



CAPITAL RC&D e-NEWS

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Many of our readers are aware of how difficult it can be to systematically monitor the annual best management practices (BMP) implemented by farmers and landowners. One method Capital RC&D uses is conducting cover crop and high residue tillage transect surveys, which in partnership with PA-DEP have occurred each fall and spring since 2012. Capital RC&D survey teams are currently traveling this year's fall cover crop survey routes to collect data for the first step of the two part transect survey process. The second step will occur in the spring when teams return to the same locations for the tillage and crop residue survey. Data collected in the fall includes crop harvested, identification of visible cover crops, planting method, and an estimation of the height and cover crop density.

Fall survey challenges are different than those experienced in the spring, such as late crop emergence resulting from weather related planting delays. Fall cover crop survey teams may also have to work through delayed harvest or even, as seen here, snow.



What's Happening at Capital RC&D?



This fall, Capital RC&D successfully hosted two in-person pasture walks at farms participating in the *Promoting Grazing and Cover Cropping by Developing Better Practice Information, Outreach and Cost-sharing* project. With approximately 20 and 40 participants respectively, the events provided not only education, but during a year when in-person events are scarce, it provided an opportunity to network and learn about practices used by other farmers and graziers in the region.



Grazier, Josh Ramsburg, speaking to pasture walk participants at Sept. 29th event.

On September 29th, host Josh Ramsburg of Rock Creek Farms (Adams County), shared detail about his previous grazing experience using permanent pasture and how he incorporated cover crop grazing into his existing livestock and crop rotation. Capital RC&D grazing advisor, Titus

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Martin, provided insight into the infrastructure options available for Josh and why those chosen are best suited for his operation. Sjoerd Duiker, who leads the research component of Capital RC&D's project, was on-hand to discuss the goals of the research which are to determine if grazing cover crops results in positive impacts for soil quality, nutrient reduction and cost savings and to develop a guide to best practices for cover crop grazing.



Martin and Duiker also presented during the October 20th pasture walk hosted by Ben & Sharon Peckman of Slate Ridge Dairy Farm (Franklin County). Ben Peckman is an experienced no-till producer but is new to grazing. He shared his experiences in working with Titus Martin to learn best practices for laying out grazing paddocks, as well as managing new livestock challenges and providing details about the cover crop species used both for grazing and in crop fields. Videos about the initial experience of both farms are available on Capital RC&D's website.

The two additional farmers participating in the project, Matt Kehr (Adams County) and Alan Jaymes (Franklin County) made considerable progress this year as well. Both will provide information about their grazing infrastructure choices, issues faced, and overall outcomes at pasture walks to be held in May 2021. Visit Capitalrcd.org/grazingsupport to learn more about this project and grazing support available through Capital RC&D.



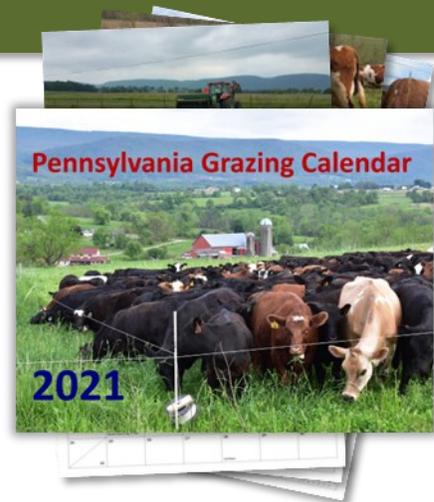
The Oct. 20th pasture walk with Ben Peckman (left) and Titus Martin (right) highlighted key issues for crop producers who are new to grazing.



Research lead, Sjoerd Duiker, Professor of Soil Management & Applied Soil Physics at Penn State.

PA GLC 2020 Grazing Calendars are Now Available

Capital RC&D partners Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the PA Grazing Lands Coalition (PAGLC), released their 2021 Pennsylvania Grazing Calendar in October. The calendar features beautiful photography of livestock and pastures, as well as tips and reminders for all graziers. Capital RC&D has print copies available and a PDF version is available at capitalrcd.org.



Capital RC&D FY2020 Council Meeting Schedule



Please Note: For the foreseeable future, Capital RC&D Council meetings will be conducted remotely.

January 14, 2020	9:00 AM
March 11, 2020	9:00 AM
May 13, 2020	9:00 AM
September 9, 2020	9:00 AM

For additional details about these and other Capital RC&D and partner events, including postponements or modifications resulting from the impact of the Covid-19 virus, visit the Events page at capitalrcd.org.

