

Loam on the Range

ACSP Highlight | Cover Crop

The North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program (ACSP) helps address nonpoint source pollution by providing technical and financial resources through a voluntary, incentive-based program designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on agricultural lands directly involved with agriculture production.

A crop of grasses, legumes, small grain, or brassicas grown primarily for seasonal vegetative protection, erosion control and soil improvement. Cover crops are typically grown for one year or less.

The practice can be implemented to support one or more of the following purposes:

- Reduce erosion from wind and water.
- Reduce water quality degradation by utilizing excessive soil nutrients.
- Improve infiltration of rainfall
- Maintain or increase soil health and organic matter content.
- Suppress excessive weed pressures and break pest cycles.
- Improve soil moisture use efficiency.

Who is Eligible?

If you are a landowner or renter of an existing agricultural operation that has been operating for more than three years, you are eligible to participate in the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program.

How does ACSP work?

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District is accepting applications! Applications are ranked based on resource concerns identified in Chatham County. If you would like more information or wish to apply, please contact Joe Trimnal at (919) 545-8353.

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Cover Crop BMP Implemented in Chatham County by the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District



“Take care of the land and the land will take care of you....”

-Hugh Hammond Bennett

Cool Season Grasses in Your Pastures

by Kristina Britt, Extension Agent, Agriculture—Livestock & Forages, Chatham Co. Center

As we start into the fall season, it's a perfect time to plant cool season grasses in your pastures. If you're interested in planting this fall, check out the NC State Planting Guide for Forage Crops as you make decisions: https://forages.wordpress.ncsu.edu/files/2020/09/AG_olina_090220.pdf

After you have selected the forage or forages you want to plant, it's time to put it in the ground! If you don't have a drill, Chatham Soil and Water has two no-till drills available for rental. Learn more about the drills and how to rent them: <https://www.chathamcountync.gov/government/departments-programs-i-z/soil-water-conservation-district/our-services/no-till-drill-rental>

As you take assessment of your pastures this fall, make sure you take time to identify any weeds present in the pastures. Learn more about weeds and identification: <https://cropsoil.cals.ncsu.edu/Wordpress/forages/assets/ag764w2.pdf>



Huge thank you to Kristina Britt for sharing her knowledge and resources!

If you are interested in renting one of the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District's no-till drills please reach out to Joe Trimnal at (919) 545-8353 or joe.trimnal@chathamcountync.gov

VAD Benefits

Landowners belonging to a VAD will not be required to connect to County water or sewer. Any assessment fees will be held in abeyance, without interest, unless and until the property is connected.

No governmental agency may condemn any interest in participating farmland without requesting a public hearing to ensure full consideration of the impact of that action upon agricultural, forestland or horticultural land.

Farms enrolled in the VAD may benefit from higher ranking in Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District cost share programs.

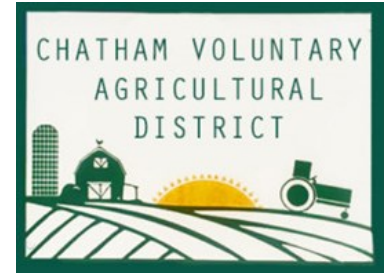
Signs identifying the VAD may be provided to qualifying farmland and placed on the property at the discretion of the owners (not within road right-of-ways).

VAD parcels and all property within one-half mile will be mapped by Chatham County GIS. This will inform the public and purchasers of real property that agricultural, horticultural, and forestry activities may occur in these areas. A notice will be posted at the Planning Department, Tax Office, and Agricultural Agencies in the county.

Voluntary Agricultural District Program

The purpose of the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Program is to promote agricultural values and the general welfare of Chatham County by increasing the identity of, and pride in, the agricultural community and its way of life. To encourage the economic and financial health of agriculture, horticulture, and forestry through protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts on properly managed farms.

Qualifying farmland must be a bona fide farm, located in an unincorporated area, agree not to develop or use parcels for purposes outside of farm-use, and manage for highly erodible land (HEL) if necessary.



The Voluntary Agricultural District Program is a voluntary program. The term of the agreement is ten years, however, a landowner may revoke this agreement at any time by notifying the Agriculture Advisory Board in writing.

