



Williams Soil & Water Conservation District



Mission Statement

Provide education and services that will improve the stewardship and management of our soil, air, water, plant and animal resources.

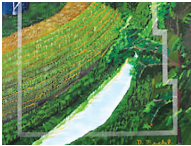
About us

The Williams Soil and Water Conservation District was established in 1947 and is locally led by a volunteer, elected 5-member board who serve three-year terms. The 2020 Board of Supervisor members are Bob Short, Kevin Miller, Jon Hake, Otis Sloan, and Adam Perry. The overall mission of Williams SWCD is to promote the use of local natural resources for economic purposes, including agriculture, in a sustainable manner that also protects the environment. The Williams SWCD helps residents, landowners, businesses, and communities use, conserve, and protect the county's soil, water, and land resources. The staff includes Chris Dancer, District Administrator; Bert Brown, District Technician; Anne Marie Michaels, Outreach & Education Coordinator; Manuel Lay, District Technician; Mary McCann, Administrative Assistant; and Reba Wicker, WLEB Nutrient Management Technician.

The Williams SWCD each year assists landowners in placing conservation practices onto their land, renting tillage equipment, educating adults and children by holding workshops and teaching in the schools, holding the annual tree seedling and fish sale, hosting a pond clinic and annual Field Technology Day, helping with the Maple Syrup Festival, along with many other services. Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. except for the following: September and October, which will be September 9 and October 13. If you would like to attend a meeting, please call ahead to be placed on the agenda.

Vision Statement

A leader in the community providing assistance to improve our land and water resources through educational programs, technical services and innovative practices to promote harmony among a diverse population.



CALENDAR

May 11 — Williams SWCD Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.

June 8 — Williams SWCD Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.

2019 Small Grain Program a Success

In 2019 the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) rolled out a new program through 20 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) located in the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB). This program, 'The Working Lands Small Grain Program' was a huge success in Williams County in 2019. In total there were 35 completed contracts amounting to 3,408 acres enrolled which paid over \$265,000 to producers of Williams County for their efforts and participation.

The ODA had set up the program with five goals to aid in helping to clean the waters of the Western Lake Erie Basin. The five goals are:

- To encourage agricultural producers to establish small grains in a crop rotation that can be used for manure application following harvest
- To expand the application window for livestock producers to allow manure and nutrients to be applied
- To expand acres of manure utilization
- To promote cover crop plantings following small grains and
- To minimize the risk of manure and nutrient runoff

The program applied to cropland where a small grain is added into the crop rotation. The eligible acres must then be used for manure application following harvest of the small grain, and a cover crop must be established following the application of manure.



The Williams Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is very proud to announce that Allen and Shelly Dean along with Tony and Carol Dean, Dean Farms, were recently presented with the National Association of Conservation Districts' (NACD) Friend of Conservation Award at the NACD Annual Meeting in Las Vegas. The Friend of Conservation Award recognizes an individual, business, organization, agency, etc. outside the association for outstanding contributions to the conservation of our nation's natural resources. Allen and Tony, Dean Farms, were chosen from applications across the entire country. They were nominated by the Williams SWCD and were chosen in part for all they do to educate and promote conservation practices to improve soil health and water quality to everyone they meet. Allen has a positive influence with farmers and professionals not only in our local community but across the country. They continually search for and build some of the latest innovations in conservation while educating, promoting and researching conservation best management practices, including as Allen states, 'cover crops, which will stop soil erosion, enhance soil health and improve water quality'. Allen and Tony are a friend to the entire conservation community.

Dean Farms

Allen is a first-generation farmer and he and Tony farm just under 1900 acres of no-till soybeans and wheat along with some barley and oats.

In the early 80s he started experimenting with cover crops. During this time, he was also learning that conservation practices such as no-till, cover crops, filter strips, and waterways were very important



in improving soil health and water quality. By 1984, Allen received the Williams Soil & Water Conservation District's Outstanding Cooperator of the Year award. After 40+ years, Allen continues to no-till and experiment with different blends of cover crops (now using an 18-way blend) to find those which will stop erosion, enhance soil health, and improve water quality.

