



Muskingum Soil & Water Conservation District

"Your Soil and Water Conservation Specialist"

225 Underwood Street, Suite 100, Zanesville OH 43701

Phone (740) 454-2027

Newsletter Issue 3

muskingumswcd.org

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THE ROLE OF SOIL IN A GRAZING SYSTEM

Better Soil, Better Days isn't just a slogan; it's the foundation of productive producers and thriving livestock. Soil testing is an available tool that can be used to manage grazing systems. The test provides direct insight into what's going on below the surface that the livestock depend on.

Soil testing measures the key factors of pH, Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Organic Matter, CEC and Trace Elements. These nutrients have a substantial impact on plant growth, forage quality, animal health and weight gain. Without knowing these factors, this may lead to wasted inputs, poor pasture performance and puts our environment health at risk.

When pasture is properly managed, grazing livestock can enhance water infiltration, carbon sequestration and enhanced soil fertility. While poorly managed pasture leads to soil compaction, erosion and decrease biodiversity. Livestock can act as natural builders that promote long term agricultural productivity.

Livestock show strong preferences for certain plant species. This creates a selection pressure that will transform your pasture overtime. Palatable species can decrease over time while less preferred plants increase. Pastures that have 10 or more species have been able to show soil productivity during drought conditions.

The relationship between grazing livestock and soil testing is all about management. Producers that have livestock are not only raising livestock, but they're also preparing the living soil that will support generations to come. At Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District, we offer 2 free soil samples for our county producers, grazing management plans and technical assistance.

For more information contact the office at (740) 454-2027



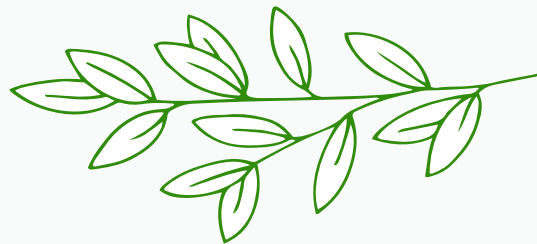
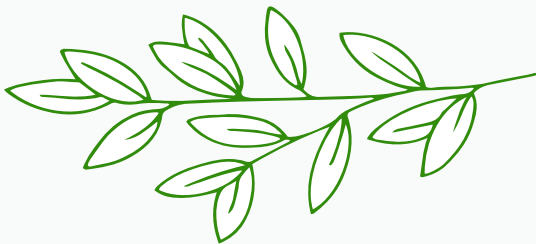
2026 Supervisor Election Notice



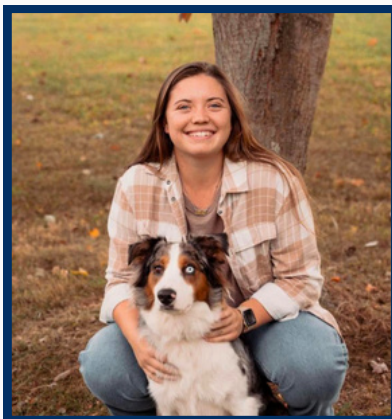
A Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor represents county residents in soil and water conservation and natural resources management. Supervisors set the District's policy, provide guidance to staff, and assist on projects. The Board consists of five supervisors who serve for three-year terms on a voluntary basis. Supervisors participate in monthly and special board meetings and attend area and state meetings. This year, candidates will be nominated to fill two open position. Potential candidates are expected to have experience relevant to the District's goals. The qualities of a potential supervisor include:

- Widespread knowledge of natural resources in the county
- Complement the existing make-up of the district board so that all geographic, educational, and land-use interests within the district are represented
- Leadership ability and willingness to share time and talent.

The Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates. Qualified residents, 18 years of age or older, may also petition to be on the ballot. For more information, call our office at (740) 454-2027 or contact Mark Sterling, Nominating Committee Chair, at 740-328-5892 or by email at masterling912@gmail.com.



