



Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation

Rock Island County SWCD Summer 2016 Newsletter

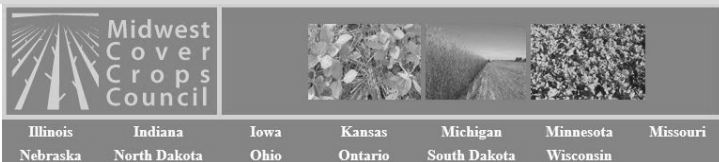
www.RockIslandSWCD.org

Cover Crop Survey Reflects Enthusiasm For The Soil-Saving Practice

WEST LAFAYETTE, Indiana (July 28, 2016)—Insight from 2,020 farmers from across the country reflected enthusiasm for cover crops and—for the fourth year in a row—found a yield boost in corn and soybeans following cover crops. Multi-year data from the survey shows the yield boost increases as cover crops are planted year after year, a revelation that points to an appealing long-term benefit of the conservation practice. The survey offers data unavailable elsewhere, providing a vital glimpse into farmers' use of and perceptions about cover crops. Previous SARE/CTIC Cover Crop Surveys have been used by researchers and farm groups, and even cited in Congressional testimony.

The survey was conducted in March 2016 by the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program and the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) with help from the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) and Purdue University. Acreage planted to cover crops continued its steady rise among survey participants, reaching an average of 298 acres per farm in 2015 and projected to grow to a mean of 339 acres in 2016. Those figures are more than double the acreage survey participants said they planted in 2011. The full report is available online at www.ctic.org/CoverCrops. (Source: CTIC Electronic News Release)

Midwest Cover Crop Decision Tools



The goal of the *Midwest Cover Crops Council* (MCCC) is to facilitate widespread adoption of cover crops throughout the Midwest, to improve ecological, economic, and social sustainability.

Visit their website (<http://www.mccc.msu.edu/>) to use several web-based systems which can assist farmers in selecting cover crops to include in field crop and vegetable rotations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Eco Camp

*September 29th-30th
Loud Thunder Forest Preserve*

Fall Fish Sale Deadlines

*Grass Carp October 14th
All Others October 21st Close Of Business*

Fall Tree Sale Deadline

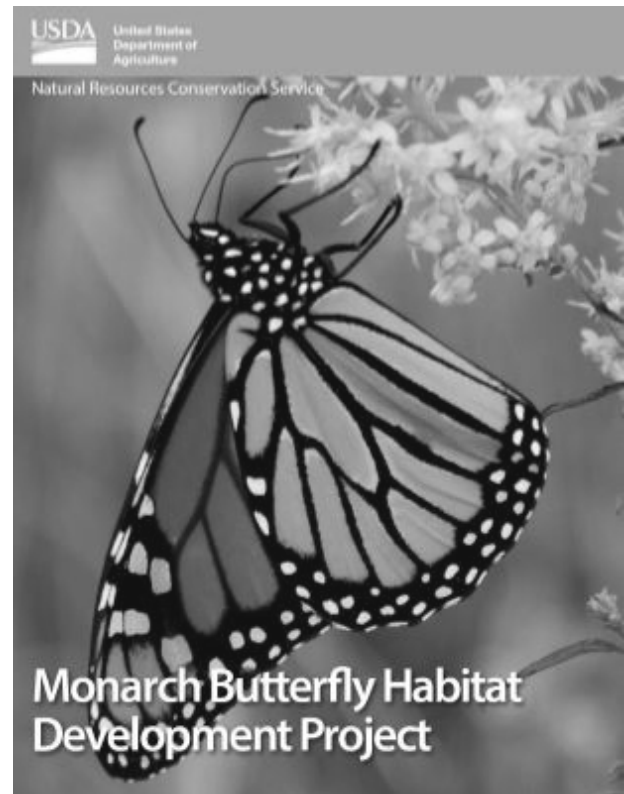
October 6th Close of Business

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced a new conservation effort to help agricultural producers provide food and habitat for monarch butterflies in the Midwest and southern Great Plains. This targeted 10-state effort by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will invest \$4 million in 2016 to help combat the iconic species' decline.

