

URBAN AGRICULTURE & SMALL SCALE FARMING



It all begins with a farm visit!

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) make farm visits, develop plans, and provide technical and financial support for a variety of urban agriculture and small scale farming. As your conservation decision partner, NRCS provides free assistance for landowners to help reach land use goals. Our local offices, staffed with conservation professionals with local knowledge, can help you make well-informed conservation decisions.

We love what we do!

That's working with growers like you to start, expand, enhance, or improve your natural resources and put conservation practices in place that will benefit the soil, water, air, and wildlife.

Getting Started with NRCS

Schedule a Farm Visit. Call or email your local USDA Service Center to set up a visit to your operation.

How to Prepare. What is the vision for your urban or small scale farm? What are your challenges? Prepare a list of questions and concerns for your NRCS conservation specialist.

What to Expect. An NRCS team member will visit your property and ask about your dreams and goals for your land and can help you develop a plan to obtain them. During our farm visit we can discuss conservation planning and what financial and technical support is available for you.



**West Virginia
Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service**

WV • 2023

Urban Agriculture & Small Scale Farming

Urban agriculture and small scale farming comes with a unique set of challenges and opportunities. NRCS can help with the challenges of conservation, and support growers in their efforts to achieve local, healthy, and sustainable food for their communities.



Vegetable/Cropping Systems

NRCS conservation practices benefits orchards, vineyards and other garden horticultural crops. Through incremental seasonal and yearly changes, a cropping system will lead to a more functioning soil. The prescribed practices will build synergistically resulting in short and long-term gains in healthier soil, improved water quality, and increased profitability.



Pollinators NRCS offers more than three dozen conservation practices that can benefit pollinators. Although many of these practices target improving grazing lands or reducing soil erosion, small modifications to the practices can yield benefits to pollinator species.



Raised Beds Raised beds create an above ground growing environment for use in areas where soils are unsuitable (contaminated, shallow or otherwise limiting) for plant cultivation. Raised beds can be either framed or unframed and are constructed with a barrier between the existing soil and installed growing media.



Low Tunnel System A low tunnel system is an enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic or fabric covered structure that is no taller than four feet. Low tunnels are used protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall or cold and to extend the growing season or to reduce pest pressure.



Our Conservation Partners



NRCS experts from many disciplines work together with state and local partners to ensure effective conservation practices. Individually the federal, state, and nonprofit groups that comprise our conservation partnerships have a diversity of expertise in discipline, location/area, and focus. As partners in conservation, we share our unique areas of expertise to better put sustainable conservation on your land.

Partners NRCS frequently work with for Urban and Small Scale Ag include:

- WV Association of Conservation Districts
- WV Department of Agriculture
- WV Conservation Agency
- WVU Extension
- WVSU Extension
- West Virginia University Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- Various Non-Profit Organizations

Contact Us

WV USDA Service Centers

Beckley	681-220-5761
Buckeye	304-427-3006
Cross Lanes	304-776-5256 ext 108
Elkins	304-635-4399
Franklin	304-358-2285 ext 3019
Gassaway	304-364-5103 ext 4012
Huntington	304-697-6033 ext 8396
Keyser	304-788-2332 ext 108
Kingwood	304-441-3770
Lewisburg	681-318-4025
Martinsburg	681-247-3016
McMechen	304-238-5648
Middlebourne	304-758-2173
Moorefield	304-530-2825 ext 106
Mount Clare	304-566-3727
Parkersburg	304-422-9072 ext 111
Petersburg	304-257-4702 ext 117
Philippi	304-457-4516 ext 115
Point Pleasant	304-857-5101
Princeton	304-557-3128
Ranson	304-930-9043
Ripley	304-514-7171
Romney	304-822-3020 ext 101
Spencer	304-519-3007
Summersville	304-618-6126
Union	304-772-3006
Weston	681-533-4128
White Hall	304-368-6910

Common West Virginia Urban Agriculture & Small Scale Farming Practices



Cover Crops Cover crops are a small crop of grass, small grain, or legumes primarily for seasonal protection. This practice is used to control erosion, add fertility and organic material to the soil, increase infiltration and aeration of the soil, and improve overall soil health.



Wildlife Habitat Planting Wildlife habitat planting is establishing wildlife habitat by planting herbaceous vegetation or shrubs to improve degraded wildlife habitat for a target wildlife species. Planting of native species, when practicable, provides greater ecological benefits than introduced species.



Livestock NRCS works with small livestock producers to implement practices that maximize grazing efficiency and increase long term success. Practices are available to increase livestock water availability, increase forage productivity, facilitate livestock movement, and reduce erosion.



Nutrient Management Nutrient management may be used to improve crop productivity and improve soil organic matter while reducing environmental impacts. This practice manages the rate, source, placement, and timing of plant nutrients and soil amendments.



Irrigation Systems Irrigation systems are installed to efficiently and uniformly apply irrigation water and/or chemicals directly to the plant root zone and maintain soil moisture for optimum plant growth.



Conservation Crop Rotation Conservation crop rotation is a planned sequence of crops grown on the same ground over a period of time. Conservation crop rotations can maintain or increase soil health, improve soil moisture efficiency, reduce the concentration of salts in soil and/or reduce plant pest pressure.



Brush Management Brush management is the removal of woody plants including those that are invasive or noxious. Brush management can be used to create the desired plant community and enhance wildlife habitat.