

THE DISTRICT CURRENT

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AG COST SHARE AND CCAP SIGN-UPS BEGIN JULY 1

By Laurie Brokaw

The Henderson County Soil & Water Conservation District (HCSWCD) is currently accepting applications for NC Agriculture Cost Share Program (NCACSP) and Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP.) Both programs are voluntary and are funded through the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Soil & Water, and are administered through the HCSWCD to fund the installation of various Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve water quality.

Ag Cost Share Accepted Agriculture-Related BMPs	
Cropland Conversion	Stock Trail
Ag Road Stabilization	Stream Stabilization
No-till Vegetables	Diversions/Grassed Waterways
Feed Pads	Riparian Buffers
Abandoned Well Closure	Livestock Exclusion (fencing)
Stream Crossings	Watering Tanks
Agrichemical Handling/Mixing Facilities and Backflow Prevention	

The NCACSP can pay up to 75 to 90 percent of the costs for installation of these and other accepted agriculture-related BMPs.

CCAP Accepted Urban BMPs	
Critical Area Planting	Bio-retention Area
Abandoned Well Closure	Stream Restoration/Protection
Riparian Buffer	Backyard Wetland/Rain Garden
Grassed Swale/Diversion	Pet Waste Receptacles
Storm Water Wetland	Large Cisterns

The CCAP can pay for up to 75 percent of the costs for installation of these accepted urban BMPs.

To be eligible for either program, **there must be an existing water quality problem.** The BMPs must be designed by HCSWCD and be maintained for ten years. If you have questions, call Jonathan Wallin, Shaun Moore or Laurie Brokaw at the Henderson County Soil & Water Conservation District at 697-4949. You can also learn more by visiting our website at www.hendersoncountync.org/soil.

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CONSERVATION PRACTICES INSTALLED IN 2009-10

By Laurie Brokaw

NC Ag Cost Share/Drought Assistance \$102,451

NCACSP

3 Eroding orchard roads repaired, totaling 1,520 ft and saving an estimated 73.31 tons of soil per year.

- 1 Animal waste application system for proper land application of waste
- 2 Fertigation Backflow Prevention Systems to prevent backflow of any nutrients used during irrigation back into a water source.
- 1 Replacement well for livestock watering.

Drought Assistance

- 3 Wells - used for crop irrigation
- 3 Wells and 2 watering tanks for livestock watering

2010 Community Conservation

- \$33,758
- 2 Streambank Protection
- 1 Pet Waste Receptical
- 1 Impervious Surface Conversion
- 2 Riparian Buffer Restoration

- 2 Abandoned Well Closures
- 1 Stream Restoration
- 2 Backyard Wetlands
- 2 Grassed Waterways

2010 French Broad River Watershed Coalition funds

- \$27,228
- 2 Streambank Protection
- 2 Riparian Buffer Restoration
- 1 Well - Alternative Water Source
- 1 Heavy use Area
- 1 Livestock Exclusion Fencing
- 1 Pasture Management Plan

2010 NC Div. of Water Resources grant \$63,100

- 2 Stream Restoration
- 2 Streambank Protection
- 4 Riparian Buffer Restoration
- 1 Livestock Exclusion Fencing
- 1 Heavy Use Area
- 1 Pasture Management Plan

Total: \$226,537

The District spent \$226,537 on the installation of all these Best Management Practices in 2009-10. Thank you to all of the partnering agencies that made this possible, especially during these tough economic times.

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GROUP LAUNCHES FORGOTTEN FRUITS INITIATIVE

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The Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT) alliance has launched a Forgotten Fruits initiative to bring back America's most endangered heirloom apples. RAFT has named 2010 the "Year of the Heirloom Apple" to engage food communities in restoring 90 heirloom apple varieties to each region of the country and to renew culinary traditions associated with American apple culture.

RAFT launched this initiative in Appalachia - the richest region for heirloom apples on the continent - with events in North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. The launch included the release of its Forgotten Fruits Manifesto and Manual. This publication builds upon the collective wisdom and work of more than a dozen of America's heirloom apple experts.