NRCS will provide technical and financial assistance to help producers and conservation partners plant milkweed and nectar-rich plants. NRCS also help producers manage their pastures in ways that increase critical populations of milkweed and nectar plants while also improving the health of their rangeland.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and remaining funds from the former Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) provide funding for this work. Additionally, NRCS is offering support for related enhancements through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to establish monarch habitat. These enhancements are available nationwide.



**Contact Joe Gates District Conservationist
At The Milan NRCS Office For More
Information
(309) 764-1486 Ext. 3**

University of Illinois Extension:

University of Illinois Extension is the flagship outreach effort of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, offering educational programs to residents of all of Illinois' 102 counties — and far beyond. More than 1.5 million Illinois residents take part in Extension programs each year. Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future. U of I Extension offers educational programs in five broad areas:

- Energy and environmental stewardship
- Food safety and security
- Economic development and workforce preparedness
- Family health, financial security, and wellness
- Youth development

Upcoming Events:

August 20th: Illinois 4-H General Project Exhibits - Illinois State Fair

August 23rd and 25th : Illinois Native Pollinators webinar

September 15th: Apple Butter Workshop (Aledo Mercer County)



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION- RISWCD PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

Pheasants Forever:



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 9/7 Habitat Management workshop in Mercer County (Details TBD)
- 9/10 Youth and Women's Wing shooting Clinic Johnson Sauk Trail State Park

USEFUL LINKS:

Pheasants Forever Seed
<http://pheasantsforever.myshopify.com/collections/illinois>

IL Pheasants Forever website and seed:
www.ihuntil.com

Pheasants Forever National website:
www.pheasantsforever.org

CHAPTER STATISTICS



Pheasants Forever Founded: 1983
Location: St. Paul, MN
County: Ramsey
Members: 125,000
Dollars Spent: \$508 Million
Acres Preserved: 476,000

Farm Service Agency:



As of May 2016, 23.9 million acres were enrolled in a CRP program, containing over 652 thousand contracts. There is expected to be 1.7 million acres expiring this fall. Pollinator habitat increased by 20,000 acres, which is the most of any of the initiatives.

Submissions will be ranked according to environmental benefits in comparison to all other offers nationwide.

Contact the Aledo FSA office for more information at (309) 582-5153 ext. 2

Farm Bureau:



Rock Island County Farm Bureau's mission is to be a positive voice for agriculture, providing resources that enhance the economic success and quality of life for rural and urban communities.

The Board of Directors is elected by the 650 voting members of the Rock Island County Farm Bureau each August at the annual meeting. And for the next 24 months of their elected term, they meet on a monthly basis to carry out the mission statement of the Rock Island County Farm Bureau.

Upcoming Events:

