

ALBANY COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWS

Email : susan.lewis@ny.nacdnet.net

Fall 2009

Albany County Soil & Water

Conservation District
PO Box 497
24 Martin Road
Voorheesville, NY 12186
518-765-7923

District Directors

John Santacrose
Chairman/At Large
Charles Houghtaling
Vice Chair/Co. Legislator
Edward Kleinke
Farm Bureau
Herbert Reilly
County Legislator
Howard Shafer
Grange Rep.

District Staff

Susan L. Lewis
Administrative Manager/
Technical Assistant
Joseph F. Slezak
Field Manager
Peter S. Bayzon
Natural Resource
Specialist

USDA,NRCS

Eric Swanson
Acting District
Conservationist
Jim Unser
Soil Conservationist

Office Hours
Monday-Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm

Board of Directors
Meetings
Second Tuesday Of Each
Month At 1:00pm

What Is Biochar? J. Slezak

Biochar is the by-product when biomass is burned or heated with a minimum or in absence of oxygen. In normal combustion biomass is oxidized into alkali ash, plus steam, CO₂ and other gases and vapors. When air is excluded, oxygen for combustion is stripped from the biomass, which is thus reduced to carbon-carbon bonds of charcoal. This process called pyrolysis, converts organic material into a long term carbon capture and storing form. Charcoal is a stable solid, rich in carbon content and can be used to lock carbon in the soil.

The production of biochar is modeled after a process begun thousands of years ago in the Amazon Basin, where islands of rich, fertile soils called terra preta ("dark earth") were created by indigenous people. These soils continue to "hold" carbon today and remain so nutrient rich that they have been dug up and sold as potting soil in Brazilian markets.

Application of biochar to soils is also being studied for its potential to increase water retention, build soil organic matter, enhance nutri-

ent cycling, lower bulk density, act as a liming agent, and reduce leaching of pesticides and nutrients to surface and ground water. The potential for use of this product in areas of Stormwater Management, Agricultural Sustainability and use by the average homeowner are both exciting and far reaching.

Come join us on September 15th 2009 as presenter David Yarrow provides an introduction of this carbon-negative strategy, and encourages folks to explore and experiment with primitive, small scale, backyard style equipment and test plots. His presentation will cover the history, overall theory of biochar, research status, backyard methods and equipment to make biochar, emerging industrial scale technology and steps to implement a broader carbon negative biochar strategy. Following his presentation David will illustrate a hands-on test burn and make a batch of biochar with a simple 2-barrel retort. Please call for details and to sign up for this free workshop.

Information adapted from:
<http://www.biochar-international.org>
<http://www.carbon-negative.us>

Think about it.....

According to the USDA, 25 years ago, teenagers drank almost twice as much milk as soda. Today they drink twice as much soda as milk.



**Items For Sale
At The District Office**

Bluebird House	\$11.25
Wren House	\$12.00
Bat House	\$25.00
Small (3lb) Feeder	\$15.00
Large (6lb) Feeder	\$20.00
Planting Gel (1 oz)	\$ 1.50
Marking Flags	\$8/100
Weed Mats	\$8/10
Fertilizer Tablets	\$10/100
Topographic Maps	\$6.48
Rain Gauge	\$5.00

All of the above items are subject to 8% sales tax.

Please call for availability of all products.

NY Standards and Specifications For Erosion and Sediment Control
\$50.00

Erosion & Sediment Control Field Notebook
\$27.00

Stormwater Management Design Manual
\$32.00

All prices are subject to change

Also available for review:

- **Albany County Soil Survey**
- **Flood Rate Maps**
- **NYS Freshwater Wetlands Maps**
- **Historic Aerial Photographs**
 - 1940 1" = 660'
 - 1952 1" = 660'
 - 1960 1" = 660'
 - 1969 1" = 1320'
 - 1977 1" = 1320'

Disposal of Household Prescriptions P. Bayzon

If you have unwanted, unused or expired medications and are looking for proper disposing techniques, flushing or pouring them down the drain is not one of them. A nationwide study conducted in 1999 and 2000 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) found low levels of drugs such as antibiotics, hormones, contraceptives and steroids in 80% of the rivers and streams tested. Pharmaceuticals enter our wastewater from a variety of sources including the flushing of unused medications. Most typical wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove pharmaceuticals. A number of studies have shown impacts on aquatic life. For example male fish have been feminized (produced eggs) when exposed to hormones (birth control pills). Drugs such as anti-depressants and beta-blockers reduce fertility or affect spawning in certain aquatic organisms.

