

PRINCE WILLIAM AT BAY



County Farm Tour Prepares for Fifth Year



Plans are being made for the fifth annual Western Prince William County Farm Tour to be held Saturday, September 24 and Sunday, September 25, 2005. Approximately seven locations will be open to the public to teach about farm life and the importance of agriculture in our county's economy and history.

On the farm tour, Prince William County citizens experience the diversity of farming first-hand including equine operations, exotic animal husbandry, vegetable and flower production, along with traditional livestock, hay and grains. The tour has fostered long-term economic opportunities for farms and agricultural direct marketers and enabled greater understanding among farm and non-farm citizens.



The farm tour continues to be a well-anticipated community event. Farm families and event coordinators strive to make the tour fun and interactive for children and adults.

We hope to continue offering the event free to the public for many years to come. This would not be possible without the faithful support of sponsors including the Bull Run Observer, Prince William County Board of Supervisors, Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, Fairfax - Prince William Farm Bureau, Culpeper Farmers Cooperative, NOVEC and Peter N. Chase, CPA. For more information, to participate as a farm stop, volunteer or sponsor, please contact Suzanne Heflin at (703) 754-7564

Also there is a website you can check out :<http://www.pwcfarmtour.com/>



Farm Field Days Needs Moo!

Many of you already know about the fun of Farm Field Days, the annual agricultural education program sponsored by the District for fourth graders. This year Farm Field Days will be held on Tuesday, October 18 and Wednesday, October 19 at Prince William Fairgrounds.

For those of you who haven't yet experienced this hog wild event, this would be a great year to volunteer! This event is always successful thanks to over 100 volunteers who help out each year. There are several volunteer opportunities available for animals as well as humans! Many of the students who attend Farm Field Day have never seen a cow, pig, horse, or goat up close. So get your goat, halter your horse, corral your cattle, or round up your roosters and head to the Fairgrounds. Call first, though to let us know you'll be there! It's a great chance for local residents to share their knowledge with kids who are eager to learn. Many of the fourth graders who visit have never seen farm animals up close. They love seeing the animals, but also enjoy learning about their homes and food. The Sheriff's Department provides security for those animals that "sleep over" from Tuesday to Wednesday.

Farm Field Days volunteers enjoy a catered lunch each day and also a raffle with fabulous prizes. Just ask anyone who has ever been a part of this event and they'll tell you that Farm Field Days is something that you don't want to miss! For more information on volunteering, call the District office at (703) 594-3621. See you at the Fairgrounds!

PRINCE WILLIAM AT BAY

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The Commonwealth of Virginia Supports the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Meet our summer intern volunteers:



Dana Thomas

Hi! My name is Dana Thomas. I'm volunteering with the Prince William SWCD this summer as a Conservation Aide Intern. My duties include creating conservation plans, attending training events, participating in district events such as the Adopt A Stream cleanup, and assisting Beata with field and office tasks. I am currently a rising senior at Vassar College majoring in biology with a minor in environmental science. In January 2005, I traveled to Kenya where I spent four months studying wildlife management in savanna ecosystems. Born and raised on a small horse farm in Haymarket, I was extremely interested in getting involved with local natural resource conservation. I have greatly enjoyed working with the PWSWCD group and learning more about agricultural management practices.

During my free time, I enjoy running, backpacking, reading, sketching, and spending time with my dog and cats.

Erica Hart

My name is Erica Hart and I'm a summer intern at Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District. I am 17 years old and a rising senior at Stonewall Jackson High School. I'm a member of my school's ecology club and I'm interested in environmental sciences and biology. As an intern, I hope to help my community and gain career experience in this field.



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Web Site Updates

www.pwsacd.org

If you haven't visited the District's Web site recently, here's what you are missing: A new link for help on weed identification

- ◇ News on the District's accomplishments during fiscal year 2005
- ◇ Information on the District's summer interns
- ◇ Many new articles on the Horse Owners page
- ◇ Farm Field Day volunteer information

Introducing our new employee– Jeannie Heflin

Hello, I am Jeannie Heflin, the new administrative assistant. I am pleased to be here at PWSWCD, working with a great team which is making a difference in our environment. I am an experienced office manager most recently working for a small municipality.

My husband and I live on the family farm in Haymarket. We raise beef cattle, hay and a few hogs (in the fall) and keep a couple hives of bees. We have a small-scale vegetable market garden operation and are adding a few laying hens. I am an avid gardener, still in training, and a certified Master Gardener.

I am enjoying getting to know all the people involved with this office and look forward to meeting you.



Looking for help with weed control?



This time of year we frequently receive phone calls for assistance with weed control in pastures. At the District we promote a holistic approach called Integrated Pest Management or IPM for weed control. IPM is a multiple step process that starts with identifying the weed, determining what non-chemical methods may be effective in controlling the weed, and then if necessary selecting and timing the application of a pesticide for optimal results.

Non-chemical methods for weed control include using a rotational grazing system that allows for each field to be grazed then rested when the grasses are no less than 4” in height. When animals are removed from the pasture they can be rotated into another pasture with taller grasses or into a sacrifice area/confinement paddock to allow all fields to rest. When animals are removed from the pasture it’s best to then mow the field. Mowing the field will keep seed heads from forming on the weeds and encourage new tender growth on the grasses. In spring and fall you can overseed your pastures with desirable grasses and fertilize your fields based on soil test results. If you consistently follow these steps you will see that over time your grasses will begin to out-compete your weeds.

If you have a weed problem that requires immediate intervention you may choose to use a pesticide. There are different types of pesticides. Before you select a pesticide you must identify your weed problem and select a chemical that is effective for controlling that weed. Timing and application rates are critical to success. You should also take the time to educate yourself about safe and legal use of pesticides to protect you, your neighbors, your well, your animals, and nearby waterways.

Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension can provide you with extensive information on weed identification and pesticide selection for safe, effective pest management. List below are some great resources or you can contact our office for more assistance.



2005 Pest Management Guide www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/pmg/index.html

Virginia Tech Weed ID Guide www.ppws.vt.edu/weedindx.htm

Upcoming Events

September 13 Pasture– Associated Equine Laminitis at M.A.R.E Center, Middleburg, VA

September 15 Local Environmental Education Partners Award Ceremony

September 24-25 Prince William County Farm Tour

October 18-19 Farm Field Days

VA Cooperative Extension Classes

For more information about any of the VCE classes call 703-792-7747

Also visit our website:

www.pswgcd.org

For more information on any of the above events please call (703) 594-3621.



PRINCE WILLIAM

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Our Mission...

The mission of the Prince William Soil & Water Conservation District is to provide leadership in the conservation of soil, water, and related resources to all Prince William County citizens, through technical assistance, information, and education.

The public is welcome at District meetings, which are held monthly on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 12:30 p.m. in the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District Conference Room. Please call (703) 594-3621 to confirm that a meeting has not been cancelled or postponed.

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The Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, veteran status, national origin, disability, or political affiliation.

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 SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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