



The signs of spring are everywhere. The earliest spring flowers are blooming, Conservation Districts are wrapping up tree sales and getting ready for BMP installations, farmers and graziers are anxiously waiting to enter fields and pasture, and Capital RC&D is preparing for the annual spring residue survey.

The spring survey will visit counties that were including in the autumn 2021 cover crop survey. During the fall survey, Capital RC&D's Cheryl Burns assisted with data collection in Centre County. While on the road, she interviewed survey technicians Joel Meyers and Barry Frantz for the Capital RC&D Conservation podcast. This episode features discussion



about no-till and cover crop practices, affects of the practices on survey results, and of course, highlights their respective careers in conservation. Listen to this episode of Capital RC&D's conservation podcast [here](#).



Technicians like Myers and Frantz rely their experience to ensure that the data is collected efficiently and accurately but an important key is returning to the same data point during both the fall and spring survey each year that the county is surveyed.

(Continued on page 3)

What's Happening at Capital RC&D?

2022 Capital RC&D Grazing Pasture Walks

April 23, 2022: Small Ruminant Grazing

Carlisle, PA (Cumberland County)

Capital RC&D Grazing Advisor, Ann Basehore Starbard, will lead a pasture walk at the farm of Eli & Mackenzie Strawser, Top Line Meats, in Carlisle, PA on April 23, 2022 from 10:00 AM—12:00 PM.

The pasture walk will highlight the Strawasers planned pasture expansion as well as ways to evaluate fields and pasture during the off-season.



Sheep grazing in the pasture at the farm home of Top Line Meats in Carlisle, PA.



Photo courtesy of Quodomine Veterinary Services

June 25, 2022: Equine Pasture Management Field Day

Bloomsburg, PA (Columbia County)

The Equine Pasture Management Field Day on June 25th from 9:30 AM—12:30 PM will help participants learn how to evaluate pastures and how to keep them healthy, the importance of rotational grazing and heavy use areas, and about the new protocol for parasite management.

Co-Host, Dr. Linda Quodomine, DVM, equine veterinarian and owner of Quodomine Veterinary Services will be joined

by Capital RC&D Grazing Advisor, Donna Foulk, and USDA-NRCS Grazing Specialist, Suzette Truax.

Additional information and registration details for both the April 23rd Small Ruminant Grazing Pasture Walk and the June 25th Equine Pasture Management Field Day are available on the [Capital RC&D Events Page](#).

Partner Spotlight

Capital RC&D works closely with the PA Grazing Lands Coalition (PA-GLC), providing administrative support and often co-promoting events and opportunities throughout Pennsylvania. PA-GLC membership includes graziers, conservation technicians, extension educators, and representatives from independent agricultural organizations. Their goal is to maintain and improve the management, productivity, and health of Pennsylvania's privately-owned grazing land through education, mentorship, and research.

In addition to a variety of grazing resources hosted on the paglc.org website, PA-GLC hosts the Graziers Grapevine podcast, an online chatroom where graziers can ask questions and discuss issues related to grazing and farm business, and sponsor a mini-grant program that supports groups and organizations hosting grazing events. The mini-grant program provides funding ranging from \$200-\$1000 for field days, pasture walks, trainings, conferences, or other similar activities focused on grazing or forage management. To learn more about the mini-grant program, visit <https://www.paglc.org/mini-grants>.



Listen to recent Graziers Grapevine episodes:

Episode 27: [Farming & Family, George Lake, Thistle Creek Farms](#)

Episode 28: [Farming & Family, Christy Lake, Thistle Creek Farms](#)

Episode 29: [Are You Kidding? Pt. 1 with Ann Baseshore Starbard](#)

Episode 30: [Are You Kidding? Pt. 2 with Ann Baseshore Starbard](#)

Episode 31: [Marketing Spotlight with Kayla Shughart, Center Cut Co.](#)

Note: Episodes 29 & 30 feature Capital RC&D Grazing Advisor, Ann Starbard. Episodes 29, 30, & 31 are guest hosted by Capital RC&D's Cheryl Burns.

(Continued from page 1)

This data is managed by dedicated GIS interns recruited from undergraduate and graduate GIS programs throughout Pennsylvania. Interns may also help process and analyze data after each survey, including visual representations demonstrating limited results.

The following charts (figure 1 and figure 2) represent data collected in counties within the Capital RC&D region during recent cover crop and residue surveys in 2017, 2019, and 2021. Lancaster and Lebanon were not surveyed during the 2020/2021 surveys.

During the fall cover crop survey, teams collect data about the type of crop harvested visible fall-planted crop, presence of manure, and land use, if no crop field is located on one side of the field. If a cover crop is observed, technicians also note the type, planting method, height, and approximate density of the cover. Figure 1 demonstrates the percentage of data points in each county with an observed fall planted crop.