August 30th – September 1st: Farm Progress Show; Boone, IA

September 14th-16th: AgXPerience 2016

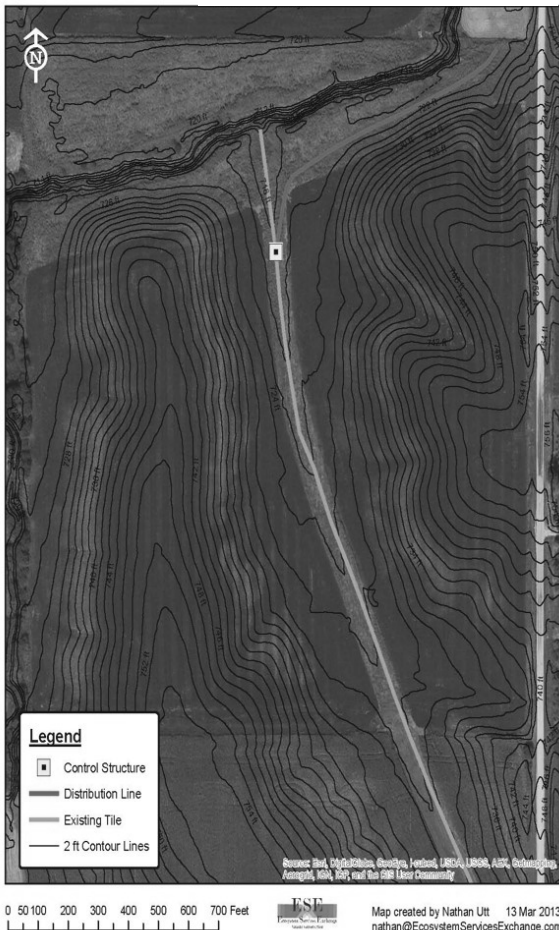
CONSERVATION SUCCESS STORIES

Brain Parkinson RISWCD Director Receives River Action “Eddy Award”

River Action, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering the environmental, economic, and cultural vitality of the Mississippi River and its riverfront in the Quad Cities area, presented its 17th Annual Eddy Awards in April 2016. These awards recognized individuals, organizations, corporations, schools, groups, and governments that went against the current to get things done and accomplished outstanding river activity or development with environmentally responsibility.

The winners were recognized at River Action’s Annual “Fish and Fire Friendraiser” with Brain Parkinson being recognized for his excellence in Agricultural Conservation. Highlighted were many of the best management practices he has installed over time throughout his farming operation. Some of the conservation practices included the Saturated Buffer pictured below as well as Brian’s use of cover crops and no-till practices. Please contact the R.I. Soil and Water Conservation District with any questions you may have about Saturated Buffers. (309) 764-1486 Ext. 3.

Illinois 5



Hello! My name is Abbey Warner and I am the new intern here at the RISWCD for the summer of 2016. I am currently a student at Eastern Illinois University, which is located in Charleston, IL. I will be entering into my senior year this next fall as geology major with a geographic information systems minor. I really enjoy my major and minor as it gives me a chance to work both outside in the field and in the office. I also enjoy the content that I study within my degree.

My decision to pursue this degree may have had a few more detours than other majors but I feel that I have finally found the program I belong to. I have been able to travel for a few of my classes which is something that I really enjoy. In the last couple years I have been able to visit the Upper Peninsula in Michigan to see the billion year old lava flows –including the largest in the world- and visit the inside of a underground mine. Additionally, I have traveled to Arizona to see the amazing geology there but also to work on my modern GPS mapping skills, to the Grand Canyon, and to Colorado to see the Rocky Mountains and Rio Grande all magnificent geologic monuments.

After I graduate in the spring I plan to continue on to graduate school in the fall of 2017. I am undecided as far as where to attend, but I am looking to get a masters degree in either environmental geology/consulting or geologic engineering. This internship is a great opportunity and I am more than excited to be a part of the SWCD team. It will be a large help towards my future and will give me extremely valuable experience!



Internship Opportunities:

The Rock Island County Soil & Water Conservation District is excited to present the following internship opportunities for Spring and Summer 2017:

- Outreach, Education, and Media Intern**
- Copperas Creek Watershed Technician**
- Conservation Mapping & Field Assistant**

Please contact the RISWCD for more details:

(309) 764-1486 Ext. 3 or riswcd@rockislandswcd.org

Is Roadside and Cosmetic Mowing A Necessity?

Written By: Scott James, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist in Partnership with USDA NRCS and IDNR

Although many tractors are observed mowing field edges, roadsides and odd areas this time of year, a surprising number of farmers and road managers are realizing it's not necessary. While controlling weeds in cropland fields and mowing hay are critical to a farm operation, most of the mowing being done is purely for cosmetic reasons. Roadside mowing is often about visual safety, but is also done for cosmetic reasons. Mowing impacts small wildlife, monarchs, and bees by jeopardizing their habitat. Additionally from an economic viewpoint, it's a fuel and labor expense. In many situations, mowing has more negative impacts than positive impacts.

One reason roadsides, field edges, and odd areas are mowed is to control noxious weeds. Situational mowing to control noxious weeds can be effective however the predominant response is a worse stand due to regrowth and/or dispersal of seed. Herbicide is typically a far better method for controlling those weeds and many sources state spraying costs roughly half what mowing does and is more effective. As long as weeds aren't noxious or invasive, they can also serve as a food source for many wildlife species.

