



## Dubois County Soil & Water Conservation District

1486 Executive Blvd. Suite A • Jasper, IN 47546  
812-482-1171 x3 • [www.duboisswcd.org](http://www.duboisswcd.org)

Fall 2011

# The Conservation Conversation

## SWCD to Host Cover Crop Field Day November 22<sup>nd</sup>

**H**ow do you choose the right cover crop species? How late can you plant a cover crop? Which cover crops work best in Dubois County? With so many cover crop choices for farmers to use on their land, how can you know your cover crop choice is the best choice for your needs?

If you've ever asked any of these questions, join us on Tuesday, November 22, 2011 as the Dubois County SWCD hosts a Cover Crop Field Day. Come learn from experts in the science of cover crops. You'll even get to view a demonstration plot with multiple cover crop species planted! The event starts at 3pm and will be held at Ring Farms just south of Huntingburg on South 500 West. This event is being provided to you free of charge thanks to a Clean Water Indiana grant received by the SWCD. Directions to the Field Day can be found on the back page of this newsletter. For more information on the Field Day, call the SWCD office at 812-482-1171 x3.



*A demonstration test plot will be available for viewing at the Field Day. Pictured above are oilseed radishes currently growing in the plot. Several other species will also be available for viewing at the test plot, including crimson clover and Austrian winter peas.*

This same grant also allowed for a Cover Crop Incentive Program earlier in the year. Through this program, Dubois County landowners applied just over fourteen hundred acres of cover crops to their land.

For the second year in a row, a plane was also contracted to aerially apply cover crops for those landowners wishing to use this service. Five hundred eighteen of the fourteen hundred acres were applied by this plane. The Dubois County SWCD has applied for another Clean Water Indiana grant and anticipates to have cover crop incentive payment programs available for at least the next two years. Details of next year's program will be available in late Summer 2012.

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## Waterhemp Weed Showing Greater Resistance to Glyphosate

**A** Purdue Extension weed specialist urges farmers to take necessary steps now to better control yield-reducing waterhemp next year as it spreads through Indiana with increasing resistance to glyphosate.

"Farmers need to learn more about waterhemp because it has shown greater resistance to the herbicide the past 2-3 years," Bill Johnson said. The weed has been present in some Indiana field surveys for about 10 years.

"More recently, we've had an increasing number of complaints about glyphosate's failure to control waterhemp in soybean production," Johnson said. "The number of calls we have been getting on that has essentially doubled each year over the last couple of years."

Waterhemp now is found throughout Indiana. It is most prevalent in the southern, southwestern, northwestern and east-central portions of the state.



*A waterhemp weed seedling.*

Johnson has produced the educational document "Waterhemp – an Emerging Weed Problem in Indiana" to raise awareness among farmers and help them develop a plan to better control the weed next year. The document, which includes pictures to help farmers identify waterhemp, is available online or through local Purdue Extension offices.

Waterhemp is among a dozen species in the pigweed, or amaranth, family. Other pigweed found in Indiana includes redroot pigweed, smooth pigweed and Palmer amaranth.

"We've had pigweed for a long time, but this one - waterhemp - has really emerged as a major threat to soybean production," Johnson said.

One waterhemp plant can produce as many as 1 million seeds. Just a few untreated weeds in a field can lead to a major infestation within a couple of years, Johnson said.

Waterhemp is more of a problem for soybeans than it is for corn. A heavy infestation in a soybean field can reduce yields by 30-50 percent, Johnson said.

Waterhemp has proven difficult to control. Although Johnson said pre-emergence herbicides



*A mature waterhemp weed growing in a soybean field.*

greatly reduce waterhemp density, it emerges throughout the growing season and usually also requires a postemergence herbicide treatment, especially for soybeans.

"It is very common to have to spray a field multiple times to get the waterhemp under control," Johnson said. "One-pass herbicide programs are not going to be effective on it because it has a very long emergence pattern."

