
- a lush spread of Mark Bowie's Adirondack photos.

Subscriptions are available for only \$12 per year or \$22 for two years from Conservationist; NYSDEC; P.O. Box 1500; Latham, NY 12110, or call 1(800) 678-6399. If you are not familiar with the Conservationist, in each issue, you will find a pleasant reminder of the wonders of New York and you will learn something too.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



State Committee Meeting, June 20, 2006, Albany Office

FL-LOWPA Conference, "Unifying Economic Development and the Environment", June 23, 2006, Holiday Inn, Auburn

NYSCDEA Executive Board Meeting , June 27, 2006, Cortland

2006 NACD North East Region Meeting, July 23-27, 2006, State College, PA

North Country Regional Stormwater Tradeshow & Conference, October 19, 2006, Lake George, NY

NYACD's Annual Meeting, October 29-31, 2006

July FYI—Deadline for Articles —June 22, 2006

Please send articles to Maggie Atkins at matkins@frontiernet.net;
Phone: 585-396-9973; Fax: 585-554-4077. Thanks.