There are economic benefits of reduced mowing, e.g. using less fuel and encouraging pollination which fosters healthier crops, more honey, etc. Less mowing means less expenses for the farmer, landowner, or roadside manager. The University of Illinois estimates that it costs a landowner \$12 per acre to mow. That may seem small or incidental, but when acres add up, when time is money, and when mowing's an expense that can be completely eliminated, the figures are more impressionable. The Illinois DOT once stated that it cost them \$30 per acre to mow roadsides!

Alternative solutions are mowing only when necessary, spraying, or mowing a very narrow strip along the edge. If mowing is necessary, it should be performed outside of the wildlife primary nesting season, Apr. 15 -Aug 1. The Illinois DNR offers a Roadsides for Wildlife Program that mandates no roadside mowing during the nesting season and encourages native plantings along the road. Native plantings, i.e. wildflowers that require less maintenance is a beautiful alternative to grasses and work well along roadsides or farm field edges.



Mowed roadside, courtesy of Minnesota DNR



Roadside prairie, courtesy of Illinois DOT



RISWCD 2016 Fall Fish Sale — Proceeds Support Conservation!

Triploid Orders Due: October 14th Payment and Orders Due: October 21st

Pick Up: Monday October 31st 7:00 AM* at SWCD Office, 3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL

Sale Questions: 309-764-1486 x3 * Stocking Questions: IDNR fisheries biologist
 Visit rockislandswcd.org for additional information and order forms.

Make checks payable to: RISWCD, 3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL 61264

Species	Size	Price	Qty.	Subtotal
Channel Catfish	4-6 in	\$0.80 each		\$
	6-8 in	\$1.05 each		\$
	* 8-10 in	\$1.25 each		\$
Albino Catfish	4-6 in	\$1.40 each		\$
Hybrid Sunfish	1-2 in	\$65.00 Bag of 250		\$
	3-5 in	\$0.95 each		\$
	5-7in	\$1.40 each		\$
Largemouth Bass	2-3 in	\$1.05 each		\$
	5-8 in	\$3.00 each		\$
Bluegill	1-2 in	\$65.00 Bag of 250		\$
	3-5 in	\$0.95 each		\$
Redear Sunfish	1-2 in	\$65.00 Bag of 250		\$
± Black Crappie	2-3 in	\$55.00 Bag of 100		\$
Fathead Minnows	Avg. 100 per lb.	\$13.50 per lb.		\$
**Triploid Grass Carp Rec: 6 /vegetated acre	8-11 in	\$13.50		\$
± Black crappie only recommended in ponds over 5 acres.			Total	\$

Remind me prior to pick up by:

Phone Email Both

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Email Preferences:

- All SWCD/NRCS Emails
- Newsletter
- NRCS News
- Ponds and Fish Sale
- Forestry and Tree Sale
- Wildlife
- Backyard & Urban Conservation
- Livestock and Forage
- Agricultural Conservation
- Conservation Education
- Copperas Creek Watershed

**REQUIRED FOR TRIPLOID GRASS CARP ORDERS

County	Township, Range, Section If unknown, Property Address	Pond Size (Acres)	Water Name	# of Fish
Ex: Rock Island	T16N R2W S16	2ac	Pond	4

Getting Your Fish Home Safely— Save This Portion of Form

- All fish, except 8-10" catfish, will be bagged at the time of pick up and sealed in oxygenated water.
- Bring containers such as 5 gallon buckets, coolers, or totes, to secure the bags while travelling.
- 8-10" catfish: Due to their spines, you must provide a container with pond water. Pond water should be collected on pick-up day to ensure sufficient oxygen.
- Bagged fish should be kept out of sunlight on your trip home.
- After pickup, go directly to your pond and put your fish in.

Pick Up is at 7:00 AM* at SWCD Office, 3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL 61264

***This is NOT an All-Day Event; Please be On Time.**

What Are Triploid Grass Carp & What Can They Help To Control?

