

ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts
3310 University Drive
Bismarck, ND 58504

December 20, 2017

Dear Local Board,

Enclosed is a check for \$1000 for your district from the Association we will call it a rebate to make it simple. Thank you for supporting your Lincoln Oakes Nursery and helping us become profitable again. It is yours to do with as your board see fits. You can use it to offset some of the cost of attending the convention, pay your national dues, add it to one of the education programs the districts put on, or anything else your board deems worthy. Put it to a good cause.

On another note, I was very concerned about a letter the lawmakers received yesterday. I was attending the hearing to determine the fate of the State Soil Committee and the funding for each district. All law makers were given a letter written from the North Dakota Nursery, Greenhouse, and Landscape Association. I have enclosed a copy of that letter for your information.

After checking with the districts that were listed as non-compliant I found that Morton, Burleigh, Eddy, and Park River are in compliance and following the agreement. Towner didn't comply last year and they are not sure about the upcoming year.

If you are following the agreement between your association and greenhouse thank you. If you are not please start doing so now. You are risking not only your funding but you are risking everybody else's too. Feel free to voice your concerns to any and all districts as it could jeopardize your funding.

Enjoy the Rebate.

Thanks again for your support,

Brian Johnston
NDASCD /CEO
3310 University Drive
Bismarck, ND 58504



North Dakota Nursery, Greenhouse, and Landscape Association

PO Box 34, Neche, ND 58265 701-886-7673 Fax – 320-585-7424

December, 2017

To: Chairman Johnson and Legislative Committee Members,

Thank you very much for allowing us to express the concerns of our 250 members consisting of greenhouses, garden centers, landscapers, and other horticultural industry members. The North Dakota Nursery, Greenhouse, and Landscape Association (NDNGLA) members highly support the conservation efforts of the North Dakota Soil Conservation Districts (SCD's). However, we are very concerned that some districts are selling non-conservation ornamental and fruit trees in direct competition with our small business members. The SCD's have a very unfair advantage in that they are tax exempt, do not have to pay property taxes, receive mill levy money from the counties, and often receive appropriations from the state as well.

We have addressed this to the Agriculture Commissioner who required SCD districts to buy nursery licenses and then set up a mediation meeting. On March 13, 2015, three members of the NDNGLA and three members of the North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts met and reached an agreement with the following terms:

1. The Soil Conservation Districts must have or obtain a nursery license consistent with the Department of Ag Executive Directive.
2. The Soil Conservation Districts will continue to sell wholesale (conservation grade plant materials) without restrictions.
3. The Soil Conservation will sell retail those trees with the following conditions:
 - A. Size: limited to a caliper of 1" at flare of root, base of tree (small size)
 - B. Bare Root (1 gallon or less container size)
 - C. No grafted trees (most fruit trees are grafted)
4. Year end surplus – same standards as above.

Since this agreement was reached, 5 SCD's have continued to order and sell non-conservation trees (Towner, Morton, Burleigh, Eddy, and Walsh/Two Rivers) unlike all the rest who are complying with the agreement. In fact, in Walsh County, the SCD ordered cut Christmas trees and sold them as well. These 5 SCD's say their state SCD Board is only an advisory Board and not a governing Board so they are free to do as they wish locally. We therefore request this legislative committee to consider proper oversight of the SCD's when determining the future of the State Soil Conservation Committee.


Our NDNGLA members are doing their best to make a living, support the local schools and economy, but this is just plain unfair competition. We applaud the rest of the county SCD's who have quit selling fruit trees and ornamental trees. We ask the remaining SCD's to abide by the agreement or lose their tax exempt status and mill levy funding in order to level the playing field. In Towner County, the SCD received \$30,000.00 in annual mill levy funds. Our members would be able to show a healthy profit if someone gave them an extra \$30,000./year. Thank you for allowing us to present this information.



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News Release

USDA Seeks Applications for \$10 Million in Conservation Innovation Grants

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Contact:
Laura Crowell
515-323-2207

Funding is available in three focus areas, including grazing lands, organic systems and soil health

Grant proposals are due Feb. 26, 2018

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18, 2017 – USDA is offering grants for innovative ideas for conservation strategies and technologies. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to invest \$10 million in the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program, funding innovative conservation projects in three focus areas: grazing lands, organic systems and soil health. Grant proposals are due Feb. 26, 2018.

"Conservation Innovation Grants play a critical role in developing and implementing new methods to help our customers conserve natural resources, strengthen their local communities, and improve their bottom lines," said Rob Johansson, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation. "Today's announcement supports our efforts to help producers build economically-strong and resilient farms and ranches by providing producers tools to utilize across their working farmlands."

