

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC.



PROVIDING TODAY...
... PROTECTING TOMORROW

FYI...

NYACD NEWSLETTER • JULY 2006

TRIPLE SUCCESS!

by Gregory Bell, Executive Director

For 2006, New York's Soil and Water Conservation Districts sought help from the New York State Legislature in three ways. I am happy to announce significant successes on all three!

New York State's Legislature has now ended its 2006 Session. In its last week, the Legislature passed both our Conservation District assistance bill and the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). After several years of unsuccessful attempts to bring about an improvement to the State's funding of Districts, we have now achieved success.

With passage of the bill, it now will be delivered to the Governor for signature. We do not foresee any difficulty in securing it.

In addition to the wording which we submitted, the bill went through five legislatively-numbered versions in recent months. The road to passage included one large and four small group NYACD lobby days at the State Capitol. It also included the need to be both flexible and persistent. These qualities were necessary in order to press for alternate language which both met New York's broad conservation needs and the concerns of the Legislature.

Passage of our bill will provide two new categories of funding for Districts. One will be a new additional fixed annual amount. The other will be a new variable amount, based on the delivery by Districts of specific conservation services. The familiar fixed \$30,000 per County in State reimbursements will remain.

The amount provided in one new section will be fixed, while the other will vary each State Budget year. The new fixed amount of \$6,000 will be available in addition to the current annual State funding per County. The other new funding stream is a variable amount that should reach \$12,000 in 2007. This would give districts a potential total of \$18,000 on top of the existing \$30,000. This is an increase of 66%. Of course, the new variable amount actually received by a particular District will depend on which projects they complete.

After 11 PM on Friday, June 23, the Assembly approved the Environmental Protection Fund. After weeks of uncertainty, not only did the EPF get passed, it was passed at a total of \$225 million! This level is \$25 million higher than the amount discussed during most of the Session and \$75 million higher than last year's. Within the EPF, there are two pieces of good news for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. First, the now-traditional amount for Districts of \$1.8 million has been increased to \$3 million. (This is the source of the additional funds which will be provided by the new law).

(Continued on Page 3)

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.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NYACD RESOLUTIONS	2
ENVIROTHON	2
FROM THE PRESIDENT	3
2007 FARM BILL	4
AG PRODUCERS SECURITY PROGRAM	5
NYFVI: THREE GRANT PROGRAMS	6
EMPIRE FARM DAYS	6
CDEA GOLF TOURNAMENT	7
COUNTY FAIRS	7
UPCOMING EVENTS	8

NYACD RESOLUTIONS—2006

It is time for resolutions to be prepared for the NYACD annual meeting. This resolution process gives District Directors a means for setting the agenda for NYACD in regards to legislation and many other issues of concern to you, our district members. We did a lot with our state legislature this past year. Are there still issues we need to raise with them? What about the Federal government?

For example, the new 2007 Federal Farm Bill is currently being worked on. Have you had concerns and problems with the current federal programs and want to see them changed? Does NRCS have enough technical and engineering staff to help deliver the federal programs??

Please discuss these issues and any other concerns you may have at your next board meeting and prepare resolutions for NYACD as described on the **Resolutions Procedure- 2006 guidelines** which has been sent to all districts by e-mail. Division meetings should also be held in the next couple of months to address resolutions as well as regional issues.

We also need Division Directors for Regions 3, 7 and 8!!!



Resolution Deadlines are:

1. Local Soil & Water Conservation Districts discuss issues for NYACD action. Resolutions are drafted and submitted by August 15th.
2. Division meetings are held to discuss issues for NYACD action. Resolutions are drafted and submitted by August 15th.
3. The Resolutions Committee meets, reviews, collates the submitted resolutions and distributes the 2006 resolution package to districts by September 15th.
4. Local Soil & Water Conservation Districts review and discuss the 2006 resolutions prior to the NYACD Annual Meeting on October 29th, 2006.
5. Resolutions are voted on by the District Directors (one per district) at the NYACD Annual Meeting.

If you have any questions or problems, please contact George Proios or Greg Bell.

NYS ENVIROTHON & 2007 CANON ENVIROTHON

Tioga County's Candor High School is this year's New York State Envirothon champs. They will be representing New York at the 2006 Canon Envirothon in Manitoba, Canada, July 24-29th. Congratulations and Good Luck!

The 2007 Canon Envirothon will be held July 29-August 4, 2007, at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. Sponsors and volunteers are needed from New York State. Can you help? Please contact Sandy Huey, chair of the event, at 315-252-4171, ext. 125 or sandy-huey@ny.nacdnet.org.



