Tree of the Quarter: Black Chokeberry
(Aronia melanocarpa) Black chokeberry are medium sized shrubs, growing to a height of 5-10 feet. Showy white flowers form in spring, attracting bees. The flowers set fruit, which will grow to around a half-inch in diameter and ripen by late summer. If not harvested, the berries will lose their juiciness and shrivel up, becoming appealing to various birds in the winter. The berries are astringent when fresh picked, but are excellent when made into jellies, jams and wines, yielding a deep purple juice. The leaves of the black chokeberry are a glossy green, and turn a beautiful shade of reddish-orange in the fall, making it an excellent focal point for a landscaped yard or a farmstead windbreak. This shrub grows best on well-drained soil, but will also grow on heavier clays. The Cass County Soil Conservation District has Black Chokeberry available in our Tree Store. Consider planting this beautiful shrub and enjoying its uniqueness the entire year 'round!

Ladies Ag Night 2017
The District held its annual Ladies Ag Night on March 9th at Hagge’s Bar and Grill in Mapleton. Greg and Lisa Cook, owners of 4e Winery, were the keynote speakers. They gave a fantastic talk on making local wines. Apple and Plum wine was tasted by the crowd. Over 130 people attended the event, which was catered by One-on-One Catering of Fargo. Four flavors of cupcakes, made by LeAnn Strittmatter of Valley City, delighted the guests. Once again this year, raffle items were a hit, and the lucky winners went home with beautiful themed baskets. All in all, it was a wonderful evening spent celebrating women in agriculture. We would like to thank everyone who attended, and are already looking forward to next year!

Cass County SCD Scholarship Program
$1000.00 scholarship available for high school students going into Natural Resource Management! The District is excited to once again offer this scholarship as a way to encourage students to consider a Natural Resource Management career. We are accepting scholarship applications until July 1, 2017. The District is encouraging high school seniors or current college students from Cass County to apply for the scholarship if they plan to attend a North Dakota accredited college in the fall of 2017. The scholarship is intended for students going into Natural Resource Management, Conservation or other related fields of study. Students can download the application from the District website.
**Upcoming Events**

April 18<sup>th</sup>— **Board Meeting:** Fargo Field Office
April 18<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>— **Bale & Pallet Gardening Class:** 6-7:30pm
April 25<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>— **Make a Rain Barrel Workshop:** 6-8pm
May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup>— **Make a Compost Tumbler Workshop:** 6-8 pm
May 16<sup>th</sup>— **Board Meeting:** Fargo Field Office,
May 16<sup>th</sup>— **Reforest the Red:** Riverwood Park and Holm Park 2-7pm
May 29<sup>th</sup>— **Memorial Day:** Office Closed
June 20<sup>th</sup>— **Board Meeting:** Fargo Field Office

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**Conservation Quote of the Quarter:**

“**A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children**”

*John James Audubon*

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**Community Garden Grant**

We are excited to announce our 2017 Community Garden Grant! Limited funding is available for those looking to enhance a current community garden or for those looking to install a new community garden. Grant applications will be accepted until current year funding is exhausted. Amounts up to $500 will be granted to successful applicants for use on their community garden projects. The grant may be used only on materials needed for updating, constructing, operation of, and maintaining the community garden. This may include, but is not limited to, fencing, infrastructure (sheds, etc), tools, landscape fabric, cover crop seed mixes, irrigation, terraces, raised bed supplies, and soil amendments. Items that are not covered by the grant include seed, labor costs, fertilizers, and rent associated with land. Contact us today for an application or more information.

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**Tree Planting Season is here!**

Spring is here! That means the District will be receiving our tree order from the nurseries. Our equipment is ready to go, so we request planting customers get your site prepped and ready to be planted. Working the site is imperative to a successful planting, as a good seedbed allows for good soil-to-root contact. Some work on the front end of the planting goes a long way in ensuring a long lasting, beautiful planting.

**The District would like to thank Dan Iwen and Barry Rupprecht for returning for their 13th planting season and Adam Breske for his second season. Their hard work contributes to our success every year.**
Cass County Cover Crop Project (4CP)

The Cass County Soil Conservation has funding available in 2017 to plant cover crops. The allocation is limited and will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. The 4CP is funded through an Outdoor Heritage Fund grant and is intended for first time users of cover crop. If you are interested in trying cover crop in 2017, talk to us about signing up! Cost-share will be paid on 60% of the seed cost. All other costs will be the responsibility of the participant. There are many options for seeding of cover crops, including drilling, broadcasting, and aerial seeding. For those producers looking to drill their cover crop, we offer a no-till drill service. We are also a dealer for quality cover crop seed. For more information or to sign up, please contact Eric Dahl at the Cass County Soil Conservation office today.

Food Plot Seed Mixes

Spring is an excellent time to start thinking about planting food plots for the benefit of wildlife. We are excited to carry a few products that will help in the process of attracting and holding deer. The Bighorn Deer Mix is a perennial mix that contains a variety of clover, brassica and alfalfa species that provide a year round, high energy food source for deer. The Wildlife Brassica Mix is an annual product that contains a variety of annual brassicas that will provide an excellent fall and winter food source. Planting both annual and perennial food sources allows for a buffet of forage to attract and hold deer. The seed mixes are in stock in our office.
STEWARDSHIP FOR TODAY & TOMORROW

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.