Background:

Control of nuisance aquatic vegetation has historically presented problems for many lake and pond owners in Illinois. Typically, aquatic herbicides were used to provide control usually at considerable expense to the owners.

In 1979, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources funded the Illinois Natural History Survey to investigate the use of biological methods (grass carp, reproductively sterile grass carp, and hybrid grass carp) for control of nuisance aquatic vegetation. Based on the results of the research, the reproductively sterile (triploid) grass carp was selected as the biological method which will control some types of aquatic vegetation effectively in the southern two-thirds of the state.

The reproductively sterile (triploid) grass carp is nearly identical to the pure (diploid) grass carp in its physical characteristics as well as in its ability to consume aquatic vegetation. The main difference between the two grass carp is that the triploid form of the grass carp is sterile and cannot reproduce in nature. Unrestricted reproduction of the grass carp (diploid) and the potential for destruction of desirable aquatic vegetation in the bottomland lakes and river backwater areas was the main concern of the Department of Natural Resources in the early 1970's when the grass carp became illegal in Illinois.

(Source: "Aquatic Plants Their Identification And Management" Illinois Department of Natural Resources)



Aquatic Species Controlled By Triploid Grass Carp:

- Bladderwort
- Chara
- Coontail (*Ceratophyllum*)
- Elodea
- Fanwort
- Hydrilla
- Naiads
- Parrot Feather (*Myriophyllum*)
- Pond Weeds (*Potamogeton*)
- Spikerush
- Widgongrass



Bladderwort



Hydrilla



American Pondweed

(Source: "Aquatic Plants Their Identification And Management" Illinois Department of Natural Resources)



RISWCD 2016 Fall Tree Sale— Proceeds Support Conservation!

Payment and Orders Due: October 6th 2016 – Early Orders Recommended

Pick-Up October 20th-21st at SWCD Office, 3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL 61264.

***Pick Up: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

Sale Questions: 309-764-1486 x3 * Visit rockislandswcd.org for planting tips, questions, and order forms.

Make check payable to: RISWCD, 3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL 61264

Special Orders

A wide selection of species and sizes are available from our nursery vendors. If you are interested in a special order, the sooner you call, the sooner we can reserve with the vendor. Call 309-764-1486 x3 for more information.

Species Spotlight

Wild Plum (*Prunus americana*)

Wildlife: Wild plums are eaten by turkey, black bear, and wolves (Thwaites 1904). Foxes, black-headed grosbeaks, and ring-tailed cats utilize wild plums (Martin et al. 1951). Plum thickets often furnish valuable protective shelter.

Conservation: Wild plums have been recommended for their drought resistance and widely planted in shelter belts in the western Great Plains (Jerry Kaiser pers. comm. 1999). They also make good wildlife habitat and are effective in erosion control because their roots hold the soil. Their thorny branches catch tumbleweeds, leaves, and other plant materials, which, when windstorms occur during times of drought, provide an effective means of slowing wind erosion of soil.

Source: USDA/NRCS Plant Guide

Remind me prior to pick up by:

Phone Email Both

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

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- Newsletter
- NRCS News
- Ponds and Fish Sale
- Forestry and Tree Sale
- Wildlife
- Agricultural Conservation
- Backyard & Urban Conservation
- Livestock and Forage
- Conservation Education
- Copperas Creek Watershed

*Weather and planting conditions beyond the control of the nursery may affect the tree pick-up date. We cannot be responsible for trees after the specified pick-up date. Please make arrangements to pick them up on time.

Plants are for conservation purposes only, and shall not be used as ornamentals or for landscaping. We make every effort to provide excellent quality stock, but we cannot provide any guarantees of survival or growth.

RISWCD 2016 Fall Tree Sale – Proceeds Support Conservation!