NYACD will sponsor the Hospitality room for the Executive Committee of the 2007 Canon Envirothon during the entire week. Donations of New York State beverages and foods are most welcome. Please contact Anne Tibbetts at 315-232-4357 or fawn4321@aol.com to make donations.

For lots of great information about the Canon Envirothon, go to: www.envirothon.org or www.nysenvirothon.org.

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

First, my thanks to each and every person and organization that worked with us to make our legislative efforts successful this year. I ask that everyone remember to thank the political leaders, as well, who supported our work. This is certainly a representation of great work that each of you does within the soil and water community. You are the face of soil and water conservation at the grass roots level.

But, we are not done. There is a commercial on the television and maybe even on the radio that goes "what's in your wallet?" Well, I would not want to fall victim to the copyright laws here, but I would ask you, what **will be** in the soil and water financial wallets for 2008 following the federal appropriation bills negotiations, concerning issues related to soil, water, farm bill and others that will have an impact on what we do in soil and water districts. There has been much written, many meetings and certainly much discussion on what this group or that group thinks should be a part of the farm bill 2007. Heck, what do **you** think should be? Do you know what program is a part of the 2002 farm bill? Or what programs from that farm bill your Soil & Water district works with?

On June 26th, Congressman Randy Kuhl from New York, a member of the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee, held a hearing on the Farm Bill in Ontario County. Several local farmers and related constituents provided testimony. Various other meetings have been held by the American Farmland Trust, the National Association of Conservation Districts, and many others to provide a forum to meet and discuss ideas. What will ours be? We want to hear from you on these ideas and we want to discuss them as a part of our annual meeting. We want you to be able to discuss these ideas with political leaders and other groups as well - all of which we want to facilitate at our annual meeting.

To provide you some fuel for the fire, these have been some of the comments (these are meant only to provide some thoughts and are not a position statement):

- * What is the adequacy of Technical Assistance?
- * Is there a way to streamline and simplify procedures and paperwork?
- * What impact will the World Trade agreement and issues have on the incentive payments?
- * Is there a way to make programs available to all producers?
- * Forestry and forest recovery as well as other practices should have a better place in the next farm bill?
- * Can we truly get to where locally led decisions can be made on local needs and standards?
- * How will the bill deal with changing agriculture and the interrelationship with urban and suburban?

I guess that is enough thought provoking questions for now. Please, we will be asking for your feedback on so much as we move forward. We do want to hear from you. We thank all of you who responded on the tree and shrub policy proposal as well. We are pleased to hear about those who are asking question about the NRCS computer security updates.

I will close again with a thank you. Thank you to Maggie Atkins who does such a great job on this newsletter, not just for NYACD, but for each of you. THANKS MAGGIE!!!!

By Linda Coffin, President NYACD

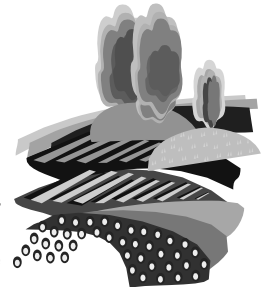
TRIPLE SUCCESS !

(Continued from Page 1)

Next, the news on non-point-source pollution funding is also good. In previous years, the EPF budget contained a combined budget line for both agricultural and non-agricultural non-point-source pollution. That amount was placed in DEC's budget. This year, these two categories have been separated into distinct budget lines. In addition, the total allocation to them has been increased by \$4.8 million, or 41%. Last year the combined allocation was \$11.7 million. The new allocation for the agricultural non-point-source line is \$11 million by itself! It will provide substantially more funds with which Districts can implement non-point-source projects.

We would like to thank all of the District Directors and District employees for writing letters to their legislators and for coming to Albany to meet with State Legislators. We would also like to thank the State Legislators for voting for our bill and for the EPF. With these three successes, Districts should be able to accomplish their conservation work even better.

2007 FARM BILL



The leadership of the New York Association of Conservation Districts' (NYACD) recently received from Bill Wilson, President of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), an e-mail, "Grassroots Component of NACD 2007 Farm Bill Conservation Title," which outlined the growing interest in NACD and the ability of state associations to serve as effective leaders for conservation during the development of the 2007 Farm Bill. As NYACD is well aware, the farm bill process is already underway in Congress with hearings being held by both the House and Senate Agricultural Committees, the most recent, thanks to Congressman Randy Kuhl, in Canandaigua, NY, on Monday, July 25, 2006. The debate will begin in earnest after the November elections. NACD and NYACD will continue to have a visible and active role throughout the entire process.