Residents interested in finding out more can visit our website or reach out to us by phone at (919) 542-8228. Residents may also apply online: <https://chathamnc.seamlessdocs.com/f/ApplicationVoluntaryAgriculturalDistrictProgram>



Education News

Educational Outreach

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District provides soil, water, and natural resource conservation related educational outreach and programming for local schools, groups, and events which are geared towards all ages.

During fiscal year 2022, Chatham Soil & Water provided programming to over 270 students and almost 30 teachers. Through the Division of Soil & Water Conservation, we helped provide training for almost 70 District and Division staff members from across North Carolina, most from the Piedmont area.



Staff attend stock trail training event.

Highlights of our educational outreach so far in fiscal year 2023 include teaching lessons about soil macroinvertebrates at the Chatham County Parks and Recreation summer camp and a lesson at the Chatham Community Library on watersheds and pollution. Education Coordinator Brandy Oldham will be in attendance at the Perry Harrison Fall Festival and Haw River Assembly's Learning Celebration as well.

If you are interested in educational programming through the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District for your school, event, or group, please reach out to Brandy Oldham by phone (919) 545-8440 or email brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov.



Brandy Oldham speaks to a group of children about soil macroinvertebrates.

Education News (Continued)

Resource Conservation Workshop

The Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW) is a weeklong workshop for high school students hosted by the Association, the Division, NCSU and the Soil & Water Conservation Society – Hugh Hammond Bennett Chapter.

Two Chatham County high school students attended the RCW this year. Both students had a wonderful time and felt the experience benefited them greatly! One attendee even went on to take 4th place during testing. This attendee was also invited to a horticulture workshop following the RCW.

If you would like to apply for next year's RCW please reach out to Brandy Oldham at (919) 545-8440 or brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov

Chatham Community Library & ecoEXPLORE Partnership

The Chatham Community Library is now designated as an ecoEXPLORE Loan Spot, a location where ecoEXPLORE participants can use their library card to check out equipment to aid in their observation of the natural world. Starting September 1, 2022, any Chatham County Public Libraries card holder will be able to check out a Discovery Pack from the Chatham Community Library. Discovery Packs have been provided by ecoEXPLORE, and contain kid-friendly binoculars, bug net, a birdcall, a trail camera and more. Kid scientists are encouraged to record their natural discoveries and submit them via the ecoEXPLORE website.



Families with children in grades K-8 are invited to join the library for an Intro to ecoEXPLORE on Saturday, November 12, at 2:00 p.m. in the Chatham Community Library Holmes Meeting Room. Program facilitators will give an overview of what it means to be a citizen scientist, how to participate in ecoEXPLORE, and then head outside to practice making a scientific observation.

For more information, contact Youth Services at youth.services@chathamlibraries.org.

Education News (Continued)



Small Business Center

From the CCCC Small Business Center: Join us for our upcoming 6-part Agriveteran Program designed for veterans and military spouses who want to transition into farming, ranching, or agriculture. In this free program, we'll help you cultivate a strategic self-designed action plan to validate your goals, build your farm, and engage with a community of entrepreneurs just like you.

- Week 1 - Wednesday, Sept 21st - Legal Structures and Business Framework
- Week 2 - Wednesday, Sept 28th - Site Analysis & Exploring Your Potential
- Week 3 - Wednesday, Oct 5th - Understanding Your Market and Customers
- Week 4 - Wednesday, Oct 12th - Financial Planning for Your Business
- Week 5 - Wednesday, Oct 19th - Maximizing Your Profits and "Belt-Tightening"
- Week 6 - Wednesday, Oct 26th - Business Operations and HR

Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: **Free** Online/Webinar

Register online: <https://www.ncsbc.net/reg.aspx?mode=event&event=110420063>



County News

Chatham County to Participate in Solarize the Triangle

Solarize the Triangle is a unique campaign which allows residents and businesses to save on the cost of a system through combined purchasing with others in the Triangle plus the availability of a federal tax credit.

“Chatham County is proud to participate in the Solarize the Triangle Campaign,” said Chatham County Manager Dan LaMontagne. “By making it easier for our homeowners and businesses to go solar, the campaign supports our goal of promoting clean, renewable energy, making Chatham County one of the coolest places to live in North Carolina and in America.”

Solarize the Triangle is a community-based group-purchasing program for solar energy, battery storage and other clean-energy technologies. The initiative is designed to serve residents, businesses, and nonprofits to become more resilient, reduce energy expenses, and save on the cost of renewable -energy systems by obtaining volume discounts on materials and installation services.



