

to step 5. They are formatting the Tech Note for review this week. The National Office of Urban Ag is involved, along with the Tech Centers.

Kaitlin will be recommending an Urban Project with NACD through the Soil Health Champions. This is in the works, but the proposal as not yet been submitted.

EQIP Soil Health Initiative has been expanded this year to integrate livestock. Not many states allow grazing of cropland and provide financial incentives to set up a place to graze the cropland. We have received two applications for this initiative.

If anyone is interested in a conversation about soil health, they come out once a month. June 18 is the next scheduled conversation with Edwin presenting on EQIP Soil Health Testing. When we work on cover crop, we like to include soil health testing both before and after. Often the conversation steers to adaptive management in New Jersey. If anyone is interested in receiving updates, please let Kaitlin know so she can add you to the list.

Soil Carbon Practices have received numerous comments. As a result, Soil Carbon Amendment 336 will be replacing the Soil Carbon Amendment 808. Soil Carbon Amendment 336 is in the Federal Register for review with comments due by June 16. If you are interested, you can find it with this information: ID NRCS-2021-0005-0001. There is some confusion as to when you should use the Soil Carbon Amendment vs. other practices. Kaitlin brought up a few other practices found in Section IV of the FOTG, including Woody Residue Treatment 384, Mulching 484, and Nutrient Management 590. Woody Residue Treatment 384 allows for the creation of biochar and is a great option when natural events create downed woody debris. We can use this practice not just for application of biochar but creation as well. Mulching 484 has been used interchangeably with 336 but it comes down to application: mulching of natural materials like leaf mulch, wood chips, etc. Nutrient Management 590 would be used when manure/compost is to be applied.

If anyone knows about Soil Health Tech Note 450-03, you will be pleased to hear that a companion tech note will be released as well. It will include recommended soil health indicators and associated laboratory procedures. This will connect soil testing with planning and implementation and will focus on goal-oriented solutions. For example, someone has already done the soil testing, they have their results, what does it all mean and which ones are important for the resource concerns that producers or NRCS are most concerned about. This companion tech note will walk someone through analyzing the tests more so than the original tech note does.

3:48 Open Discussion/Questions for presenters, Evan Madlinger, NRCS

NRCS Programs wants to discuss possibly moving up application cutoff as in the previous few years, it has been the third week in October and that is just too late.

George Cassady spoke up on behalf on the Salem County Board of Ag, asking that some priorities be addressed. They are pleased with the programs offered historically but need more conversations with the farmers directly. The programs haven't been user friendly the past few years and as a result, farmers do not want to sign up. The local field office is viewed as being understaffed and payment schedules for practices haven't been updated recently considering COVID and the rising cost of goods.

NRCS Staff answered that staffing has been addressed via the Workload Analysis and that more positions are being advertised. Payment schedules are updated yearly with a national team and the state agency has no control over cost.

4:30 Adjourn, Julie Hawkins, NRCS