Across New York State, NYACD, with its 62 conservation districts (including the five boroughs of New York City), is helping people to conserve land, water, forests, wildlife and related natural resources. We share a single mission: to coordinate assistance from all available sources, whether it is private, local, state or federal, in an effort to develop locally driven solutions to natural resource problems. More than 300 volunteers serve in appointed positions on conservation districts' governing boards, working directly with every land owner statewide. Their efforts touch every acre of private land and resident of New York State. The conservation title has grown over the past few years and now represents significant funding and meaningful technical assistance to farmers, ranchers and foresters across our state. This commitment allows land owners not only to protect their soil and water but also to be a better neighbor and citizen. The 2002 Farm Bill provided and encouraged new participants and created new partnerships at the local, state and national level. It is our responsibility to see that the 2007 Farm Bill includes a commitment by Congress to provide much needed and much used technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and foresters. The conservation title is important to all New Yorkers.

NYACD believes that every facet of conservation counts, including row crops, range, forest or livestock, and the growing rural/urban interface. To meet the needs of all areas of agriculture both federal agriculture committees should consider the impacts of the current regulations that restrict participation in conservation programs because of adjusted gross income regardless of their conservation needs. NYACD appreciates the awareness that there needs to be a balance of programs to address both lands that are in active production of food, feed and fiber and lands that are retired and protected. Land owners need and use both and we hope Congress will continue to recognize that no one program meets the needs of all farmers, ranchers and foresters.

Conservation financial assistance provided through the Farm Bill program is an important component in achieving agricultural sustainability both economically and environmentally. NYACD continues to stress the importance of a local district's ability to give quality technical assistance to the land owners. Technical assistance allows the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff at the local level to work with districts, land owners, and state and local agencies to address local resource concerns. We will continue to inform Congress that technical assistance is utilized in working with land owners on conservation plans in design, layout and implementation, helping land owners understand proper management of highly erodible land and necessary compliance for participation in farm bill programs. Technical assistance is also used for evaluation and maintenance of conservation practices. Once a conservation practice is installed, it must be maintained to ensure the continued benefits of the practice. Congress must continue to realize that funding for technical assistance allows NRCS and district employees to meet face to face with land owners, visit their operations and help them to develop strategies to meet the resources' needs of their individual agricultural operation. Through these discussions, a comprehensive conservation plan can be developed and financial assistance programs can be offered that will help meet the goals of the conservation plan. NYACD must use every opportunity afforded it to show how districts continue to provide the expert technical assistance, along with NRCS staff, that is so critical to the success of conservation in New York State. Technical assistance must continue to be a fundamental element of the next farm bill, both as a stand alone program and as a component built into delivery of every individual conservation program.

NYACD will encourage the New York Congressional Delegation to work with sound science and proven technologies for the best use of New York State's natural resources. We believe this research can be done and is already being done with the production of corn for ethanol and oilseed for biodiesel. We also see potential in New York through our forestry resource that could be a valuable resource for cellulosic energy production with available biomass. NYACD, always mindful of its position, want to make sure one does not improve one set of factors while damaging another.

NYACD believes that the 2007 Farm Bill offers a great opportunity to build on the programs and policies of 2002 by providing for meaningful assistance to producers, sound and prudent research, and benefits the taxpayers will accept and approve.

By Brad Rogers, NYACD First Vice President

THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS SECURITY PROGRAM

REMEMBER TO ONLY SELL FARM PRODUCTS TO LICENSED DEALERS

The Agricultural Producers Security Program, also known as Article 20 of the Agriculture and Markets Law or the Farm Products Dealer Licensing Program, helps ensure that agricultural producers are paid fully and timely for farm products sold.

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Brennan has reminded farmers that in order to be eligible for financial protection available under the Agricultural Producers Security Program, you must only sell to licensed dealers. In the event of nonpayment, the Commissioner also reminds farmers to report to the Department any dealer who does not pay for farm products.

In order to preserve your eligibility for financial protection under the Agricultural Producers Security Program you must follow these four important steps:



Sell only to licensed dealers. Check the dealer's license status by visiting the Department's website at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/programs/apsf.html. Licenses expire on April 30th of each year, so make sure the dealer's license is current. The dealer must be licensed at the time of the transaction.

Do not continue to sell product to a dealer who has not paid you. Stop delivery of product if you have not been paid within 30 days of the date farm products sold by you were delivered or within the period you and the dealer agreed to prior to the transaction.