Farewell, Carah Mladek



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Carah Mladek for her dedication and contributions during her service with us. It has been a pleasure working alongside her, and her positive attitude and commitment will be deeply missed. While we are saddened by her departure, we are excited for her as she embarks on a new chapter with a Soil and Water Conservation District closer to home. We wish Carah all the best in her new role and are confident that she will continue to make a meaningful impact wherever she goes. Thank you, Carah, and best wishes on your new journey!



Now is the time...

Now is the time to start thinking about cover crops for late summer or fall after your harvest. It could be a farm field with corn, soybeans, or wheat or your backyard garden, all can benefit from the addition of a cover crop.

A cover crop is something that is planted to cover the soil between times that a cash crop is not growing. In a traditional corn / soybean rotation or corn / soybean / wheat rotation, more than 50% of the time the ground can be bare. Bare ground can lead to excess soil being lost due to erosion.

A raindrop falls between 15 – 25 mph. If it hits bare soil, it causes a small explosion. When multiple raindrops collide with bare soil it starts to move soil particles and erosion begins! The thickness of a dime, which isn't very thick, over the area of an acre can amount to 8 tons of soil. Most of our soil in this part of state have a tolerable soil loss figure of 5 tons of soil per acre or less. Cover crops help keep soil in place!

Our soil is full of life, from bacteria to fungi to nematodes to earthworms and many others! If we don't have a living plant growing, we are starving our friends beneath our feet. There can be the equivalent weight of an elephant or two of microorganisms in every acre of soil. These microorganisms have a symbiotic relationship with the plants growing there. They make nutrients available to the plants and the plants provide food for the microorganisms!

Different plants make different nutrients available or make them more readily available for other plants to take advantage of. Buckwheat can make phosphorus more available to other plants.

Sunflowers can make Zinc and Manganese more available. Oats are great to promote mycorrhizal fungi. Flax can help with Potassium. And it goes on and on....

Cover crops can help take up excess nutrients that the previous crop didn't use. Nutrients such as Nitrogen and Phosphorus have been linked to water quality issues. Cover crops can take up these nutrients and then release them to the next crop as they die and break down. Additionally, they can help reduce compaction, increase soil tilth, release micronutrients, a source of forage, benefit pollinators and can be picturesque!

So now is the time to plan what you want to plant next! If you have questions or just information about cover crops, contact the office at 740-454-2027 or you can contact us by email through our website www.muskingumswcd.org.

Community Events & Engagement

- Launched the Brighton Grows Community Garden Series, providing educational community events that promote healthy eating, sustainable gardening, and access to fresh food.
- Introduced the Growing and Preserving Series at Marshall Greens Garden with OSU Extension, teaching small-space food growing and preservation methods.
- Started the Fast Track to Farming training series with Central State University Extension to empower new growers in local food systems.

Garden Development & Infrastructure

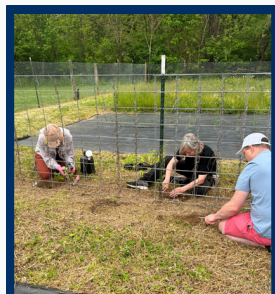
- Completed new raised beds at Restoration Park, reserved for the growing season, built by Cairn Recovery Resources.
- Additional raised beds constructed at the Youth Garden, Veterans Garden, and Maple-Harding Garden through community partnerships, promoting youth involvement. Thank you to West Muskingum FFA, Maysville Woodshop, and Mid-East NHS.

Composting & Sustainability

- Cairn Recovery Resources built compost stations at Maple-Harding Garden and Brighton Grows, with more in development to enhance composting education and access.

Community Support

- Strong community support through in-kind donations of soil, water, and refreshments to sustain Brighton Grows programming and expand access to gardening and education.



Welcome Our 2026 Garden Coordinators!

