

SPRING, 2015



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**YORK
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

[Http ://yorkconservationdistrict.org](http://yorkconservationdistrict.org)



*"The bluebird carries the sky on
its back."*

...Henry David Thoreau

**YSWCD showcased bluebirds
on Earth Day Birthday**

Earth Day Birthday at the Museum of York County celebrated 25 years of free environmental fun on April 25. This year, the Conservation District featured an exhibit about bluebird habitat and how to build and locate a bluebird box. Students could even enter to win a bluebird box.

Bluebirds are cavity nesters and love to make their home in boxes built especially for them. The brightly-colored male bluebird checks out several potential boxes in early spring, then shows his mate his favorites. She inspects and selects the best box, spending several days building a tidy nest of grass, bark, pine needles, twigs, straw and hair. The male helps but usually spends most of his time guarding the nesting area. Young hatchlings are fed insects, worms and spiders by the male bird, who also feeds the mama as she tends to the young. For more information about how to get involved with bluebirds, contact the Conservation District, 803-684-3137 x 101 or email barbara.oconnell@sc.nacdnet.net.



SPRING 2015

York Soil & Water Conservation District



This is an exciting year for soil health. The United Nations designated 2015 as the “International Year of Soils” to bring worldwide attention to the importance of soil health for ensuring a sustainable future.

Healthy soils are the foundation of American agriculture. In the face of mounting challenges such as a growing global population and impacts from climate change and extreme weather events, soil health is critical to our future. Healthy soils are needed if we are to increase production responsibly as global demands rise for food, fuel and fiber. Healthy soils have a greater capacity to hold nutrients and water which can help farmers during drought and reduce erosion during heavy rainfall.

Rent from York Soil & Water Conservation District

If winter was hard on your pastures and you need to reseed this spring or fall, be aware that the District rents **no-till drills** at \$9 per acre (\$100 minimum). Call 684-3137 x 101 to reserve a planter.



Filter fabric, an 8 ounce non-woven fabric to place under stone in heavy use areas, is also available from our office for \$2.10 per running foot, 15 feet wide (that's just 14 cents per square ft!).

York USDA/NRCS Conservationist Leaves



LaKeisha Barber, District Conservationist in York since 2008, has been promoted to a multi-county District Conservationist position in Florida and will be greatly missed by all her coworkers in York County. Good Luck, LaKeisha!

Volunteers Assisting With School Gardens



Master Gardeners Jan McCoy and Donna Hummelman help Northside Elementary 1st graders plant a vegetable garden.

Several volunteers are assisting the Conservation District by working with its “encore” classrooms (schools who participated in the garden series in past years) to help them maintain their garden programs. The Conservation District provides training, all materials & lesson kits for volunteers to conduct a mini-series from February to May which includes planting and

harvesting a vegetable garden. A second training session will be held this summer—please call the Conservation District if you would like to be a volunteer.



Volunteer Mary Warlick teaches a lesson on MyPlate to show students at Griggs Rd Elementary how a good meal includes fruits & vegetables.

Worm Composting Workshops



Worms are all the rage for school groups and garden clubs & the Conservation District has supplied worms and workshops for several this year. Worms eat fruit and vegetable scraps, reducing the amount of garbage you throw away. And the castings worms make from the scraps are a nutritious addition to your garden, reducing your need for chemical fertilizers. For more information on how to make and maintain a worm composting bin, contact your Conservation District.



Students at York Road Elementary learned about worm anatomy and worm behavior.

Watch for Those Scarecrows!

Many of our school gardens this year are sporting scarecrows entered in last fall's Scarecrow Contest. These three are standing guard at Orchard Park Elementary in Fort Mill.



YORK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

SCHOOL GARDEN LESSON SERIES

There are 27 new first grade gardens at schools in York County as part of the Conservation District's School Garden Lesson Series. Gardens were planted in March and will be harvested in late May with all the students enjoying a salad made from the vegetables they grew themselves. Shown below left is volunteer Marge Ulmer helping plant at Orchard Park Elementary. At right are: learning about plant parts at Orchard Park (top), grinding wheat seeds into flour with students at Hickory Grove/Sharon Elementary (middle), and planting vegetable seeds with students at Kinard Elementary (bottom).



YSWCD School Garden program made possible through grants and donations from the Woman's Club of Rock Hill, Town & Country Garden Club, Fleur de Lis Garden Club and Affiliate members of the Conservation District. Thank you!



How much space does an oak tree

need? . . . Students at The Children's School in Rock Hill learned about plant parts and what plants need during Science Week at the school.

SPRING 2015 York Soil & Water Conservation District

THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 AFFILIATES

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SC Department of Natural Resources
York County Council

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Fleur de Lis Garden Club

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Bennie Copeland

Thanks to all the conservation supporters
who have become affiliates for 2015!

Spring activities are in full swing & your
Conservation District is busier than ever
providing classroom activities that
promote good stewardship of our natural
resources. Please show your support for
the many educational programs in the
District by becoming an affiliate, or
renewing your affiliate membership for
2015 today !! Help us make a difference
in conservation education — we can't do
it without YOU! Please clip the form
below and send it along with your tax
deductible gift to:

York Soil & Water Conservation District

1460 E Alexander Love Hwy

York, SC 29745

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THANK YOU



YORK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT SPRING 2015



CATAWBA FRESH MARKET

The Catawba Farm and Food Coalition is a 5-county group of organizations seeking to advance agricultural productivity and profitability, environmental stewardship and availability of locally grown food in the region. They have developed a way to shop for fresh local food online and an efficient system of delivering orders to convenient pickup points. Through this on-line farmers market, you can order from multiple local or regional producers, pay with a credit card, and pick up your assembled order at your chosen location. Getting local foods on your table is easy with Catawba Fresh Market—your order is picked, packed and delivered on the same day to ensure freshness. To place an order or join as a grower, visit www.CatawbaFreshMarket.com .

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please contact our office at 803-684-3137 or email barbara.oconnell@sc.nacdnet.net.

If you get this newsletter via US Postal Service and would rather receive it by email and in color, please contact us with email address.

All programs and services of the York Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA-NRCS, and the SC DNR, Division of Land, Water and Conservation are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

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