Johnson recommended that farmers now going through their fields at harvest time take note of whether waterhemp is present and, if so, the level of density and whether there appears to be more of it this year than last. He said that will help them determine a plan for better controlling it.

*Story courtesy Purdue Extension.*

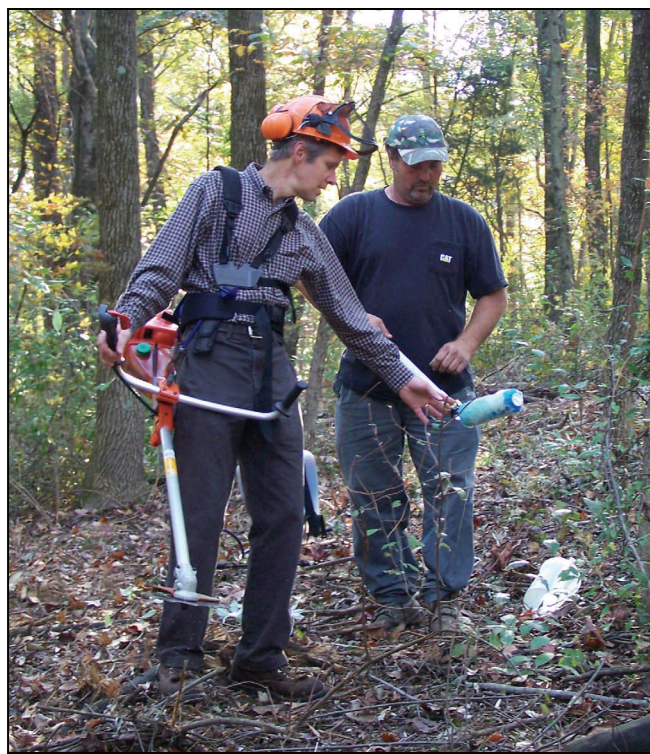


## SWCD Co-Sponsors Invasive Species Field Day



Several area residents came out to the Southern Indiana Purdue Ag Center (SIPAC) on October 4th and 8th to learn about controlling invasive species on their land. Participants first went through a classroom information session on the 4th where they learned how to identify common invasives now trying to take over land in Indiana. On October 8th these participants also had a chance to gain practical experience through a field day where control methods were demonstrated.

Check out these highlights to see what you missed! If you are interested in learning how to control invasive species on your land and learning how to identify common invasives, stop by our office for a free landowner packet. You can also check out our website at [www.duboisswcd.org](http://www.duboisswcd.org) where we have loads of free information on invasive species for you. Choose the Resources menu at the top of the page and click on Invasive Species Information.





## Buening & Prusz Awarded Indiana River Friendly Farmer Awards

**L**loyd Prusz and Jerome Buening were recently selected as Indiana River Friendly Farmers for 2011 for their outstanding conservation achievements.

The award winners are selected from across the state by the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Buening operates a 262 acre family farm. The farm was originally a dairy farm starting in 1945. The dairy herd was sold in 2005 and now 45 head of registered Angus beef cattle are being raised to sell as feeder calves and breeding stock. Showing his commitment to keeping Indiana's water sources clean, Jerome utilizes a rotational grazing system which has his cattle changing paddocks every three weeks. He also uses no-till technology on his land. "We never work the ground", Jerome says. "We use inter-seeding with a no-till drill. If we have to completely renovate a field we will use round-up ready soybeans to clean the field in spring and then use no-till drill to re-seed in the fall."

Jerome farms in the Bruner Creek Watershed. "We keep all of our main ditches clean and clear", Jerome says. "We use no-till to help take care of the water supply. We have filter

strips along all our major ditches. We also have 16 dry dams, a lake and 2.1 acres of waterways. By doing and having all of the above practices we no longer have any over-



*The Indiana River Friendly Farmer award is presented annually at the Indiana State Fair. Both Buening and Prusz were unable to attend the State Fair and will be presented their awards at the SWCD's Annual Meeting on January 14, 2012.*

flow of our major ditches." In addition to all of this, 150 acres of crop land is rented to a local operator who uses no-till technology to plant all of his cash crops. Jerome also has 12 acres of woodland in the Classified Forest Program with DNR. He has even planted wildlife food plots.