If you change the prompt payment period of 30 days, make sure of the following: the agreement is in writing, the agreement states that the new agreed payment period is no more than 120 days from the date farm products sold by you were delivered to the dealer, and the agreement is signed by you and the dealer on or before delivery of your farm products.

If you have not been paid by a dealer, file a complaint. To do so, you must submit the complaint within 365 days after the sale and delivery of your farm products to the dealer. To be eligible for financial protection, unpaid transactions must have taken place within 120 days of the oldest unpaid transaction. Complaint forms can be accessed by calling 518.457.1954 or by visiting www.agmkt.state.ny.us/programs/apsf.html.

If these statutory requirements are not satisfied, you may lose all or part of the financial protections available to you under the Agricultural Producers Security Program.

Agricultural producers can also take advantage of the program's new trust provision, a legal mechanism that holds a dealer responsible for the full amount owed to a producer. The "Article 20 Trust" is established upon delivery of the producer's farm products to a dealer and ends once the amount due is fully paid. The trust assets are the farm products and the proceeds from the sale of those farm products. To take advantage of the Article 20 Trust, producers must provide a written notice to the dealer within 60 days from the date when payment is due informing the dealer of the producer's election of the trust benefit. The written notice must provide details of the transaction, including the dealer's name, transaction date, product sold, quantity, price per unit, amount owed and the date payment is due. As a practical matter, a producer may wish to provide written notice to a dealer on the invoice itself. The Department recommends that producers consult with their attorney concerning matters involving preservation of their benefit or to enforce the trust.

For further information on the Agricultural Producers Security Program, a program brochure or a list of licensed dealers, please visit the Department's website at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/programs/apsf.html, or call the Department at 1-800-554-4501 or directly at 518-457-1954.



NYFVI ANNOUNCES REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS FOR THREE GRANT PROGRAMS

Contact: R. David Smith, New York Farm Viability Institute, 315-453-3823

Website: www.nyfarmviability.org

The New York Farm Viability Institute, Inc. (NYFVI) has announced \$5 million in funding available through its 2006 grants programs. NYFVI funds projects that will result in measurable farm-level impacts, increase the overall success and profitability of NY farm businesses, strengthen the NYS agricultural production sector, enhance agricultural environmental stewardship and contribute to the vitality of rural communities. The three grant programs are as follows:

Agricultural Innovation Center grants (up to \$250,000) – **deadline 8/1/06**: focus on value-added product development and business planning. (11 projects funded in 2005 totaling \$1.1 million)

Extension Innovation grants (up to \$500,000) – **deadline 9/1/06**: focus on new and unique ways of providing technical assistance, education and outreach that will foster the adoption and implementation of new technologies, practices, production systems or management strategies. (10 projects funded in 2005 totaling \$960,000)

Applied Research Partnership grants (up to \$250,000) – **deadline 10/1/06**: include field tests, demonstration plots and research trials implemented directly on farms. (12 projects funded in 2005 totaling \$735,000)

Since the overall purpose is to reduce practical barriers to the success of NYS farming businesses, barrier reports are used to prioritize grant project proposals. The reports list challenges and potential opportunities identified by farmer/producer panels addressing both production management and business management. The Institute's most recent reports of identified barriers to NYS agriculture, specifically for the dairy, berry, juice grape, tree fruit and vegetable production sectors, are posted on their website.

Guidelines, submission dates, barrier reports and requests for proposals are on the web at: www.nyfarmviability.org

Producer panels consisted of members of the New York State Horticulture Society, New York State Vegetable Growers, New York State Berry Growers, juice grape growers, and the Organic Dairy Task Force. Input from conventional dairy producers representing large and small farms across the state is also on the NYFVI website.

In 2005, the New York Farm Viability Institute awarded \$2.8 million to 33 projects that addressed challenges to a diverse mix of horticultural, fruit, vegetable, dairy, and livestock enterprises. Projects that received funding range from equine economic development and dairy manure management to value-added maple products and high tunnel horticultural production enhancement.

With the \$5 million in funding NYFVI was awarded in the 2006 State budget by Governor George Pataki and the NYS Legislature, the Institute expects to fund projects addressing an even broader set of barriers to and opportunities for New York's agricultural production industry.



2006 EMPIRE FARMS DAYS AUGUST 8, 9 & 10

The largest farm show in the Northeast is being held at the Rodman Lott & Son Farms in Seneca Falls, New York. The 73rd annual show, sponsored by the Empire State Potato Growers, Inc., is located on a 300-acre site with more than 600 exhibitors and an expected attendance of 75,000 farmers from all over the US and Canada. Empire Farm Days provides farmers with a chance to see the latest advances in Northeast agriculture.

