# Conservation Ch ALLENge

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ALLEN COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT


## Pasture and Hayland Management Twilight Tour Set for July 15th




The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District in cooperation with Milan Center Feed and Grain, Inc. is hosting a Pasture and Hayland Management field day on July 15th from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. The event will be held at Lake Farms, 9414 Brush College Road, Woodburn, Transportation to the event is available on a limited basis, for information please contact Erik at Milan Center Feed and Grain, Inc. The event is sponsored in part by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture and the Clean Water Indiana Program.

Highlights of the event include discussion on forage species selection, weed and pest control, fertility management and proper pasture management techniques. Guest speakers include Jerry Perkins, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Northern Indiana Grazing Specialist and Mark Perry, Salesman with Cisco Seeds, Inc.

In light of today's record high commodity prices, why not get maximum forage and nutritional benefit from your hay and pasture, to reduce dependency on corn and other grain inputs? Making small management changes in your operation could yield higher profits from your forage acres. Be sure to join us on July 15th.

For more information contact either Milan Center Feed and Grain at (260) 657-5461 or the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District at (260) 484-5848, ext. 3. Light refreshments will be served.

## Agronomy Field Day 2008

The Anderson's in cooperation with Allen & DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Purdue Extension are presenting the Agronomy Field Day 2008. Plan now to attend this event being held July 30th at the Waterloo Research Farm on County Rd 28. The day will begin with check-in at 8:30 and plot tours at 9:00 am. Lunch will be available and if you are planning to eat on-site, please RSVP by July 25th at (260) 837-8162 or (800) 988-8091.The afternoon sessions will be presented by Tony Vyn and Fred Whitford. PARP credit will be available for attendance at Fred Whitford's presentation. Please see the enclosed brochure for more information.

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## St. Marys River Watershed Project

## THE RESULTS ARE IN!!!

In the Winter of 2008, the St. Marys River Watershed Project teamed with Purdue University to develop a survey of social indicators. These indicators would be used to measure the social components of nonpoint source projects and also correspond to more traditional environmental indicators such as pH, temperature, nutrients, and E. coli. Social indicators include measures of capacity, awareness, attitudes and behaviors of target audiences. In the past, environmental projects were evaluated solely on environmental outcomes, but it could take years to see detectable environmental change. Using social indicators as part of a package of assessment tools is a way to address these shortcomings and provide an immediate indication of how a project is proceeding.

The purpose of this study is to collect social indicators data from both agricultural producers and "urban" residents in the St. Mary's watershed to inform the watershed planning and implementation activities. The results of this survey also provide baseline social indicator information that will be used for comparison with a follow up survey in order to examine changes that occurr in the watershed over time.

The questions in the survey were developed by a regional team of researchers for utilization in nonpoint source pollution (NPS) projects. More information about this regional project can be found at: http://www.uwex.edu/ces/regionalwaterquality/Flagships/Indicators.htm. A 12-page survey was sent to 1000 residents in the watershed; 500 agricultural producers in Allen and Adams counties, and 500 residents of Allen County. After accounting for undeliverable surveys, the overall response rate was 45%.

### Below are some interesting results of the survey:

- 66.7% of ag producers and 60.5% of urban residents view the quality of water in the St. Marys as poor for swimming.
- 5.9% of ag producers and 1.9% of urban residents view the quality of water in the St. Marys as good for fish consumption.
- 65.5% of urban residents were not aware of the name of their watershed and 39.9% of ag producers were unaware.
- 83.2% of ag producers correctly identified that a watershed is an area of land that drains to a specific water body while 59.6% of urban residents identified this correctly.
- 51.7% of ag producers would be willing to change farm management practices or reduce use of fertilizers on lawns to improve water quality, 50.6% of urban residents also responded this way.
- 26.7% of ag producers feel that manure from farm animals is not a problem, while only 5.8% of urban residents responded this way
- 31.6% of urban residents see discharges from sewage treatment plants as a severe problem, 10.8% of ag producers responded in the same manner.
- 24.2% of ag producers and 22.2% of urban residents have never heard of using phosphate free fertilizer as a practice to improve water quality.
- 35.1% of ag producers and 48.4% of urban residents see E.coli as a moderate or severe water quality problem.
- 55.6%

A special thanks to those who took the time to complete the survey, the results will be very beneficial in the watershed planning process. The public is invited to attend the St Marys River Watershed Project steering committee meeting planned for July 17th at 6:00 pm in the Adams County Annex Building. For more information about the meeting and the complete survey results, contact Clint Nester at 260.484.5848.