

CONSERVATION CONNECTION



News from the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District



Winter 2012

Landowner Highlight:

Interview with Phillip Herinckx, Danny Dave Farms

By Dean Moberg, NRCS District Conservationist

Q: What's the history of Danny Dave Farms and who is now involved?

A: My great-grandfather Frank started the farm in the 1930's. He worked the ground with horse-drawn implements. My grandfather Willie Herinckx took over around 1944 and then my father Dave bought the farm in the 1980's and I took over in 2009. So, I'm the fourth generation on the place and we've been producing milk the whole time. I'm leasing the farm now while I buy into it.

Q: How many cows are you milking, how much land do you farm and what crops do you grow?

A: I milk 86 cows and farm 37 acres. I have a small pasture, some grass hay and then farm most of the acreage to silage corn with a tetraploid ryegrass winter cover crop. I harvest the ryegrass as silage.

Q: Do you raise the heifers on site or send them to another farm?

A: I raise them on site. My cows are mixed breeds, with Holstein, Guernsey, Jersey and Milking Shorthorns. These genetics result in somewhat smaller cows than pure Holsteins. The smaller cows work better with the way my barn and milking parlor are laid out. I don't use artificial insemination, so I keep bulls on site.

Q: What kind of manure storage system do you have and how is it working for you?

A: The system is pretty simple. Manure is scraped to a reception pit and then pumped through a screw-press separator. Liquids coming out of the separator go into a small storage pond and the solids are stacked on concrete under a roof. The liquid storage is big enough to get me through the winter. The solid manure coming out of the separator, producing a very nice, uniform product that almost looks like peat moss. Almost all of the solid manure is picked up and hauled away by people who want it for their gardens. This manure that's removed from the farm contains a lot of phosphorus, so that helps me reduce the phosphorus load to my fields, which is a common challenge for dairy farms.

Q: Arguably, dairy farms are more highly regulated than any other farms in Oregon. Do you have any advice for how dairies can meet or exceed all of the regulations and still survive economically?

A: I don't think it's all that complicated. Of course, this farm is set up very nicely as far as environmental protection is concerned. But I think the main thing is to do what protection is concerned. But I think the main thing is to do what needs to be done and get



Phillip Herinckx (L) and Dean Moberg (R)

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Native Plants 101

By Nicole Ahr

It's getting close to planting time again, so here are some answers to common questions about native tree and shrub planting in our area.

What are some of the common forms of native plants used for planting?

Bare-root plants: Perennial plants that are dug-up and stored without soil on their roots while they are not actively growing (dormant). These are planted by digging a small hole, deep enough to cover the roots, and taking care that the roots are not matted together and are pointing down.

Container plants: Plants growing in containers with soil. These are usually just placed in holes in the ground for establishment.

Cuttings: These are typically branches cut from woody trees and shrubs that can reproduce vegetatively, such as red osier dogwood and willow. It can be beneficial to store cuttings in water for 24-48 hours before planting. Cuttings are placed in pre-made narrow holes in the soil for establishment, and will create new roots and stems of their own. Just make sure you remember which way is up after you cut them!

Plugs: Blocks of soil containing one or several plants that are planted by literally plugging them into a hole in the ground, primarily used to establish forbs and grasses.

Seed: Seed is either broadcast or drilled into the ground, and is primarily used to establish forbs and grasses.



So why do we plant in the winter?

There are several reasons that the winter season is the best time to plant native trees and shrubs. The primary reasons include the following:

Transplants are less stressful in the winter.

- Transplanting trees and shrubs while they are actively growing can result in mortality. If we transplant them in the winter, when they are dormant, there is less stress to the plant and we are more likely to have a successful planting. Even species with persistent or evergreen leaves are dormant in the winter.

Encourage proper root growth.

- Planting in the winter gives the plants some time to adjust from the shock of transplanting while they are dormant, and leaves them with the entire spring to develop roots capable of supporting the plant in the warm, dry summer.

Moist soil in the winter is favorable for planting.

- As we all know, the ground is moist in the winter, making it easier to shovel into the soil for planting, and providing favorable wet soil conditions for the roots of the newly planted trees and shrubs.



