

# 2013 Dale County Groundwater Festival

By Janet Benton, District Technician, Ozark, AL

About 525 students from across Dale County attended the 2013 Dale County Groundwater Festival. The event was hosted by the Dale County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), at Wallace College in Midland City on October 11, 2013.

The fourth graders participated in three hands-on educational activities related to groundwater-- the Edible Aquifer, Water Filtration, and Water Cycle Bracelet.

The Edible Aquifer consists of ice, clear soda, ice cream, chocolate syrup, and sprinkles. Each ingredient represents a different part of the aquifer -- soil, rock, water, and pollutants such as oil and other chemicals. Afterwards, students pumped the “proverbial water” from their aquifer by sucking through a straw and experiencing the tasty treat that represented how groundwater is received.

With the Water Filtration activity, students polluted water with cooking oil, vinegar, and soil and then attempted to filter and clean the water. The students learned it is very difficult to remove certain contaminants from water.



Instructors talk to students about water filtration.



Students enjoy Groundwater Festival.

During the Water Cycle Bracelet activity students learned about the water cycle. Colored beads represented the various phases of the water cycle such as evaporation and precipitation. Students also sang along with the Water Cycle Boogie to review the Water Cycle.

This was a great experience for all the students as they learned the importance of keeping water clean and some specific ways to prevent groundwater contamination. Judging by the

smiles and enthusiasm of all, this year's event was another success.

Many organizations came together to accomplish the event. It was sponsored by grants from Wiregrass Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D), the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, and Choctawhatchee, Pea, Yellow River Management Authority. Local business also provided contributions for students to receive a groundwater t-shirt and for bus transportation. Wallace College provided their Science building. About 50 volunteers from a variety of agencies and organizations also helped to make the event a success.