In addition to the conservation practices installed on his land, Jerome has been a 4H Leader in the St. Henry Club for the past 45 years. He's also a 25 year veteran of the Southwest Dubois School Corporation's Board. He also serves as an advisor to his local FFA chapter at Southridge High School, where he is currently assisting

the FFA with implementing conservation practices on school grounds. It's easy to see why Jerome was selected for this award!

This year, the Dubois County SWCD is also privileged to have a second award winner from within our county, Lloyd Prusz.

Prusz is a corn and soybean farmer, farming mostly in the Sugar Creek Watershed. Lloyd says that a typical year would have approximately 240 acres devoted to these cash crops. He also keeps between 35-40 head of beef cattle. Lloyd says, "With all the rolling hills and wooded tracts, it is a perfect way to make these acres productive." The beef cattle are raised as feeder calves and then sold to other producers to finish for market.

The cattle are kept in pasture for 10 months of the year. During the two month stretch from mid-February through mid-April the cattle are off the pastures. These two months include the time that the winter thaw occurs and a large portion of the spring rain falls. Keeping the cows off the ground reduces areas where mud results from their continued trampling of popular areas. This time also allows the grass cover to grow thick and tall to reduce erosion

and provide a good food supply for the herd throughout the summer.

Of his corn and soybean acres, Lloyd says that approximately half of these acres would be in corn and half in beans. “We try to split the bottom ground and the HEL land so that not all of one of them is in corn while the other is in beans.”, Lloyd says. He also utilizes no-till farming practices on all of his highly erodible (HEL) cropland. On most of the HEL-acres in crop production, he has also installed dry dams to collect runoff rain water. These temporary holding ponds allow the water to sit for several hours before entering local streams. This allows sediment to settle and stay in the field, keeping the river cleaner. Where the runoff is the most extreme, Lloyd says rock chutes have been installed.

Committed to keeping soil erosion out of Sugar Creek, which runs through the middle of his bottomground, Lloyd says that following the fall harvest, he bush-hogs corn stalks to in-



crease the amount of residue lying on the soil. On bean fields he sows a cover crop of wheat. Since bean ground tends to be loose and therefore erode more during winter and spring, these wheat plants are grown to help reduce the erosion these fields experience. In addition, corn is no-tilled into these fields in the spring, adding to the amount of residue on the surface.

The Indiana River Friendly Farmer program was initiated in 2000 as a statewide initiative to publicly recognize and reward farmers who do an excellent job of managing their farms in an economically and environmentally sound way that protects and improves Indiana’s soil and water resources for future generations. Since 2000, nearly 600 farmers across Indiana have been publicly honored at the Indiana State Fair for their stewardship. Fourteen of those have been from Dubois County, including our 2011 awardees.

The Dubois County SWCD congratulates our awardees for outstanding conservation achievements. Both Prusz and Buening were unable to attend the ceremony at the State Fair. Both award recipients will be presented metal signs at the Dubois County SWCD Annual Meeting in January 2012.

## Conservation Items Available for Dubois County Landowners



**T**he Dubois County SWCD has several conservation items available for use by Dubois County landowners. Contact us for more information about any of the following items:

### **Blanket Stapler**

Installing erosion control blankets? This stapler makes completing the job easy! The plunger simply pushes the cartridge staples into the ground. \$20/day. Boxes of 1,000 staples costs \$80.

### **Tile Flags**

Flags on 36” wire staff can be used to mark underground power lines or surveying jobs. \$7.00/bundle of 100; various colors.

### **Spinning Jenny**

Use to install high-tensile wire fences. Load with wire and set on the ground. Walk away pulling the end of the wire and it will spin, preventing your wire from tangling. Slow down gradually before stopping to prevent over-spinning and tangling. Can also be used to rewind wire in the field. No rental fee.