CITY OF RALEIGH	TOWN OF MORRISVILLE	DURHAM COUNTY	TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH
TOWN OF APEX	CITY OF DURHAM	ORANGE COUNTY	TOWN OF CARY
CHATHAM COUNTY	TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL	TOWN OF CARRBORO	

Solarize campaigns are driven by community group purchasing. Based on a tiered “bulk” purchasing concept, the more local residents and business owners who contract for their solar installations through the program, the more savings accrue to all participating property owners.

In addition to participating in Solarize the Triangle, Chatham County has received a designation as a SolSmart Gold community. The SolSmart program recognizes local governments that are friendly to solar development and have made focused efforts to simplify the process of installing solar panels. The Gold level designation is the highest the program offers. Both participating in the Solarize the Triangle program and achieving the SolSmart Gold designation contribute to Chatham County’s Comprehensive Plan goal of becoming a carbon neutral county by reducing the amount of energy generated using fossil fuels.

All solar and battery installations are expected to be completed by November 30, 2023. Interested residents may go to solarizethetriangle.com to learn more about the program and sign up in advance of the launch to be first in line for a free evaluation.

District News

Mike Sturdivant Nominated for Reappointment to Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Mike Sturdivant has been nominated to be reappointed to the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Mr. Sturdivant was previously nominated and appointed to fill the partial term left by the passing of long term Supervisor Mr. Edward McLaurin. During his first partial term with the Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors, Mr. Sturdivant gave invaluable insight on numerous projects and cost share applications that came before the Board for approval. Mr. Sturdivant's term will begin this December 2022 and he will be up for reappointment again in 2026. He will take his oath of office prior to the Board of Supervisors regular meeting occurring in December 2022.

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District Staff Attend Conservation Employee Training (CET) in Cherokee, NC

Staff with the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District attended the 2022 Conservation Employee Training (CET) held in beautiful Cherokee, NC. Offerings included new employee training, educational workshops, a site visit to the Purchase Knob Educational Center, workshops on surveying, and a visit to Kituwah Farm. Kituwah, or Mother Town, is where three Cherokee tribes trace their origin. Archeologists date the history of this site back to 10,000 years ago. The Eastern Band of Cherokee purchased more than 300 acres in 1996 to bring the site back. The property continues to be farmed by indigenous people as their ancestors have since time immemorial.

This yearly training event allows staff from Soil & Water Conservation Districts across the state to gain further skills and knowledge related to our field allowing us to better assist residents across the state.



Cost Share Programs

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District is always accepting applications for our cost share programs. We can provide financial and technical assistance to Chatham County land users. Please contact us for more details at (919) 545-8353.

The **North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP)** is designed to address water quality issues on agricultural lands throughout the state. Common "Best Management Practices," or BMPs for short, include Livestock Exclusion Systems, Nutrient Management Practices, and Sediment Management.



The **Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)** is set up based on the same procedures and outlines of the ACSP and offers similar water quality improving practices, but on non-agricultural lands. Typical BMPs include: Backyard Rain Gardens, Riparian Buffer for nutrient reduction, and Critical Area Planting.

The **Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)** is designed to identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, availability and storage and in some cases help fund BMP to conserve and protect water resources. BMPs in this program include irrigation ponds and irrigation wells.



Chatham SWCD Mission

To ensure the wise use of our natural resources, soil, water, air, plants and animals by providing technical and educational services to land users.

Important Dates

November 11: Veteran's Day (Office Closed)

November 24-25: Thanksgiving Holiday (Office Closed)

December 23-27: Christmas Holiday (Office Closed)

January 2: New Year's Day Observed (Office Closed)

January 16: Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observed (Office Closed)

District Supervisors:

J. Lynn Mann, Chair
Johnny Glosson, Vice Chair
Rich Hayes, Secretary
Keith Stanley, Treasurer
Mike Sturdivant, Member

District Staff:

Susannah Goldston, District Director & Environmental Specialist
Joe Trimnal, Soil Conservation Specialist
Brandy Oldham, District Administrator & Education Coordinator

NRCS Staff:

JaBioas Glenn, NRCS Soil Conservationist
Diana R. Irizarry, NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our programs and services.

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

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Pittsboro, NC 27312

(919) 542-8240

Visit us on the web at
www.chathamcountync.gov/swcd

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

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