Please join us in welcoming our 2026 Garden Coordinators: Diane Altman, Carrie Turner, and Michelle Illing. We would also like to recognize Marvin Gill for his continued dedication to the Urban Greens program. While Marvin is stepping down from his coordinator role, we are grateful that he will remain involved as a volunteer.

Their dedication, teamwork, and hard work help keep our community gardens thriving while supporting educational programs and community events throughout the season. We are grateful for their commitment to creating welcoming spaces where community members can learn, grow, and connect.



Save The Date

Thursday, November 5, 2026
McDonald's Greenhouse and Corn Maze
Catering by: Farm to Fork Catering



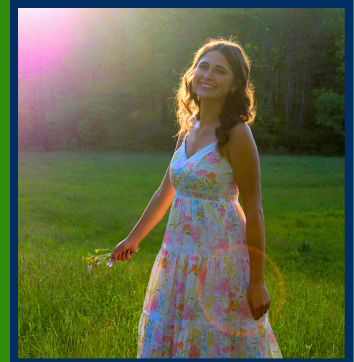
2026 Pond Clinic



On May 14, Muskingum SWCD held a Pond Clinic at Maysville High School. The event featured two programs, beginning with a daytime session attended by more than 60 students who learned about pond management from professionals with Aqua Doc and Muck Commanders. A representative from Zane State's Wildlife Conservation Program also spoke with students about educational opportunities available through the program. The evening session welcomed more than 30 attendees who brought questions and learned firsthand about management options to improve ponds on their properties. Muck Commanders demonstrated the state's only Weedoo machine, showcasing mechanical management techniques for pond systems. We would like to thank Maysville Schools, Muck Commanders, Aqua Doc, and Zane State College for helping make this event possible!

A word from our Forestry Intern..

Hello! My name is Emma Swope. I am the Forestry Intern this summer. I graduated from Philo High School in May, with over 40 college credit plus hours. In the fall, I plan to attend Mount Vernon Nazarene University (MVNU) to study Environmental Biology and to dual minor in Business and Nonprofit Management. During my time at MVNU, I hope to study abroad in Belize. After MVNU, I would like to pursue a career at a State or National Park. Some of my hobbies include running, weight lifting, painting, and traveling. I'm super excited about this internship and grateful for the opportunity.



Share Your ATV Tour Feedback

Have you attended a Muskingum Soil and Water ATV Tour? We want to hear from you! Your feedback will help us better understand what participants enjoy and assist with planning future tours. Please take a moment to complete the survey by scanning or clicking the QR code. Thank you for your input!

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www.mccf.org





Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District
225 Underwood Street, Suite 100
Zanesville, OH 43701

Return Service Requested

District Personnel:

Lacey Harrier
Doreen Maurer
Dylan McNabb
Van Slack
Megan Taylor
Grace Rolfe
Abriana Newsom,
AmeriCorps VISTA Member

Board of Supervisors:

Lance Deal, Secretary
Wayne Kilpatrick, Member
Doug McConnell, Chairperson
Mark Sterling, V. Chairperson
Mark Weiser, Treasurer/Fiscal
Agent

Save the Date



Date	Event	Date	Event
June 23	Mid-Day News	August 31	Mid-Day News
June 29	Mid-Day News	September 2	Brighton Grows Event Series
July 3	Office Closed – Independence Day	September 7	Office Closed – Labor Day
July 14	Board Meeting	September 8	Board Meeting
July 14	Mid-Day News	September 8	Mid-Day News
July 21	WHIZ News	September 10	Growing & Preserving Series
July 28	Mid-Day News	September 15	WHIZ News
August 4	Board Meeting	September 22	Mid-Day News
August 4	Growing & Preserving Series	October 12	Office Closed – Columbus Day
August 5	Brighton Grows Event Series	October 13	Board Meeting
August 11	Mid-Day News	October 13	Mid-Day News
August 18	WHIZ News	October 20	WHIZ News
August 25	Mid-Day News	October 27	Mid-Day News