## SWCD Holds Soils Judging Competition

Sixty six students making up seventeen teams participated in this year's soils judging competition held near Holland. Ten schools from eight different counties, including Dubois, participated in the event. The competition is held annually by the Dubois County SWCD to help prepare local students for regional competitions. Check out these great highlights!

*Congratulations to our winners!*

### The Top Three Teams:

1. Gibson Southern, Coach Richard Ritter
2. Gibson Southern, Coach Richard Ritter
3. North Harrison, Coach Archie Sauerheber

### The Top Five Individuals:

1. Dan Book, North Harrison
2. Maggie Ritter, Gibson Southern
3. Gavin Kissel, Gibson Southern
4. Andrew Ziliak, Gibson Southern
5. Brayden Schuetter, Forest Park





## New Regulations Affect Farm Fuel Storage

**A**gricultural producers storing more than 1,320 gallons of fuel or other petroleum products on their farms soon will need a written plan for preventing and handling spills, a Purdue University specialist said.

The plans are covered in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulation amendments that take effect Nov. 10, said Fred Whitford, coordinator of Purdue Pesticide Programs.

The federal Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure regulation was adopted in 1974. It has been amended over the years.

"The SPCC's basic intent is to make sure growers who store large amounts of these products are putting in place measures that will protect the area around their properties, specifically groundwater and surface water," Whitford said. "With this regulation EPA is saying that we need to be thinking about fuel storage as much as pesticide and fertilizer storage. It doesn't take much oil or gas to pollute water."

Under the new amendments, only petroleum products stored in stationary tanks and containers of at least 55 gallons are counted toward the regulated total. Gasoline, diesel fuel and oil in tractors, trucks and other vehicular machinery are exempt.

Farmers would not be required to write a SPCC plan if their more than 1,320 gallons of petroleum products are stored on separate farms, so long as no single farm stores the regulated minimum, Whitford said.

"If you're between 1,321 gallons and 10,000 gallons, you can self-certify your written plan. If you're at greater than 10,000 gallons, the plan has to be written by a certified professional

engineer. The EPA is looking to divide the smaller everyday users of products from those



*New regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency affecting farm fuel storage goes into effect on November 10, 2011.*

that store much larger quantities." Farmers can expect to spend between \$2,000 and \$4,000 to hire an engineer to write a SPCC plan, Whitford said.

The plan includes such information as how petroleum products are stored, the location of storage units, the farm's topography and what steps would be taken in the event of a spill. The document is kept on the farm; EPA does not receive a copy.

"If EPA has to respond to a spill on your farm they will ask for this plan," Whitford said. "Regulatory enforcement likely would occur only if an EPA representative visited a farm on an unrelated matter."

General information on the SPCC and fuel and oil storage is available in Purdue Extension publication PPP-73, Aboveground Petroleum Tanks: A Pictorial Guide. The publication can be obtained from your local Purdue Extension Office. In Dubois County, call 812-482-1782 for more details.

*Story courtesy Purdue University.*

## Improving the Potential of Your Wooded Land Through TSI

**D**oes money grow on trees? In a well-managed woodlot, it does! By working with a professional forester, owners of wooded land can decide how to best manage their trees, and reap the benefits they most desire. A landowner's management objectives can include financial gain, making the forest inviting to wildlife, increasing the size of the trees or a combination of all three goals.

Anything done to improve or enhance a stand of trees to better meet landowner objectives is called timber stand improvement, or TSI for short. The primary goal of TSI for timber production is to concentrate the diameter growth potential on high value, vigorously growing trees by eliminating competition for sunlight, and to a lesser extent, for moisture and nutrients. For landowners with woodland wildlife management objectives, TSI may include crown release of hard and soft mast trees, encouraging rather than deadening hollow trees and those with nesting cavities or dens, and the creation of wildlife openings.

