

AgWRAP Highlight | Water Supply Well

The Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) was authorized through Session Law 2011-145. The program is administered by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission through local soil and water conservation districts.

An agricultural well means constructing a drilled, driven or dug well to supply water from an underground source for irrigation including chemigation and fertigation, livestock and poultry, aquaculture, freeze protection, or on-farm processing.

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

- Identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, availability and storage
- Implement best management practices (BMPs) to conserve and protect water resources
- Increase water use efficiency
- Increase water storage and availability for agricultural purposes

Who is Eligible?

If you are a landowner or renter of an existing agricultural operation that has been operating for more than one year, you are eligible to participate. Cooperator must make less than \$250,000 or have 75% or more of their income supported through agricultural operations.

How does AgWRAP 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 by phone (919) 545-8353 or email joe.trimnal@chathamcountync.gov

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Agricultural well installation in progress.



Haybuster 77C No-till Seed Drill

“Out of the long list of nature’s gifts to man, none is perhaps so utterly essential to human life as soil.”

-Hugh Hammond Bennett

Soil Health from NRCS

Soil is not an inert growing medium – it is a living and life-giving natural resource. It is teeming with billions of bacteria, fungi, and other microbes that are the foundation of an elegant symbiotic ecosystem.

Soil health is defined as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife, and beautiful landscapes. Soil does all this by performing five essential functions:

- Regulating water – Soil helps control where rain, snowmelt, and irrigation water goes. Water flows over the land or into and through the soil.
- Sustaining plant and animal life – The diversity and productivity of living things depends on soil.
- Filtering and buffering potential pollutants – The minerals and microbes in soil are responsible for filtering, buffering, degrading, immobilizing, and detoxifying organic and inorganic materials, including industrial and municipal by-products and atmospheric deposits.
- Cycling nutrients – Carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, and many other nutrients are stored, transformed, and cycled in the soil.
- Providing physical stability and support – Soil structure provides a medium for plant roots. Soils also provide support for human structures and protection for archeological treasures.

Chatham Soil & Water has two no-till drills available for rental. 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.

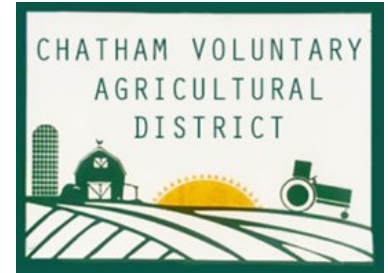
Signs identifying the VAD may be provided to qualifying farmland and placed on the property at the discretion of the owners (not within road right-of-ways).

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

2022 NC State Fair

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District was on site at the NC Division of Soil & Water Conservation's 2022 NC State Fair booth to provide fair goers with information about our mission and the services we provide to the public across NC through local soil & water conservation districts.

During our time at the fair booth, Brandy Oldham, Joe Trimnal, and Ja'Bioas Glenn (NRCS) spoke with numerous guests. We were able to talk with fair attendees about soil types, BMPs, and even the NC Environmental Education Certificate program.



Brandy Oldham, Joe Trimnal, and Ja'Bioas Glenn

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

If you are interested in technical assistance or cost share programs, please reach out to Joe Trimnal by phone (919) 545-8353 or email joe.trimnal@chathamcountync.gov.

2022 Haw River Assembly Learning Celebration



Brandy teaches 4th graders about aquatic macroinvertebrates.

Education Coordinator Brandy Oldham was one of many helpers who volunteered at the Annual Haw River Assembly Learning Celebration. Week one was held in Bynum and attended by almost 100 4th graders from Chatham and Durham Counties. Brandy led a hands on lesson about aquatic macroinvertebrates. Students were able to identify and explore why these critters are important and how they give an overall picture of water quality and health.

District News

County Establishes Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund

On October 17, 2022, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to establish the first-ever county-based trust fund aimed at supporting agricultural preservation and development within Chatham. This critical support will help fund a local working lands protection program as well as implementing an ag economic development program, based on recommendations from the Farmland Preservation Plan.

The Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund will be established and funded annually with Article 46 tax revenue. On November 18, 2019, the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution that, pending the passing of the Article 46 tax referendum, the resulting revenue was to be used for education, parks & recreation, agriculture preservation & enhancement, and affordable housing. Chatham County voters took to the polls in March 2020 to vote on this referendum. The referendum was approved, and the tax was levied in April of 2020.

The aim of this initiative is to protect Chatham County farms and working lands while also addressing the need to help farmers stay in business, both now and for future generations. Addressing ever-increasing developmental pressures and the need to preserve remaining farms and working lands in Chatham, this trust fund will help to combat the irreversible loss of Chatham's finite resource of productive, arable land. In a recent report, North Carolina ranked second in the nation in the potential agricultural land lost by the year 2040. In Chatham County alone, a moderate projection model states the estimated farmland loss in the next 20 years could total nearly 15,000 acres.



Agriculture, forestry, and agribusiness industries account for a significant portion of Chatham's total income each year, averaging \$125M in cash receipts and almost \$300M in additional gains from forestry sector output. Agriculture contributes to Chatham County's beloved green spaces and rural character, provides access to local food, and serves as a foundation for natural resource conservation.

Through the dedication and commitment of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, the Agriculture Advisory Board, the NC Cooperative Extension Chatham County Center staff and advisory council, and the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District staff and Board of Supervisors, the Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund should be in place by the end of the year 2022.

District News (Continued)

Farmland Preservation Plan Update

The University of Mount Olive, in coordination with the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District and the NC Cooperative Extension Chatham County Center, is working to update our 2009 Farmland Preservation Plan. This plan is expected to be finalized by end of year 2023. Throughout this process, University of Mount Olive staff will work alongside agriculture related entities and other interested parties to gather input and data.

A committee related to our farmland preservation planning is being established and a survey will be sent out to agricultural operators in January 2023. Please keep an eye out for more details.

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors and Staff Attend Area 3 Fall Meeting

Supervisors and staff with the Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District attended the Area 3 Fall Meeting on October 27th. This meeting was hosted by Randolph Soil & Water Conservation District at Rolling Acres Farm in Asheboro, NC. This beautiful working farm also hosts weddings and other events.

Chairman Lynn Mann was awarded for 20 years of service on the Chatham SWCD Board of Supervisors. Congratulations Lynn!

This meeting occurs twice each year, allowing for staff and Board Supervisors to discuss successes, struggles, and updates with partner agencies. Funding was raised for the Area 3 Education Committee through raffles. Resolutions approved at the Area 3 Meeting will be presented for further approvals at the NCASWCD Annual Meeting in January 2023. Next year's Area 3 Meetings will be hosted by the Rockingham Soil & Water Conservation District.



Chairman Lynn Mann with
NCASWCD President Chris
Hughes

Save the Date—Chatham County's Spring Ag Fest is Back!

Chatham County will host the third annual Spring Ag Fest at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center (CCACC) 1192 US 64 W Business, Pittsboro, NC on Saturday, March 25th, from 10 am to 2 pm. The 2023 Spring Ag Fest is a celebration of Chatham County's agriculture, forestry, and natural resources. If you would like to be considered to participate in this annual event as a vendor/exhibitor, please complete the exhibitor/vendor application by clicking the following link: <https://forms.gle/GqD7pDCRFsYr1rp2A>

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

December 23-27: Christmas Holiday (Office Closed)

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

January 8-11: NCASWCD Annual Meeting (Staff Out of Office)

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

March 25: Spring Ag Fest at the CCACC, Pittsboro, NC - 10am-2pm

April 7: Good Friday (Office Closed)

District Supervisors:

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

District Staff:

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

NRCS Staff:

Vacant, 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

1192 US 64 W Business Suite 200
Pittsboro, NC 27312

(919) 542-8240

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

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