

CAPITAL RC&D e-NEWS

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Capital RC&D grazing events and resources are designed to share information that is relevant to all graziers regardless of livestock species, but often use dairy and beef grazing farms for



Mackenzie & Eli Strawser joined Ann Starbard to host a small ruminant pasture walk in April 2022.

demonstration. As a result, these resources may omit important species-specific details for goat, sheep, multi-species graziers and horse owners. The number of horse owners is steady and the demand for the dairy, meat, and fiber products marketed by sheep and goat owners is increasing, so there is a need to provide targeted support for these graziers. In 2021, Capital RC&D expanded existing grazing advisor knowledge in dairy, beef, and sheep

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Partner Spotlight



After two years of only hosting virtual activities, county Envirothon competitions resumed in-person events in April and May 2022. All seven county conservation districts within the Capital RC&D region hosted local events for senior high school students, with several also providing programming for students in grades 3-8. All students are exposed to topics across several categories, including aquatics, forestry, wildlife, and soils & land use. A current environmental topic category is added for senior high school students.

The highest ranking senior high school team in each county Envirothon is eligible to compete in the Pennsylvania Envirothon. In 2022, 66 of 67 counties had teams compete and two teams within the Capital RC&D region ranked in the top ten. The York Home School Association team "Tsugoose

Canadensis" (York County) placed 6th and the Palmyra Area Senior High School "Envirovengers" (Lebanon County) placed 5th overall while also placing first in the Soils & Land Use category. Penncrest High School in Media, PA (Delaware County) placed 1st and ultimately went on to a 10th place finish at the 2022 National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon in Oxford, Ohio. Congratulations to all!



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management, to include advisors experienced with dairy goats and horses. This year these advisors helped develop pasture walks focused on important issues for non-cattle graziers.

Capital RC&D Grazing Advisor, Ann Basehore Starbard, led a small ruminant pasture walk on April 23, 2022 at the farm of Eli and Mackenzie Strawser, Top Line Meats, in Carlisle, PA. The Strawser's shared details about using an accelerated lambing program that allows them to maintain a herd of approximately 100 sheep while only needing to graze 50-60 at any one time. Participants learned about grazing planning tools that determine paddock size and how frequently livestock should be moved to a new paddock, and then saw how these concepts were integrated into the Strawser's walkway and pasture layout.

On June 25th, a Capital RC&D grazing advisor, Donna Foulk, coordinated an equine management field day in collaboration with Dr. Linda Quodomine, DVM. The field day was held at Quodomine Veterinary Services in Bloomsburg and started with a discussion about new protocols for parasite management that included preventative and treatment options. Donna demonstrated weed and forage identification methods before guiding participants on a pasture walk focused on in-field identification and pasture quality.



Grazing Advisor, Donna Foulk, leads discussion about pasture plant identification during the June 25th Equine Management Field Day.

Prior to the field day, Donna and Dr. Quodomine were interviewed for an episode of the PA Grazing Lands Coalition (PA-GLC) Graziers Grapevine podcast. They discussed their participation in an equine parasite research project, the results, and prevention. To listen to the episode visit: <https://www.paglc.org/category/the-graziers-grapevine/>

Project Feature: Cover Crop Grazing



Three years after its launch, Capital RC&D's cover crop grazing project is complete. As part of the final reporting process, staff met with project partners and field liaisons for the project funder, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, at the farm of Ben Peckman in Franklin County, PA. When the project started in 2019, project partners visited each of the farms participating in the research component of the project, so it was fitting to return and see the changes first hand and discuss the issues, benefits, and future plans for using cover crop grazing as part of his crop rotation.

The Peckman's used conservation practices including no-till techniques to improve their soil health for many years before participating in this project and as a result Ben was featured in a segment of Capital RC&D's PA Soil Health video series (available here.) The first photo (above) is from the series and shows the

fields in June 2016, several years prior to the addition of exterior perimeter fence, watering lines, or multi-species cover crop. The second (left) was taken during first project partner meeting in August 2019 while partners examined Ben's first mixed species cover crop prior to grazing. The third photo (below), from the final meeting on July 13, 2022, shows a recently grazed cover crop field and a new interior perimeter fence that will facilitate better livestock control as the Peckman's continue cover crop grazing.

The videos, podcast episodes, and Penn State research reports developed for this project are available on the Capital RC&D Grazing Support webpage and even though the project is complete, on-going support for farmers and graziers interested in incorporating cover crop grazing is available through the Capital RC&D Grazing Advisor program.





Upcoming Dates

August 14, 2022	Land Conservancy of Adams County Annual Picnic
September 2022	Adams County Planting Partnership sponsored Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) Buffers Short Course: Sept. 1 - Buffers Basics Webinar, Sept. 15 - Planning & Implementation Workshop, and Sept. 20 - Maintenance Workshop.
September 8, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting
September 15, 2022	York County Conservation District, Sporting Clays Fundraiser
October 15, 2022	Land Conservancy of Adams County, Road Rally
November 10, 2022	Capital RC&D Council Meeting

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