Regardless of your management objectives, site selection for TSI projects is important. If you have large acreages or multiple tracts, begin TSI on the most productive areas. Young stands (below sawlog

size) generally will yield a higher return for the time and money invested in TSI than older stands. Sawlog stands, particularly if harvesting is an-

Crop tree release is generally used in quality stands of oak, ash, walnut, etc. Adjacent competing low quality trees (by form or species) are deadened



*By working with a professional forester, owners of wooded land can decide how to best manage their trees, and reap the benefits they most desire.*

anticipated in 8-10 years, will benefit the most from post-harvest TSI, with the exception of pre-harvest grapevine control where vines and a serious problem.

There are several types of TSI which are commonly used. The most productive method, particularly for previous unmanaged stands, is an improvement harvest. Low quality trees (by form or species) and partially merchantable cull trees, plus trees of any size or quality crowding or overtopping future crop trees, are harvested. This will provide growing space for higher value species to develop. Also, the landowner receives payment from the timber buyer for many of the trees removed.

to release future crop trees' crowns on at least three sides. This is usually performed either in young stands, where the competing trees are not of a merchantable size, or as a post-harvest treatment to improve the residual stand.

Cull tree removal is the deadening of unmerchantable trees, usually with short trunks, spreading crowns, cavities, seams or other defects. A single large cull can occupy and affect an acre of woods, removing that acre from any timber production. Large culls may be retained, however, for wildlife, according to management objectives.

Regeneration openings are created through harvest when harvest trees are selected and



removed as a group, or during TSI when groups of culls are deadened. Most valuable hardwoods are intolerant of shade, so any woods openings created should be completed by deadening all stems within the opening two inches in diameter or ten feet tall. This will allow full sunlight to the forest floor, and encourage even-aged regeneration of desirable hardwoods through seeds and sprouts. To be effective, the width of regeneration openings should be at least one and a half to two times the height of the surrounding trees.

Another important part of TSI for timber production is grapevine control. Grapevines are particularly damaging to young stands, where they will deform trunks and crowns, and compete for sunlight. Vines are especially damaging in regeneration openings. In full shade under a closed canopy, vines can be controlled by cutting them each place they emerge from the ground. Where moderate to full sunlight reaches the forest floor, the live ends of severed grapevines should be treated with an approved herbicide to prevent resprouting. Since untreated severed vines will resprout and persist for a few years, even in shade, it is recommended that herbicides be used if the stand is to be opened through harvest within three years following vine control. For landowners managing for wildlife production, it may

be desirable to leave grapevines for soft mast production and nesting. In woods with heavy vine problems (generally in bottomlands or in drainages), it is usually advanta-

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*To get help managing your forest, contact District Forester Adam Dumond at 812-789-2789.*

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geous to control vines prior to harvesting, before they are tangled in treetops and logging slash, making proper control difficult.

The most common methods used to kill unwanted trees and vines are frilling, cutting and girdling. Frilling is used in conjunction with an approved herbicide. Connecting axe cuts are made at a downward angle, four inches wide and encircling the tree. A liberal application of herbicides is then applied to the frill.

Unwanted vines and small trees can be completely severed. The live ends should be treated with an approved herbicide if in areas where resprouting may be a problem. Girdling, usually done with a chainsaw, is the most popular and effective method for deadening large trees. Make one complete, connecting cut at least one inch deep and

apply a liberal dose of herbicides to the cut. If not using herbicides, make two connecting girdle cuts one inch deep and about four to six inches apart. Effective herbicide use is very difficult in the early spring when sap flow is heavy. For best results, avoid the months of March through May when using herbicides on frills, cut surfaces and girdles.

Cost shares to help defray the cost of TSI projects are often available through the EQIP program of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. In Dubois County, contact Bart Pitstick, NRCS District Conservationist for details. For help and information on managing your forests in District 11, which includes Dubois County, contact Indiana DNR District Forester Adam Dumond at 812-789-2789.



