



Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter

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Web site: www.vanwertswcd.org

Funding Available to Western Lake Erie Basin Farmers to Improve Water Quality

Enrollment starts March 15 and goes through May 1

The Ohio Department of Agriculture, in partnership with Van Wert Soil and Water Conservation District is providing funding for new assistance programs for farmers to help protect water quality in the western basin of Lake Erie. The Ohio Working Lands program will encourage producers to establish year-round vegetative cover on eligible crop land that is near environmentally sensitive areas. The program will promote conversion, establishment and maintenance of forage/hay land on certain cropland acres.

The funding is not authorized for:

- ✦ existing meadows, filter strips and field borders
- ✦ existing pasture and hayland
- ✦ existing or required ditch maintenance right-of-ways

Forage plantings must include two species, including at least one cool season grass specie.

Cool season grass species must be planted at 50% pure stand seeding rate minimum. Residual forage height must be a minimum of 4" height by September

15th each year. Cover may be cut for hay and residual forage must be maintained during the non-growing season.

Van Wert SWCD office staff will assist landowners with putting together a plan for installing these buffers. The maximum width eligible is 300 foot average. The minimum eligible width is 50 feet. Landowners will be eligible to receive up to \$120/acre per year for a 5-year contract. The goal of the program is to reduce nutrients entering Ohio waterways to lessen harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie. Funding is available to farmers installing conservation practices that benefit water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin.

Program enrollment officially kicks off for Ohio farmers in the Western Lake Erie Basin on **March 15 and runs through May 1.**

Stop in the Van Wert SWCD to sign up for the program.

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Special points of interest:

- ✦ Soil & Water Stewardship Week April 28—May 5
- ✦ \$500 College Scholarship is being offered
- ✦ Need fish for your pond—order now!

College Scholarship Being Offered

The Van Wert SWCD is offering one \$500 scholarship to college students studying agriculture, natural resources, or closely related fields at an Ohio college or university during the 2018/19 academic year. Recipients of the scholarship must have completed their freshman year, and must be a Van Wert County resident.

Scholarship applications are due by May 3, 2019. The Scholarship Committee of the SWCD will review all applications and the recipient will be announced in June. Scholarship money will be sent directly to the recipient's college or uni-

versity at the beginning of the academic year.

Criteria for determining the recipient will be area of study, grades, activities, leadership, and commitment to conservation practices. The SWCD reserves the right to refuse any applications not meeting requirements.

Applications and two reference forms need to be completed and sent to the office by the deadline of May 3. The forms are available at the office or on the Van Wert SWCD website.

Soil & Water Stewardship Week

The Van Wert SWCD wants to remind you that each of us has a connection to natural resources. The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is celebrating the 64th year of Stewardship week April 28 – May 5, 2019. The 2019 Stewardship Week is themed "Life in the Soil: Dig Deeper".

Soil is a dirty topic, but everyone needs to learn more about it! Soil is the foundation for many of the items we use in our daily life, such as food, clothing, clean water, homes and more. Healthy soil equals healthy food, which equals a healthy

you. Don't treat your soil like dirt! Contact the SWCD to help you care for your soil.



During Stewardship Week, Van Wert SWCD will provide a swamp white oak seedling and a presentation on the importance of trees to each 4th grade student in the county and place Soil & Water Stewardship placemats in local restaurants during the weeks observance.

Fish Fingerling Orders / Delivery Scheduled

The SWCD is currently taking orders for fish fingerlings. The types of fish available are: largemouth bass, blue gill, channel catfish, minnow, and white amur. The bass, blue gill, and channel catfish are available in lots of 25; larger largemouth bass, blue gill and hybrid bluegill in lots of 20; minnow in lots of 100 and white amur are ordered individually.

The fish sale is an opportunity for pond owners to stock or restock their ponds for a reasonable cost.

Orders will be accepted until Wednesday April 24. Payment is expected when the order is placed. The fish will be delivered Monday, April

29 at 3:00 p.m.

Stocking recommendations for a one acre pond are:

100 largemouth bass	500 blue gill
100 channel catfish	500-1000 minnow

The orders will be boxed and ready at the time of delivery. Order forms are available in the office or on the website at: www.vanwertswcd.org

Van Wert SWCD Seeking Posters for Contest

Calling on local young artists in grades K through 12!! It's time to break out the paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers and paper for the Van Wert SWCD Poster Contest. The contest is open to all Van Wert County students. The creation may not be traced from other artists' work or from photographs. Each entry must have the completed form signed by the parent or guardian attached to the back of the poster. This form can be downloaded from the SWCD website at: www.vanwertswcd.org on the education tab. The topic "Life in the Soil: Dig Deeper" must appear on the front of the poster. The deadline to turn in posters to the Van Wert SWCD is Thursday, May 2 by 4 PM.

Life in the Soil: Dig Deeper is the 2019 theme, as selected by the National Association of Conservation Districts. The purpose of the poster contest is to provide students with an opportunity to share their thoughts about soil, water, and related natural re-

source issues, and to express the importance of conservation.

Posters will be judged on grade divisions: K-1; 2-3; 4-6; 7-9; and 10-12. First place entries from each level will receive a certificate from the Van Wert SWCD. Those first place entries will be submitted to the State Poster Contest which is held during the summer of 2019. Posters selected from the State Contest will be forwarded on to the National Poster Contest. Posters at this level will be judged on: Conservation message (50%); poster uses correct theme and visual effectiveness (30%); originality (10%); universal appeal (10%).

Additional information can be found at: <http://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/conservation-district-directory/> or by calling the SWCD office at (419) 238-9591 x 4273.

Ohio Department of Agriculture

Meet Ohio Department of Agriculture Director

Dorothy Pelanda

Director Pelanda is hosting meet and greets across the state and she wants to hear from you!

Meetings are offered in cooperation with your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

April 12, 2019

Time: 2:00 P M

Perry Township Administrative Building

2408 E. Breese Road

Lima, Ohio 45806

More Info: Contact the Allen SWCD Office at 419-223-0040 ext. 3

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1185 Professional Drive
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Upcoming Dates and Events

- April 10—SWCD Board Meeting 8:00 AM
- April 12—Meet Director Pelanda 2:00 Perry Twp House
- April 17—Park District Meeting 2:00 PM
- April 24 – Deadline to purchase fish fingerlings
- April 28- May 5 – Soil and Water Stewardship Week
- April 29 – Fish delivery at 3 PM
- May 2—Poster Contest deadline to submit
- May 3– College Scholarship Application Deadline
- May 8 - SWCD Board Meeting 8:00 AM
- May 15—Park District Meeting 2:00 PM
- May 27—Memorial Day (office closed)