Of some 15,000 to 16,000 named apple varieties that have been grown on the North American continent, only about 3,000 remain accessible. Roughly nine out of ten apple varieties historically grown in the US are at risk of falling out of cultivation and off of our tables.

Over the last century, apple culture and diversity in America have dramatically declined. RAFT partners are concerned that just one apple variety, the Red Delicious, now comprises 41 percent of the entire American apple crop. Eleven varieties produce 90 percent of all apples sold in chain grocery stores.

What's more, much of the apple juice, puree and sauces consumed in the US are now produced in other countries. As the overall number of apple trees in cultivation

decline to a fourth of what it was a century ago, the number of apple varieties considered threatened or endangered has peaked at 94 percent. These are not just abstract statistics; they affect our health and the health of our landscapes.

RAFT has identified a previously unrecognized catalyst of the decline in the variety of apples available to growers. Over the last 15 years, the US has lost roughly 600 independently owned nurseries. These nurseries formerly harbored most of the place-based heritage apples on the continent, but their business has been usurped by the garden-and-lawn departments of big-box stores that offer far fewer varieties. Perhaps just as problematic is the dramatic loss of traditional knowledge about apple cultivation and varietal usage that has occurred over the last half century. The skills of grafting, pruning and preparing apples in diverse ways are as endangered as the apples themselves.

However, there are signs of hope. Despite the economic downturn, heirloom and antique apple varieties are being successfully marketed at many of the 5,000 farmers' markets and 2,500 community-supported agriculture (CSA) projects in the US. Some CSAs, like the one of Morte's Mountain Apples near Boone, specialize in introducing customers to a wide variety of heirlooms. Consumption of hard cider is also on the rise in America, offering a means to use heirloom varieties not suited for eating fresh. Among chefs and cider-makers, future market prospects for heirloom apples look good.

See "Apples" on Page 4



Text and photos by Gary Nabham



Welcome, Jonathan Caden Wallin!

Born June 10, 2010 at 4:30 p.m.

20 inches long and 8 lbs.

Caden and proud parents Oshen and Jonathan Wallin

are all doing well!



THE HENDERSON COUNTY SOIL &
WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER

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OUR MISSION:

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AG DISTRICT PARTICIPANTS MUST UPDATE INFORMATION

By Laurie Brokaw

Many Voluntary Ag District (VAD) participants have received copies of the original VAD file information from us in the mail. We've had a great response and are trying to catch up on all the updates. We've had a great time talking to folks on the phone or in the office, where we can finally put a name and face together. A big thank you goes to all the folks that have contacted us already to update their files. The first to call and come in was Mr. William Enloe, who will receive a free VAD sign for his property.

If you are a VAD participant and have not returned the completed update form or contacted us, please do so as soon as possible. If you are a VAD participant and did not receive a mailing from our office, please give us a call so we can make sure all of your parcel/contact information are still current. We had many packets returned because of insufficient/no longer used addresses from our original files from 1992.

To continue participating in the VAD program, participants must update their information. Anyone with questions can call Laurie Brokaw at 697-4949.

APPLES

Continued from Page 3

The RAFT Alliance is now proposing that at least 90 endangered apple varieties in each region be earmarked for recovery. RAFT released its first regional list of apples for recovery - including over 100 heirlooms unique to Appalachia - at the Marketing Opportunities for Southern Farmers conference on Feb. 27 at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa. To find out ways you can celebrate the Year of the Heirloom Apple, go to <http://www.raftalliance.org> and <http://www.garynabhan.com>.

RAFT is an alliance of food, farming, environmental and culinary advocates who have joined together to identify, restore and celebrate America's biologically and culturally diverse food traditions through conservation, education, promotion and regional networking. Gary Nabhan is founder of Renewing America's Food Traditions Alliance (<http://www.raftalliance.org>). For further information, email gpnabhan@email.arizona.edu.