*Girdling, usually done with a chainsaw, is the most popular and effective method for deadening large trees.*

## Backyard Conservation: Preparing Your Garden for Winter

**W**hen autumn nights start to get cold, it's time to prepare your garden for winter. Winterizing not only makes your garden look better during the cold weather months, but will make for easier work in the spring and will protect less hardy plants from the cold.

Start closing your garden down when there is frost in the forecast or the temperature consistently starts to drop to the low 40's or mid-30's, usually around late October or November.

Before you start your preparations, take a moment to review what worked and did not work in your garden over the past season. Fall is an ideal time to move plants (or remove plants) if you feel that they are not working in their current location. Fall is also a great time to plant bulbs, as well as plant bare-root shrubs and trees. It's a good time, too, for dividing perennials. Division not only maintains the health of your perennials, but it's also an easy way to propagate your plants so that you'll have more coverage next season.

Take a look around to see if your garden is lacking in fall blooms. If so, you may want to

plan on planting some late flowering plants in the spring, such as Rudbeckia (Black-Eyed Susan), Aster Novi-Belgii, Anemone Japonica, Sedum spectabile.

Hydrangea paniculata also pro-



*Winterizing the garden not only makes your garden look better during the winter months, but will make for easier work in the spring.*

vides nice color in the fall, but you don't have to wait until next spring to plant them. Many hardier shrubs like panicle hydrangea are perfectly happy with a late planting and will use the extra winter to build up a bigger root system; it's like getting almost another year into your plant. While this applies to many plants, not all will appreciate that head start. Talk to your local garden center to get planting advice.

Start your clean-up by removing weeds and spent annuals from your beds. For shrubs and trees, remove diseased leaves, but pruning is not recommended in the fall as it may stimulate new growth just as

the harsh winter is bearing down. Non-hardy bulbs, such as cannas, dahlias, and gladiolus, should be removed from the ground. Let the bulbs dry out in the sun for a few hours before storing them in a cool, dry place for the winter, such as a garage, attic, or basement.

If you don't already have a compost bin, consider starting one at this time. You can throw your cuttings as well as dried leaves in your compost bin, which will break down into a nutrient-rich compost for next season. Don't throw weeds or diseased cuttings into your compost, however, as this will only multiply these problems down the road.

Fall is also a great time to have a tree expert come over to look at the topside of the landscape; the leaves to the trees are off and all is revealed, including any dying or diseased wood that should be removed. Limbing up trees lightens the shade some the next season as well, so think about places in the garden that could benefit from that.

Another key point to winterizing is to look to those evergreen plants that make up so much of the American landscape. Wind can dehydrate these perpetually verdant types and send them into permanent



dormancy, so we should protect them somehow. The old school method is to hammer in three or four stakes around the plant and then take a few turns with a roll of burlap to make a windscreen. Not too pretty but very effective, especially if you stuff the top of the screen with straw or pine boughs.

The new method is to spray your plants with an anti-desiccant like Wilt-Pruf, creating a waxy coating on the leaves and needles to seal in the moisture. These sprays work great while they're on, but they usually need reapplying right around the time the nastiest storms of January and February are hitting, so remember to stock up for that second application.

Many perennials should be cut back to about 6 to 8 inches above the ground. A word of

caution, however, regarding cutting back: some perennials actually look quite attractive during the winter. If you're not sure, you might want to leave them be and see if you like the way they look in your garden

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*"It's a good idea to water your garden thoroughly before the ground freezes."*

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over the winter. Additionally, seed heads of some perennials are quite attractive and provide food for birds during the winter. Evergreen and alpine perennials should also not be cut-back in the fall. Many perennials, however, look tired and messy during the cold weather months, so you'll want to cut them back in the fall to keep your garden looking tidy and to avoid extra work in the spring. Prime examples of perennials to cut back are Alchemilla, Campanula, Coreopsis, Delphinium, Geranium, Hosta, and Veronica.