The NRCS uses CIG to work with partners to accelerate transfer and adoption of promising technologies and approaches that address some of the nation's most pressing natural resource concerns. This year, NRCS is focusing funding in these areas:

Grazing Lands: Helping livestock producers make grazing management decisions, encouraging prescribed burning as a grazing management practice, and improving access to conservation planning tools used for developing grazing management plans.

Organic Agriculture Systems: Helping organic producers develop innovative cropping and tillage systems, edge-of-field monitoring, crop rotations and intercropping systems.

Soil Health: Supporting both cropping and grazing systems, in a variety of climatic zones, that incorporate soil health management systems for addressing specific resource concerns like nutrients and availability. Evaluating multiple soil health assessment methods to assist in the development of new soil health indicators and thresholds.

"Every sector of American agriculture has its unique conservation challenges," said Johansson. "CIG enables USDA to help support new, innovative tools and techniques which have helped U.S. agriculture become the powerhouse we see today, leading the world in both production efficiency and conservation delivery."

Potential applicants should review the announcement of program funding available at www.grants.gov, which includes application materials and submission procedures. All U.S.-based entities and individuals are invited to apply, with the sole exception of Federal agencies. Up to 20 percent of CIG funds will be set aside for proposals from historically underserved producers, veteran farmers or ranchers or groups serving these customers.

NRCS is hosting a webinar for potential CIG applicants on Jan. 11, 2018 at 4 pm Eastern. Information on how to join the webinar can be found [here](#).

CIG is authorized and funded under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Projects can last up to three years. The maximum award amount for any project this year is \$2 million.

Funding Conservation Innovation for More Than a Decade

Since 2004, NRCS has invested nearly \$286.7 million in more than 700 projects focused on providing farmers and ranchers new techniques, data and decision-making tools for improving natural resources conservation on their land. Projects included:

The National Association of Conservation Districts evaluated year-by-year changes in corn and soybean farmer income during a multi-state, three-year study, that determined soil health practices such as cover crops and no-till can result in an economic return of over \$100 per acre.

The National Center for Appropriate Technology worked with leading sustainable and organic agriculture organizations, NRCS staff, consultants and hundreds of farmers to better integrate organic systems into NRCS programs and procedures and improve NRCS programs accessibility. As a result, NRCS changed 15 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) conservation enhancements, added one new CSP conservation enhancement, and published an organic guidebook for NRCS field staff.

The Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship (DGA) project will work with historically underserved populations in the Great Lakes Region to develop apprentice relationships that will foster skills in innovative managed grazing.

The DGA is a two-year accredited National Apprenticeship that provides employment, mentorship, comprehensive training, and peer-to-peer discussions to help dairy grazers advance their careers.

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Finding the Right Balance: Managing Land, Wealth & People for Success

**A 3-day Holistic Management
Introductory and Refresher School
featuring Joshua & Tara Dukart**

North Dakota Ranchers, Global Educators & Consultants

DATE & TIME:

Wednesday-Friday, Feb. 21-23, 2018,
9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. (CST)

LOCATION:

Menoken Farm

(I-94 Exit 170 east of Bismarck;
south 1 mile to Highway 10; east 1 mile to
St. Hildegard's Church; south ½ mile)

COST:

**\$100 for first person and only
\$50 for additional participants
from same family or
operation/organization!**

SPONSORS:

**Burleigh County SCD
Morton County SCD**

Natural Resources Conservation Service



Menoken Farm

Your instructors

Joshua & Tara Dukart of Seek First Ranch near Hazen, ND, have been practicing Holistic Management since 2008, identifying and working toward their financial, environmental and social goals. They have made career decisions and managed resources using their Holistic Management approach.

Former attendees say:

"Very good course – a must for all ranchers to attend. It will provide a good foundational approach to improve our ranch."

--Chip Fischer, Rhame, ND

"This course is definitely a must if you want to improve your quality of life."

--Chad Njos, Bowman, ND

"Excellent class! It needs to be implemented in the university system."

--Carl Lindgren, Ashley, ND

Registration form

(Deadline Feb. 14, 2018)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone number: _____

Cost of \$100 or \$50 includes lunches and breaks. **Registration is limited to first 30 people, so mail this registration form (add extra names on back) today to:**

Burleigh County SCD
916 E. Interstate Ave., Suite 6
Bismarck, ND 58503

Questions: 701-250-4518, ext. 3, or e-mail
lucinda.makedonski@nd.nacdn.net