

Frederick, Catoctin Districts Celebrate Soil Stewardship

KAREN BUTLER

Maryland Correspondent

FREDERICK, Md. — The political climate in Maryland surrounding soil and water conservation may be fast and furious right now, but some Frederick County farmers have been quietly shouldering the responsibility for stewardship of the county's resources for years. Members of the Frederick and Catoctin Soil Conservation districts gathered here recently to commemorate the week of April 26-May 3, designated as national Soil Conservation week.

"Soil conservation has been a big part of this county since back in the early '40s. In today's environment it's a whole lot different than it used to be, and we have to go on and do the best jobs we

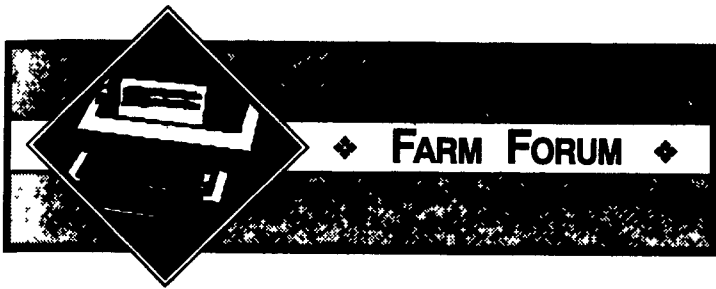
can do," suggested Jesse Burall, chairman of the Frederick Soil Conservation District. Mr. Burall addressed a group of about 30 gathered at Watson's restaurant in honor of Soil Conservation week.

Mark Hoke, chairman of the Frederick County board of commissioners, presented Mr. Burall and Mr. Daniel Poole, chairman of the Catoctin district, with a plaque recognizing the call to conservation stewardship. This year the theme for the week-long celebration is "Backyard Stewardship."

Nutrient management of course came to the forefront in legislation this year, and Rebecca MacLeod, district conservationist with the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, updated the group on goals and timeframes for the newly enacted nutrient man-



Mark Hoke, center, chairman of the Frederick County Board of Commissioners, presented a plaque proclaiming the week of April 26-May 3 as Soil and Water Stewardship Week to Jesse Burall, right, chairman of the Frederick Soil Conservation District, and Daniel C. Poole, left, chairman of the Catoctin Soil Conservation District.



(Continued from Page A10)

someone else to enjoy and I'll pack my crown and banner away, along with my scrapbook.

Bur... only the tangible things will be packaway because I'll al-

ways carry with me the memories, poise, public speaking skills, and the desire to promote the dairy industry, because "Once a dairy princess always a dairy princess!"

agement bill.

By December 31, 2001, an operation using commercial chemical fertilizer must have a Nitrogen and Phosphorous based plan, said MacLeod. The plan must be implemented by the same date one year later. If applying manure or sludge, you must have a

Nitrogen based plan by the December 2001 date, implemented by 2002, and then a N&P based plan by July 1, 2004, that must be implemented by July 1, 2005. These requirements apply to ag operations that gross more than \$2500 annually, or to livestock operations with 8 or more animal units, as defined by federal regulations. The bill also targets com-

mercial applicators fertilizing 3 or more acres, specifying they must be a certified nutrient management consultant or work under a certified nutrient management consultant.


"One thing I believe will bring this nutrient management plan bill closer to home is the definition of who is required to have a nutrient

management plan," said MacLeod, "Eight or more animal units of livestock is going to be particularly interesting to the horse people. If we follow the federal guidelines that would be 4 horses or an income of \$2500." Ms. MacLeod went on to explain that out of a total of about 220,000 acres of agricultural land in Frederick County, 68 percent of the acreage is currently covered under Nitrogen based nutrient management plans.

"As with other water quality issues, the soil conservation district stands ready to assist the farmers in complying with these regulations," MacLeod stressed.

In other soil conservation district news, she said there are a few new federal cost share programs to help with resource conservation management. Federal funds can be combined with state money for programs providing incentive payments. "These programs recognize that change in management is not always easy for a farmer who's used to doing things one way," according to MacLeod.

She noted that enrollment for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, or EQIP, a federal cost-share program that can pay up to 87 percent for switching to rotational grazing, installing animal waste facilities, troughs, stream fencing, and cross fencing, runs through May 15.



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