Vine Maple

Spring rains provide needed moisture for transplants.

- The spring rains that follow winter plantings supply continued moisture to the plants that will support root growth once the plants break dormancy.

Roots are less susceptible to drying.

- Planting bare-root seedlings usually involves carrying around a box or bag of bare-root seedlings. This exposure to the air can cause the roots to dry out. During cool winter days the roots stay hydrated for longer.

Conservation Tidbits

District wins Website Award

The Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District received an award from the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) for the outstanding appeal and easy access of information from the home page. This award was given to the District on November 8, 2011 during the OACD convention in Sunriver. If you have not accessed our website at www.swcd.net, please do so. We are very proud of our website!



District Chair John McDonald receives award



John was presented with the “Sustained Superior Performance” award recognizing his many years of service to Oregon Association of Conservation Districts. This award was given to him at the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts convention on November 8, 2011 in Sunriver. Congratulations John!!!

District wins Outstanding Special District Program Award

This award recognizes innovative projects and programs, outstanding safety, public information, public involvement in a district decision-making process, and outstanding achievement. The District won this award in the under five district employee’s category for our achievements with our Enhanced Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (ECREP) projects. Kudos to Autumn Bryant, District’s Restoration Program Manager, Clean Water Services and Farm Service Agency for all the great work that has been done in this program! This award will be announced at the Special District Association of Oregon Conference Award Banquet in Sunriver on February 11, 2012.

Oregon Envirothon



The Oregon Envirothon is an exciting, fun way for high school-aged students to learn about the environment through hands-on field experiences that demonstrate knowledge of natural resources. Teams of five students train and compete in the areas of Aquatic Ecology, Forest Ecology, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife Ecology, and a current environmental issues relating to particular ecosystems. Please help us spread the word to high school teachers about this exciting competition. Contact Ron Crouse for more information at 503-399-5741 ext. 121 or Oregon Envirothon, PO Box 13736, Salem, OR 97309. E-mail: info@oregonenvirothon.org. Website: <http://oregonenvirothon.org/>

Native Plant Sales are here!

Some great places to get native plants are local native plant sales. Here is a list of native plant sales coming up in the general area for 2012:

- East Multnomah SWCD (Portland): pre-orders for native plants accepted in January
- Yamhill SWCD (McMinnville): February 10th, 11th, and 12th
- Polk SWCD (Independence): February 17th, accepting pre-orders now
- Marion SWCD (Gervais): March 9th and 10th
- Washington County Small Woodlands Association (Aloha): March 10th
- Jackson Bottom Wetlands (Hillsboro): April 14th
- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District (Beaverton): April 28th

Please visit our website www.swcd.net for more information on Native Plant Sales and Events.



Oregon White Oak

Weed Wise

By Nicole Ahr

Look out for...English hawthorn!!

English hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), also known as single-seed or one-seed hawthorn, naturally occurs in Europe, northern Africa, and western Asia. The species has been present in the Willamette Valley for over 100 years, and is now commonly found in the area. It usually occurs in disturbed areas with moist soils, including grasslands, pasturelands, and wetlands. It also occurs in the understories of oak woodlands and other forested areas. English hawthorn dominates these areas, crowding out native trees and shrubs. In much of Oregon, this weed causes huge economic loss for farmers and ranchers.

Identifying English hawthorn

- Hollow bamboo-like stems that grow up to 10 feet in height.
- Leaves are alternate, heart-shaped, and up to 10 inches in length.
- The stems are often red or reddish speckled, with thorns up to one inch long.
- Young shoots look similar to red asparagus.
- Small white or green flower clusters grow at the leaf joints in July and August.
- Mainly reproduces by rhizome fragments.
- One-seeded red fruit.



Eradicating this species usually includes a combination of mechanical and chemical methods. Smaller trees or shrubs can often be removed with a weed wrench. Larger trees can be cut down and the stump painted with herbicide. There are several native species that provide good substitutes for English hawthorn and will also provide valuable food for wildlife, including: Douglas hawthorn, mock orange, western serviceberry, cascara, and elderberry.

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needs to be done and get whatever help is available from USDA, OSU Extension or private vendors.