The data collected during the spring tillage and residue survey focuses on the type of crop planted, cover crop kill method (if applicable) and an approximation of the soil coverage from crop

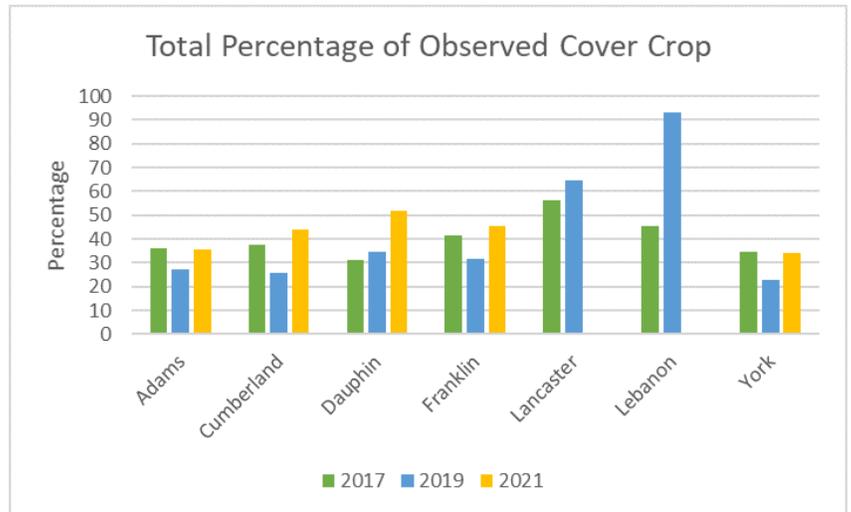


Figure 1. Total percentage of cover crops observed during the 2017, 2019, and 2021 cover crop surveys. Surveys were not conducted in Lancaster or Lebanon counties in 2021.

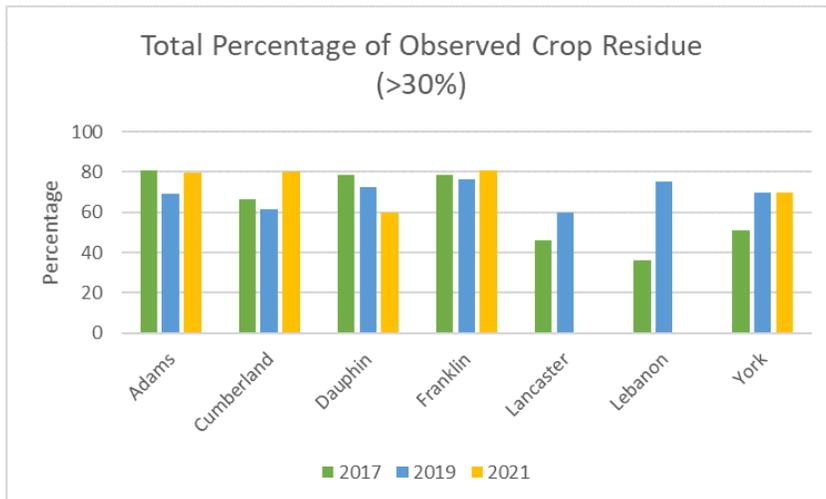


Figure 2. Total percentage of data points with observed crop residue greater than 30% during the 2017, 2019, and 2021 tillage and residue surveys. Surveys were not conducted in Lancaster or Lebanon counties in 2021.

residue. Figure 2 represents the percentage of data points with greater than 30% remaining crop residue. Tillage activity breaks down crop residue relatively quickly, so fields with greater than 30% residue were likely planted using no-till or conservation tillage techniques.

Cover crop and residue percentages vary between survey years for many reasons, including economics and weather. Residue percentage may also vary because of the number of farmers removing grain or corn residue for use as bedding material. Joel Myers and Barry

Frantz discuss some of these reasons and provide more detail in the most recent episode of the Capital RC&D Conservation Podcast. To learn more about the survey or listen to the podcast, visit capitalrcd.org.

Upcoming Dates



April 23, 2022	Small Ruminant Grazing Pasture Walk - Carlisle, PA
May 12, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting
May 13, 2022	South Mountain Partnership , Spring Partnership Meeting, Gifford
June 25, 2022	Equine Pasture Management Field Day - Bloomsburg, PA
July 13-14, 2022	North American Manure Expo - Chambersburg, PA
July 14, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting
September 8, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting
November 10, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting
September 9, 2021	Capital RC&D Council Meeting (TBD)
November 18, 2021	Capital RC&D Council Meeting (TBD)

For additional details about these and other Capital RC&D and partner events, visit the Events page at capitalrcd.org/events.