3 Gallon Potted RPM (Root Production Method) Trees - Conservation Grade			
SPECIES	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
Bur Oak	\$17.50		\$
Red Oak	\$17.50		\$
Swamp White Oak	\$17.50		\$
White Oak	\$17.50		\$
“Bucks Unlimited Oak”	\$22.00		\$
Shagbark Hickory	\$18.50		\$
American Hazelnut	\$15.00		\$
American Chestnut	\$18.50		\$
Pecan	\$17.50		\$
Wild Plum	\$15.00		\$
Black Chokeberry	\$15.00		\$
Eastern Redbud	\$17.50		\$
Flowering Dogwood	\$18.50		\$
Norway Spruce	\$18.50		\$
Eastern White Pine	\$18.50		\$
Subtotal			\$

Accessories			
SPECIES	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
Tree Wrap 2'	\$2.50		\$
Tree Tube 3' with Stake	\$5		\$
Tree Tube 4' with Stake	\$7.50		\$
Tree Tube 5' with Stake	\$8.50		\$
Subtotal:			\$
Totals			
3 Gal. Potted RPM Subtotal			\$
Accessories Subtotal			\$
Grand Total:			\$

Fall Planting

Fall planting, ideally between October 20th and December 10th is recommended for RPM trees. Fall's cooler air temperatures, warm soil, and plentiful rain create optimum conditions for developing strong root systems.

Dig a hole twice as wide and slightly shallower than the root ball. Remove the container; gently separate roots and guide them outward. Cut very long roots or ones that will not straighten. Position the tree straight and refill the hole around the roots



RISWCD NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

In January 2015, Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District (RISWCD) began a newsletter mailing program. RISWCD is seeking sixteen sponsors to help offset the printing and mailing costs. A newsletter sponsorship costs \$200 per year, and you will be recognized in three or more newsletters for your support. In appreciation of your sponsorship, RISWCD will feature Your Recognition Stamp (3.875" by 1.25") on this page. Design your own stamp or work with RISWCD to design. Sketch your design in the blank stamps at the bottom. Double size spots are also available.

The newsletter is mailed to 1800+ recipients. Mailings are timed to promote RISWCD events, sales, and conservation news. Sponsors will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Mail a \$200 check to RISWCD to sponsor 2016 newsletters and beyond. Please consider sponsoring this important resource for conservation in Rock Island County!



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Quad City Conservation Alliance

2621 4th Avenue
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A Non-Profit Coalition of Conservation Clubs



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Est. 2012

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Email: mholgersson@vildmarkinc.com
Located in Rock Island, Illinois

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Need more room? Try a double-size stamp to the
right. Mail it to RISWCD and we will format it in
the computer and work with you to make adjustments.*

Thank you to our RISWCD newsletter sponsors. Their support makes this publication possible.



Rock Island County
Soil and Water Conservation District
3020 1st Ave E
Milan, IL 61264

Summer 2016 Newsletter

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Rock Island County SWCD & NRCS
3020 1st Ave E, Milan, IL 61264 • 309-764-1486
www.RockIslandSWCD.org

Monday - Friday • 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Closed Federal Holidays

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Gary Blanchard: Chairman
Bill Parchert: Vice-Chairman
Jim Mueller: Treasurer
Twila Cederstrom: Director
Brian Parkinson: Director
Nathan Oak: Associate Director

Staff:

Rich Stewart..... Resource Conservationist, SWCD
Sarah Fitzgerald..... Administrative Coordinator, SWCD
Joe Gates District Conservationist, NRCS
Wyatt Junis..... Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Ed Griffin Soil Conservation Technician, NRCS

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250- 9410 or call (866) 632-9992. Rock Island County SWCD operates in accordance with the USDA policy.

FOR SALE

Flags (multiple colors): \$.15 each or 100 for \$12

Native Grass Seed and Pollinator Mixes

Call office at 309-764-1486, Ext. 3 for pricing.

5' Tile Probes: \$30

FOR RENT

7' Great Plains No-Till Drill: \$100/day & \$12/acre

Pheasants Forever member rate: \$100/day & \$10/acre

6.5' Tye No-Till Drill: \$100/day & \$12/acre

Boxes: Grain, Small Seed, Native Grass

ATV Broadcast Seeder \$25/day

Tree Planter (Seedlings): \$50/day

Donations

Cash or property donations to RISWCD are tax deductible under IRS Code 170(c)(1).