To properly dispose of medications you should first contact your local pharmacy, most pharmacies will take unused prescriptions. If you are unable to return medications, look for local collection events; contact your recycling coordinator or municipality to find out if there is a household hazardous waste collection day coming up. The Department of Health must approve events that collect these substances. Always check with the event organizers to see if they are authorized by the department to accept such substances. If you are unable to find a collection event in your area disposing of the drugs in your household trash is the next best option. If you are disposing the prescriptions in the trash follow these steps to avoid accidental or intentional misuse:

- ◆ Treat medications (liquids and pills) by adding water, salt, ashes, dirt, cat litter, coffee grounds, or another undesirable substance.
- ◆ Hide and seal all medications in an outer container, such as a sealable bag, box or plastic tub to prevent discovery and removal from the trash.
- ◆ Dispose of drugs as close to your trash collection day as possible to avoid misuse.
- ◆ Do not conceal discarded drugs in food or food containers to prevent consumption by scavenging humans, pets or wildlife.

Medications self-administered by injection with a needle or "sharp" may be disposed of in the trash in a puncture proof container. The state strongly recommends that medications with attached needles be disposed of at hospital-based household sharps collection programs.

Information obtained from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation

Congratulations

The District would like to congratulate Susan Lewis on her 2009 Conservation District Employee Association Division VI Merit Award. She was nominated for this award for showing her dedication to conservation initiatives within Albany County and the Hudson Mohawk Region. Susan is deeply honored by this recognition and would like to congratulate all of the other award winners throughout the State. Keep up the good work!



Fall Fish Sale 2009

Albany County Soil & Water Conservation District

(518) 765-7923

ORDER DEADLINE : Friday, September 25th 2009



PICK-UP : Friday Morning, October 2nd 2009 : you will receive notification of the time

Quantity	Species	Price	Total Cost
	4-6" Largemouth Bass	\$2.30 each	\$
	3-5" Rainbow Trout	\$1.50 each	\$
	6-8" Channel Catfish	\$1.90 each	\$
	Fathead Minnow (forage fish)	\$.16 each	\$
Subtotal			
8% sales tax			
Total			

A Farm Fish Pond License is needed to stock your pond. Contact DEC at (607) 652-7366 or the District for an application.

NAME _____

ADDRESS (for reminders) _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

DAY PHONE # _____

HOME PHONE # _____

Please note : The District is not responsible for any mortality of stock which may occur during transport. Refunds will not be given for failure to pick up your fish on the designated pick up day. If you cannot pick up your fish, you must make arrangements to have them picked up. We have no way to hold your fish.

SEND PAYMENT AND ORDER FORM TO:

Albany County SWCD

PO Box 497

Voorheesville, NY 12186

NO ORDERS WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PAYMENT

There will be a \$30 charge for any returned checks.

BASS:

- Maximum pond temperature during July and August is 75-85 °F
- Pond depth should be 6-8 feet
- Stocking ratio : 75-100 per acre with forage fish at a rate of 750-1000 per acre

RAINBOW TROUT:

- Maximum pond temperature during July and August is 65-70 °F
- Pond depth should be at least 8-10 feet
- Stocking ratio : approximately 600 fish for a one acre pond
- **Trout should not be stocked with bass**

MINNOW:

- In newly built ponds it is best to stock with minnow prior to stocking fish
- Recommended stocking ratio 750-1000 per acre

CATFISH:

- Warm or cold water
- Temperature must exceed 70°F for 2-3 weeks in order to reproduce
- Will cohabitate with most other fish
- Depending on food availability will grow 5-10 pounds

Grass Carp are only available during our Spring Sale

Delivery : Orders will be available for pick-up at the District Office parking lot on Martin Road in Voorheesville, Friday Morning, October 2nd. During the week of September 21st you will receive confirmation of your order and an exact pick up time. **If you do not receive confirmation before September 29th, please call the District ASAP**

Containers - Please bring a clean container with your own pond water, not tap or well water. Line each container with an unscented, heavy duty garbage bag and fill 3/4 full with water.

For increased survival, fish can be bagged and oxygenated for an additional fee of \$1.00 per bag (to be collected at pickup site)

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NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DELMAR, NY
PERMIT NO. 6

Return Service Requested

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Mailing List Update

Help us to cut costs and reduce waste!

Would you like to receive our newsletter by email? Feel free to email the following information to susan.lewis@ny.nacdnet.net, call 765-7923, or mail this form to us.

Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Please Add Email Address

Please Remove Address

To receive tree & fish order forms ONLY

Visit us at : <http://www.albanycounty.com/swcd>