Mulching for the winter protects plants from drastic temperature changes in the soil, insulating plants against extreme cold, and also prevents soil erosion. Don't mulch too early, though, as it may encourage disease and pests. It is best to wait until after the first frost when the ground starts to

freeze. In general, 4 to 6 inches of mulch, such as dried leaves, pine needles, shredded bark, or pine boughs, will provide an adequate layer of protection for your softer plants.

It's a good idea to water your garden thoroughly before the ground freezes. Even with snow, winter can be very dry and harsh for many trees and shrubs, such as evergreens and rhododendrons, so it's best to provide them with a large supply of moisture before the extreme winter weather arrives.

Once your cleaning and cutting is done, it's time to give some love and care to your tools. Clean, oil, and sharpen your tools, then store them in a dry place for the winter. Drain garden hoses and store them coiled in a sheltered place where they won't freeze and crack. It's a little extra work, but come spring, you'll be delighted to pull out your tools that are ready to go to work with no fuss or muss.

Of course, if you choose to ignore winter preparations, the world will not come to an end, but you risk losing some of your less hardy or younger plants to severe cold, and also face a more daunting garden preparation chore in the spring. It's well worth spending some extra time in your garden on a crisp autumn day to snugly tuck-in your garden in before winter takes hold.



*Cleaning your tools before storing for winter will help prolong the life of your tools.*



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**The Conservation Conversation**

**OFFICE HOURS: MON-FRI 8 AM TO 4 PM**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER**

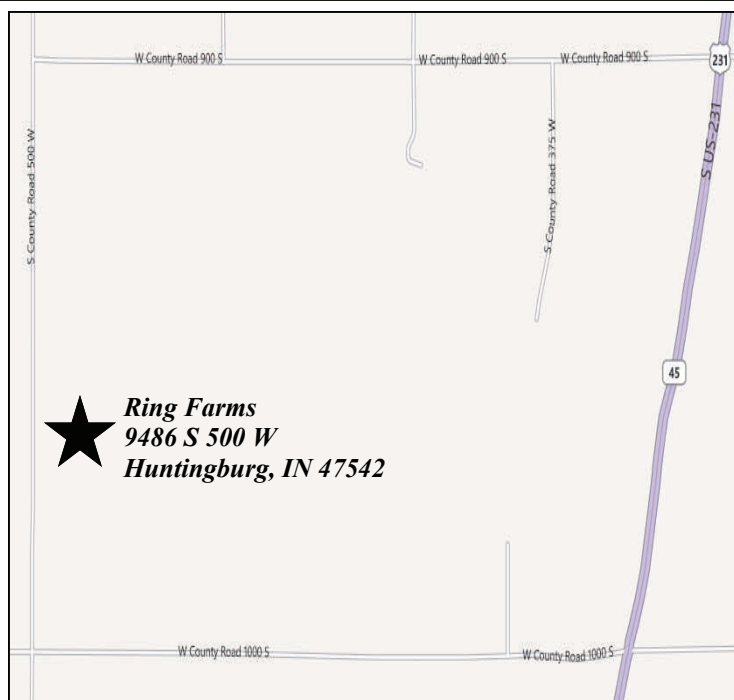
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For address corrections or to be taken off the list,  
please contact the office by email at  
[michael.wilHITE@in.nacdn.net](mailto:michael.wilHITE@in.nacdn.net)  
or call 812-482-1171 x3



*This Field Day will be held at Ring Farms, 9486 S 500 W in Huntingburg. Coming from the North: Take US 231 South from Huntingburg and turn right onto W 900 S across from the airport. Drive west until 900 ends at S 500 W. Turn left and drive approximately 1/2 mile south. Ring Farms will be on your left.*

**Cover Crop Field Day**

**November 22, 2011  
3:00PM**

**NO REGISTRATION FEE**

**For more information, call  
the Dubois County SWCD at  
812-482-1171 x3.**

*Come see the following cover crops  
growing in our test plot:*

- Crimson Clover
- Oilseed Radish
- Annual Ryegrass
  - Hairy Vetch
- Austrian Winter Peas
  - Many more!