- 2011 - Dean Farms was a stop on the National Conservation Technology Information Center's (CTIC) 'Conservation in Action Tour' to share his knowledge of the benefits of cover crops and how they improve soil and water quality.
- 2013 - Dean Farms Cover Crop Sales and Service was formed to market seed; one year later, Dean and his brother, Tony, designed and fabricated the farm's first cover crop specialty interseeder.
- 2016 - began hosting an annual cover crop field day at his farm so everyone can learn about the importance of covering the ground and the benefits of conservation in farming.

- 2017 - a new cover crop seed facility was constructed on the farm to clean and blend seed to a farmer's specifications from across the country.
 - Currently, between 10,000 and 12,000 acres are custom-planted annually on farms in three 3 states.
 - 2019 - Allen received the "Ohio Farmer" magazine "Ohio Master Farmer 2019" award.
- Although Allen loves farming and finding innovative ways to improve soil health, his passion is to teach everyone around him about conservation and improving the soil, which includes teaching our next generation of high school 'Future Farmers of America'.
- Allen has always worked with and supported the Williams SWCD. He continues to provide assistance, offers his farm for tours, and support our programs.
- As stated on their webpage, "Cover Crop Technology....feeding the world through healthier soil."

New to No-till? Vertical tillage? Let us give you a hand this spring!

Ready or not, it is crop planting time, or will be soon, and the time is now to be finalizing those spring cropping plans. As always, all of us at the Williams Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would like you to take a closer look at the benefits of conservation tillage options and take a close look at no-till planting for the 2020 planting season.

As many of you and your neighbors have proven, no-till planting is a highly successful practice in our area. If you haven't already tried no-till planting your soybean acres, it's time to try some no-till acres on your farm. Save time and fuel by using modern no-till equipment at a reasonable cost.

This spring the Williams SWCD has



available for rent two well equipped 15-foot John Deere no-till drills. These drills are ready for no-till planting of soybeans, hay crops, and/or pastures for this spring and summer. If you aren't already no-tilling, there is no time like the present to get started. Try a few acres this year and see what all the fuss is about.

We also have a Salford vertical tillage tool available for use on your farm

this spring. The Williams SWCD board purchased this equipment to assist local farm operators by offering another cover crop planting option, but THIS SPRING, the Salford is available for rent to do vertical tillage on your acres. With this tillage tool, we can incorporate commercially applied fertilizers, or we can do vertical tillage simply to help break up heavy crop residues from last year's crops prior to this year's crop plantings.

Give Bert Brown a call at 419-636-9395 Ext 3 to schedule your acres. Bert can answer your questions about our equipment rentals and help get you signed up, work out the scheduling, and get you started soon!

Manure and Fertilizer Application Regulations

As spring season begins, a reminder to producers and nutrient applicators of the laws and regulations when applying manure and fertilizer in Williams County, which is part of the Western Lake Erie Basin.

After being signed into law in July 2015, Ohio Senate Bill 1 prohibits applications of manure

- to frozen or snow-covered ground
 - when the top 2 inches of soil is saturated from precipitation
 - if the forecast calls for a 50% chance of precipitation exceeding 1/2 inch in the following 24-hour period
- After being signed into law in July 2015, Ohio Senate Bill 1 prohibits applications of fertilizer
- to frozen or snow-covered ground
 - when the top 2 inches of soil is saturated from precipitation
 - if the forecast calls for a 50% chance of precipitation exceeding 1 inch in the following 12-hour period

Applicators are responsible for checking and keeping records of rain forecasts when applying. A good source of printable local forecast can be obtained from NOAA through the website <http://weather.gov>.

Restrictions do not apply if the application is injected into the ground, is incorporated within 24 hours of surface application, or is applied to a successful growing crop.

An important thing to remember is that any discharge or pollution into the 'Waters of the State' will be in violation of the Agricultural Pollution Abatement Program.

Taking precautions, such as utilizing setbacks and keeping records of applications could prevent accidents from happening. For information regarding setbacks please visit the Williams Soil and Water Conservation District Office (SWCD) or go to Table 4 at https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/OH/11-01-2012_Ohio_590_Standard.pdf

Record keeping is an extremely important part of being a quality farm manager. Keeping records of forecasts, manure analyses, soil tests and application times, locations, and rates are especially useful if a discharge of nutrients is to occur. A reviewable record also allows producers to evaluate a system and make cost-effective improvements over time.

Contact the Williams SWCD with any questions or concerns regarding the application of manure or other nutrients at (419) 636-9395 Ext 3 and ask for Reba Wicker or Manuel Lay.

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