Check out the website at www.empirefarmdays.com for directions and detailed information about the show and a complete schedule of events and demonstrations.

5TH ANNUAL CDEA GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 5th Annual CDEA Golf Tournament is being held on Thursday, July 27, 2006, at Orchard Vali, in Lafayette, NY. The tournament, which benefits the CDEA programs, is open to all SWCD and NRCS employees, their families and all of the conservation partners. The cost is \$50 per person and includes greens fees, cart and a fantastic buffet.



4 Person Captain & Crew 10:00 a.m. SHOTGUN

Skins Game Longest Drives (Men's & Women's)
 50/50 Drawing Closest to the Pin (Men's & Women's)

Any questions contact Brian or Gloria - Jefferson County SWCD (315) 782-2749

Make checks payable to: Brian J. Wohnsiedler
Please send check and registration to:
Jefferson County SWCD, PO Box 838, Watertown, NY 13601

COMMISSIONER URGES NEW YORKERS TO VISIT COUNTY FAIRS

52 County Fairs Scheduled this Summer

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick H. Brennan today encouraged New Yorkers to visit their local county fair, as well as The Great New York State Fair this summer. This first county fair of the season opened June 30 in Sandy Creek, Oswego County.

"I have always enjoyed the county fair," the Commissioner said. "The agricultural exhibits, the community involvement, along with the abundance of food and rides have always made it a wonderful and memorable experience for me. It is a once a year opportunity for everyone in the county to come together and share their proudest accomplishment. I encourage you to exhibit your specialty, plan a visit and take part in all that our county fairs have to offer."

Russ Marquart, President of the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc. said, "The county fairs of New York State play a major role throughout the summer to provide the public with a wealth of first hand experience in the importance of agriculture in our great State. The fairs provide a truly unique family experience and we welcome everyone to the many county fairs planned this summer."

Over the next several months, fairs will open their gates to millions all over New York. Last year, more than 4 million people visited county fairs in New York, which enrich visitors with agricultural history, educational exhibits, competitions, talent shows, youth activities and more.

County fairs were originally created to show off the latest in agriculture as well as provide a social gathering for the community. Today, they continue their agricultural tradition, but also provide a host of other family activities including entertainment, educational exhibits, games of skill, and a variety of food. Every county fair has its own unique attractions, but some have become common to most fairs including tractor pulls and demolition derbies.

The 160th Great New York State Fair will open August 24 and run through September 4. This year, the Fair will have its annual attractions such as the Butter Sculpture, the daily parade, the Wine Court, the animal shows, Moo Country, midway rides and much more. The Grandstand will be featuring artists Keith Urban, Carrie Underwood, Toby Keith, Rascal Flatts, James Taylor, and Gretchen Wilson. As always, there will be food from all around the world for its million visitors to enjoy.

The largest county fair is the Erie County Fair with 855,664 people; the smallest is the Madison County Fair with 5,705 attendees. The oldest continuously operating fair in America is the Jefferson County Fair, first organized in 1817.

To find information on the county fairs in your area, visit the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets website at www.agmkt.state.ny.us.



NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC.

NYACD, Inc.
HRC 335E, HVCC
80 Vandenberg Avenue
Troy, NY 12180

Phone: 518-629-7645
Fax: 518-629-7646
E-mail: NYACD@nycap.rr.com
Web: www.nyacd.org

CHECK IT OUT!

WWW.NYACD.ORG



PROVIDING TODAY...
... PROTECTING TOMORROW

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 14424
PERMIT NO.335

Return Service Requested

UPCOMING EVENTS



- **2006 NACD North East Region Meeting**, July 23-27, 2006, State College, PA
- **5th Annual CDEA Golf Tournament**, July 27, 2006, Orchard Vali, Lafayette, NY
- **Empire Farm Days**, August 8-10, 2006, Seneca Falls, NY
- **North Country Regional Stormwater Tradeshow & Conference**, October 19, 2006, Lake George, NY
- **Conservation Skills Workshop**, October 23-27, 2006, Cortland, NY
- **NYACD's Annual Meeting**, October 29-31, 2006, Otesaga Hotel, Cooperstown, NY
- **2007 Canon Envirothon**, July 29– August 4, 2007, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY

August FYI—Deadline for Articles —July 22, 2006.

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