Q: There is a trend toward larger and larger dairies with greater numbers of cows per acre. You have kept your operation fairly small. What are the advantages and disadvantages to running a smaller dairy farm?

A: An advantage to small dairies is that I know my cows whereas large farms hire herd managers for the day to day operation. A disadvantage for small farms is that we don't get some of the economic advantages that large farms do. For example, my costs per ton of feed are higher than for large farms.

Q: What are your conservation goals and what kinds of practices are you using to achieve those goals?

A: Right now I have most things in place as far as manure storage. However, I do plan to change my mortality composting facility around a little bit to improve the drainage to the manure pond. Of course, we don't have a lot of animals that die, but the best way to deal with mortalities now is to compost them. I'm implementing conservation practices with help from NRCS and the Tualatin SWCD. For example, I have a filter strip between my crop field and the drainage ditch to reduce risk of nutrient runoff. I'm growing and harvesting the ryegrass cover crop to extract as much soil nitrogen and phosphorus as possible. I've installed bat boxes and bird houses, partly because the bats and birds help keep down the flies. We allow chickens access to the pasture because they pick maggots out of manure, again helping with fly control. Finally, I'm doing some pretty intensive nutrient management with annual soil testing for phosphorus and soil testing for nitrate in both the early summer and after harvest in the fall. I test the manure and develop an annual budget to ensure added nutrients don't exceed applied nutrients. NRCS has been helping with technical assistance and some cost-sharing.

Conservation Calendar

When	What
Saturday, January 21—9:00am to 1:00pm	Naturescaping Basics. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website
Tuesday—Thursday, January 24, 25, 26	Northwest Agriculture Show. Please check their website at www.nwagshow.com for more information.
Monday—Friday, January 23, 24, 25, 26, 27	Organic Land Care Training. Please check West Multnomah SWCD’s website at www.wmswcd.org for more information.
Sunday, February 26—1:00pm to 5:00pm	Naturescaping Basics. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website
Saturday, February 11—9:00am to 1:00pm	Site Planning 1. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website at www.emswcd.org for more information.
Saturday, February 25—9:00am to 12:00pm	Rain Garden 101. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website at www.emswcd.org for more information.
Saturday, March 3—9:00am to 1:00pm	Naturescaping Basics. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website
Saturday, March 17—9:00am to 1:00pm	Site Planning 1. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website at www.emswcd.org for more information.
Saturday, April 21—9:00am to 12:00pm	Rain Garden 101. Please check East Multnomah SWCD’s website at www.emswcd.org for more information.

Monthly Board Meetings

- Tualatin SWCD - second Tuesday of the month 6:30pm, USDA Conference Room. For more information, contact Judy at 503-648-3174 x117.
- Washington County Farm Bureau—third Tuesday of the month, 7:30pm, Country Insurance and Financial Services Building, 885 SW Baseline St., Hillsboro.
- Tualatin River Watershed Council - first Wednesday of the month, 7:00pm, Clean Water Services Administration Building, Tualatin Room. For more information, contact April Olbrich at 503-846-4810.

To volunteer for restoration activities, contact the following organizations:

- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, Melissa Marcum at 503-629-6305 ext. 2953.
- SOLV at <http://www.solv.org>.
- Tualatin River Watershed Council at <http://www.trwc.org> or April Olbrich at 503-846-4810.

Providing local solutions to local problems.



Tualatin SWCD

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We're on the web!

www.swcd.net

Our Mission

In order to conserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources in the Tualatin Basin, the mission of the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District is to:

- Assess watershed conditions, identify resource concerns, and select strategies to help natural resources meet standards and all beneficial uses;
- Provide technical assistance to help private landowners install conservation practices to meet natural resource goals and their own objectives;
- Increase the public's knowledge of and involvement in natural resource issues and solutions; and
- Deliver conservation programs and services to individuals, groups, and other governments.

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George Marsh
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Sally Krahmer
Anthony Mills

Employees

Lacey Townsend, District Manager
Autumn Bryant, Restoration Program Manager
Nicole Ahr, Project Coordinator
Judy Marsh, Administrative Assistant

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