



East National Technology Support Center

Director's Message

In the immortal words of Briscoe Darling, "sometimes you just have to jump in and hang on!" For the past six months that's what we've done. When I stepped into the role of "acting" East NTSC Director, I had no idea that I would still be doing so at this point in the year. The staff at the Center continues to impress me with their willingness to go the extra mile to get the job done.

We continue to provide training and assistance to the states in our service area. Prescribed Burning (pg. 4) and CNMP training courses were held in the Northeast and each session had excellent participation. The Center hosted soil quality training for 35 students from 10 different states. Actually, make that 36 students with the addition of Ann Mills, USDA's Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, who visited our Center for a first-hand look at training and technical assistance we offer. Training on organic farming principles/practices was conducted by the Rodale Institute with more than 50 individuals participating (pg. 2). We also had the opportunity to host the East NTSC Advisory Board here in Greensboro and have them tour the local university farm and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) in Goldsboro, North Carolina. The feedback we received from the Board will help guide us in meeting the needs of the states, and I must admit that the feedback we received from the Board has been excellent.

Thanks to Ramona Garner, plant materials specialist, the East NTSC Community Garden is showing outstanding promise! In a very small space we are demonstrating just how productive these gardens can be. By the time this report is released, we will have harvested produce from the garden and hopefully can use it in the Feds, Farmers, and Friends Feed Families national outreach project that is being promoted by USDA.

We will soon be contacting the states for suggestions on webinar topics that you would like for us to sponsor during the next fiscal year. Please let us know about topics that interest you, and we will make arrangements to get the expertise in place to make the presentation(s).

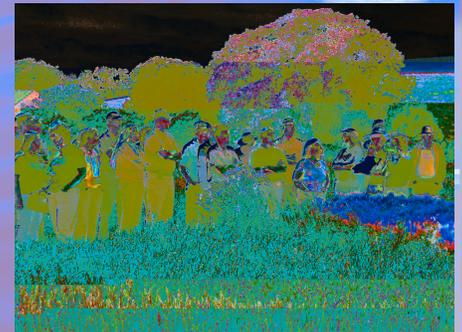
The Director's Message in our next newsletter will feature comments from Mary Podoll, our new director. Until next time, we appreciate your continued support and encourage your feedback on how we can improve our assistance to the states.

Bill Boyd, Acting Director

Quarterly Report July 2010



Soil Quality



Organic Systems



Advisory Board

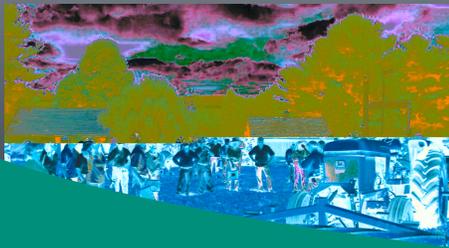
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Technology Transfer

terminate cover crops, seeing their innovative compost turning equipment in action, and visiting their Farm Systems Trial.

Participants walked away from the workshop with a clearer understanding of the organic certification process and how NRCS conservation practices can assist producers with transitioning to organic. While the workshop was primarily to educate, the wrap-up discussion resulted in a long list of activities for the East NTSC to follow-up on to assist field staff working with organic producers. A similar session related to organic livestock production is high on our to-do list. Contact David Lamm at (336) 370-3339 for more information.



Culturally Significant

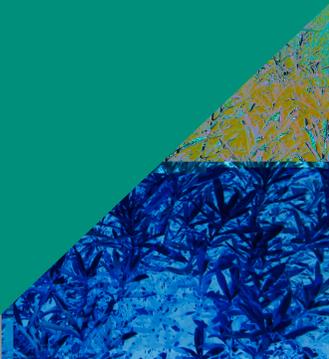
Ramona Garner, plant materials specialist, gave a presentation to the Cultural and Heritage Council at the annual meeting of the United Southern and Eastern Tribes, Inc. The meeting was held at the Battle House in Mobile, Alabama on June 14-17, 2010. United Southern and Eastern Tribes, Inc. is composed of 25 tribes in the eastern United States.

Ramona's presentation focused on how the NRCS Plant Materials Program can assist the tribes in establishing culturally significant plants on tribal land. She introduced them to the plant materials program, gave them examples of how Plant Materials Centers have worked with tribes, and offered suggestions on how the NRCS Plant Materials

Program can help them through the development of plant material collection techniques, training and demonstration. Ramona's talk was followed by brief comments by NRCS Chief Dave White and Ramona's presentation.

Plant Materials Centers are available to assist tribes with the collection of culturally significant plants. Contact Ramona Garner at (336) 370-3340 for more information.

Top left: Wild rice; Bottom left: Trail of Tears Indian corn; Right: Sweet flag



Technology Development Teams

Manure Management Team

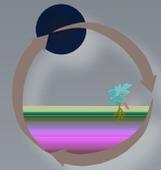


One of the services provided by the Manure Management Team is technology evaluation. The team, working with Virginia NRCS, recently provided a functional review of the state's first anaerobic digester. This modified plug-flow digester is to be installed on a 1,100 head dairy operation. Methane generated by the digester will be used to produce electricity that will be sold to the utility grid. Due to urban encroachment, the digester should significantly reduce odors from the farm. Separated solids from the digester will also be used for bedding, eliminating the need to purchase sawdust.

Other technology evaluations have included a complete mix anaerobic digester (Massachusetts), in-house composting of poultry litter (DelMarVa), and manure amendments (various states). Contact Bill Boyd at (336) 370-3334 for more information on this and other Manure Management Team activities.

foods, medicines, and basketry, and promoted forage plants that were attractive to game animals. By examining the many indigenous uses, harvesting, and management practices on these openings, tribal and non-Indian landowners, in collaboration with NRCS field offices, can incorporate this ancient body of knowledge and practice in restoring and maintaining prairies and wetlands today. Contact Susan Andrews at (336) 370-3337 for more information on National Plant Data Center activities.

Soil Quality Team



National Plant Data Center

Kat Anderson, ethnobotanist, distributed "The Ozette Prairies of Olympic National Park: Their Former Indigenous Uses and Management" to NRCS offices, Olympic National Park, and tribes in western Washington state. The report provides natural resource conservationists and other technical specialists with a broad knowledge of the past cultural importance of the Ozette Prairies to the Makah Nation. The document addresses the many indigenous uses of these openings for hunting wildlife, gathering plants, and smoking foods. A segment of the document is devoted to how the Makah played a major role in the conservation of these landscapes by lighting periodic fires which kept the brush and trees from encroaching, encouraged the growth of herbaceous plants important for

Here's what's happening...

- ✘ Elvis Graves, national technology specialist, is detailed to Massachusetts as Acting State Conservationist. Center staff wish Elvis well with this opportunity.
- ✘ Dennis Chessman, Georgia grazing lands specialist, is detailed to the East NTSC. Dennis is assisting the Center with the Agency's national emphasis to accelerate development of ecological site descriptions and forage suitability groups.



Technology Transfer, continued
Prescribed Burn Training

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Webinar Schedule

Milking Center Waste
September 29

Grazing Management Concepts
October 27

Developing Seeding Rates for Conservation Practices
December 1

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Contact Kris in Smith at
(336) 370-3362 for more information.

