Tree of the Quarter:  
Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) is a long lived, native oak tree. In Cass County, Bur Oaks are found naturally along riparian areas, and have been planted in shelterbelts. The taproot is extremely deep, helping to draw water during dry spells. The leaves are deeply lobed and are semi-glossy, with an alternate pattern. The acorns the Bur Oak produce are high in fat and calories and are eaten by a variety of wildlife. Deep ridges and furrows in the bark are distinctive of the species, and also allow for fire protection from prairie fires. Bur Oak may live hundreds of years. Planted as a conservation tree, Bur Oak will provide a long lasting, wildlife-friendly, and attractive choice.

Mark your Calendars!

**Ladies Ag Night: Thursday, March 10, 2016**
Ladies Ag Night is open to ALL ladies of Cass County.

We are very excited to have Dr. Val Farmer, a well-known clinical psychologist and syndicated columnist, as our keynote speaker. Dr. Farmer specializes in rural mental health and family relationships. He will be giving us tips on how to handle stress in our lives; especially on the farm.

Dr. Farmer is currently living in Wildwood, Missouri and looks forward to returning to the Fargo area to speak at Ladies Ag Night.

Please pass the word around Cass County about our special upcoming Ladies Ag Night. Please join us in March to give Dr. Farmer a warm ND welcome. The evening will features a great meal and dessert bar, and is free of charge.
2016 Tree Planting Season

It’s time to begin planning for the 2016 tree planting season. Whether you need replacement handplants or want to schedule a machine planting, now is the time to prepare.

Handplants: Our online tree store, www.casscd.org/Store/, will be open in October. You can also submit the order form directly to our office. For best selection, place your orders by December 1st.

Machine Planting:
- Site Prep Service available
- Machine planting sites must be free of any crops

Contact Tony for more information or to get on the 2016 schedule

Cost-Share opportunity: CRP general sign-up is December 1, 2015—February 26, 2016.

Instructional videos can be found on our website: casscd.org:

Machine Planting
- Handplanting a Conservation Tree
- Weed Barrier Installation

Urban Conservation

The fall season is harvest season. As we pluck the last remnants of our gardens there are a few things to keep in mind. Gardens can be looked at as a miniature field. They, too, can suffer environmental impacts if not properly taken care of. There are a few things we can do to minimize these effects. First, after harvesting is completed, place leaves, straw or other natural mulch over the top of the garden. This works as an excellent composting agent, as well as reducing erosion from wind, rain, and snow melt runoff. You should also consider planting a cover crop after harvest. Crops such as peas, beans, winter wheat, ryegrass, and alfalfa can be planted in the fall. Left to grow, they can either cut and left on top of the soil (no-till) or worked into the soil in the spring (conventional till). The benefits of a cover crop include providing nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous back into the soil, increasing organic matter, suppressing weeds, and erosion reduction. Lastly, perhaps your garden didn't reach its full potential this year. Your soil may be lacking important soil nutrients or you could have a s pH issue.

Cass County SCD offers free soil testing and recommendations for your gardens.

For more information contact:
Ashley Fisk
Ashley.fisk@nd.nacdnet.net
701.282.2157 Ext. 3

Conservation Quote of the Quarter: “...As a farmer, man himself became closely attached to the landscape, firmly rooted to the soil that supported him. At times the soil seemed bountiful and kindly and again stubborn and unfriendly, but it was always a challenge to man’s cunning.”

Charles E. Kellogg

REMINDEES

EQIP Sign Up Deadline is October 16th.

There is funding through a NDFS Windbreak Renovation Program. For information on any of these programs, stop by the office or give us a call.
Cass County Full Season Cover Crop Plot

Cover crops made another large appearance in the Valley in 2015, as many farmers are discovering the value cover crops have on their soil. The Soil District continues to try to provide the latest information and education in the use of cover crops. Currently, the Soil District has two demonstration areas in Cass County to showcase the uses and management for incorporating cover crops. For the third year in a row, we have a cover crop demonstration area located two miles south of the Embden overpass on County Highway 7. This year, we planted a nine-species cover crop cocktail containing annual ryegrass, turnips, radishes, oats, sorghum-sudan, hairy vetch, sunflowers, millet, and peas. We wanted to show the value of diversity in cover crops, especially those planted early in the growing season. We also emphasize the importance of cover crop on Prevent Plant acres to reduce fallow syndrome and continue to keep that soil active and working through the entire growing season. The other demonstration area is located west of Gardner near Northern Cass School. This demonstration area is a full-scale No-Till demo site that includes a four crop rotation with intensive use of cover crop following the harvest of the cash crop. We are very excited to learn more about how cover crops can be utilized in Cass County and to have these sites available for the public to see. Whether you’re new to the idea or have been incorporating cover crops for several years, come check out our demonstration sites to see what cover crops can do for you! - Eric

Buckthorn Control

Common Buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica) is a non-native tree brought to the US from Europe for hedge plantings in the mid 1800’s. Unfortunately, it was found to be invasive in natural areas, displacing native vegetation. It does so by leafing out before native plants, forming a dense layer of vegetation that out-competes other plants. Buckthorn can be managed by first positively identifying the tree as Buckthorn. The tree often has several stems branching from the base, with a grey to brown bark. The leaves are egg shaped, with a smooth texture and finely toothed, along with a glossy appearance. The fruit is in berry like clusters, measuring around a 1/4” in diameter. Once positively identified, the tree should be cut and chemical applied to the stump. The cuttings should be disposed of by burning. This is best done in late fall or early winter. Buckthorn is resilient, so it may take a few years to get it under control.

Buckthorn can be replaced with, depending on the soil type, with Black Chokeberry, Highbush Cranberry, Chokecherry, Grey Dogwood, Native Cottonwood and Bur Oak. It is very important to replace Buckthorn with native trees, to allow the new trees to crowd out any sprouting Buckthorn and to continue to provide all the benefits that trees provide. If you have any questions on Buckthorn identification or control, please call us.

Upcoming Events

- **Sept 15-17th** — Big Iron: RRVF
- **Sept 22nd** — Board Meeting: Fargo Field Office
- **October 12th** — Columbus Day: Office Closed
- **October 20th** — Board Meeting: Fargo Field Office
- **October 21st** — Plot Tour: No-Till Demo, Hunter, ND

Happenings………..

A Plot Tour, open to the public, will be held at the No Till Demonstration Plot near the Northern Cass School near Hunter, ND on October 21st at 9am. For more information please call the office.
All programs and services of the Cass County Soil Conservation District are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or handicap. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.