

STOKES SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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LOCAL GROWERS TRY THEIR HAND AT BURLEY

While driving through the county have you noticed some different looking tobacco in the fields? Well, if so your probably looking at burley tobacco. According to the NC Cooperative Extension Service, there is approximately 100+ acres planted in Stokes County this season. Traditionally burley is grown in the mountains of North Carolina, Virginia and Kentucky but tobacco companies have offered some of our flu-cured growers the opportunity to grow this crop. Burley is different than flu-cured tobacco in many ways. For example burley can't handle drought as well as flu-cured, it takes around 6 weeks to cure, whole stalks are cut, hung and air cured, and after the curing process leaves are then picked and sorted according to grades. Farmers are estimating approximately 10 cent more per pound for burley versus flu-cured, but the jury's still out as to if it will be a successful crop in this area.



Burley grown at Smith & Sons Farm in King.

ATTENTION ALL TOBACCO GROWERS

Are you following your conservation plan on highly erodible land? If you don't know what is required in your plan, please call our office so that we can review it with you. Many plans may need to be updated if you have changed cropland to hayland or pastureland. Have you started farming different fields in the past few years? Have you switched from strip-cropping to whole field rotations? If so, we need to revise your plan. In order to remain eligible to receive tobacco buyout payments, producers must be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions. You must be using an approved conservation system to be in compliance. Please call our office at 593-2846 if you have any questions.

SOIL IS MEANT TO BE COVERED

If you have crop fields that were plowed and not planted or if you have already harvested your crop, now is the time to plant a cover crop or permanent vegetation. Grasses (fescue & orchard grass) should be planted by October 25th. In absence of a soil test, use 2 tons of lime and 1000 lbs. of 10-10-10 fertilizer per acre.

Consider the following cover crops behind tobacco:



No-till soybeans with residue.

	<u>Planting Dates</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Barley	8/20 – 10/10	2 – 3 bu./ac.
Crimson Clover	9/15 – 11/5	15 – 30 lbs./ac.
Oats	8/20 – 10/10	3 bu./ac.
Rye	9/5 – 11/1	2 bu./ac.
Wheat	10/10 – 11/1	2-3 bu./ac.

These cover crops will protect the soil from erosion, add organic matter, conserve moisture, and provide wildlife benefits.

Cost share incentives may be available for farmers who want to try no-till or conservation tillage.

Keep records of fertilizer, lime, herbicide, etc.! Future conservation programs will emphasize the importance of record keeping

Are your pastures overgrazed? Is your fescue dying out? Consider planting warm season grasses in your pastures or hayland. Call us for more information. We may be able to provide cost share assistance.



Check out our WEBSITE at <http://www.co.stokes.nc.us/soil/>

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Tom Smith, *District Soil Conservationist*
Jane Dobson, *NRCS Technician*
Sara Jo Durham, *District Technician*
Janice Pack, *Adm. Asst./Education Coordinator*

We will be holding our annual **TREE SEEDLING SELL** this fall. Call our office for species available & cost list. All orders must be pre-paid & will be available for pick-up in February 2006 at the soil & water office. Deadline to order seedlings is **OCTOBER 14th**.

COST SHARE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

If you have erosion problems or water quality issues on your farm, you may be eligible to receive cost share assistance through the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program and/or the Environmental Quality Incentives Program administered by technicians in the soil & water office. Eligible participants may receive up to 75% cost share funding for installing practices that control erosion and improve water quality. Some examples of eligible practices include riparian buffer restoration, excluding livestock from streams, protection of heavy use areas such as feedlots, converting highly erodible cropland to perennial vegetation, long term no-till planting, and stream-bank protection. Poultry and livestock waste & mortality concerns are also addressed through the cost share programs. Examples of eligible practices could include, wells & drinkers, drystack and poultry incinerators or composters. If you are interested in improving the water quality on your farm, please call the Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District at 336-593-2846 ext. 3 for more information on programs available.



Pictured: Poultry Incinerator recently installed with 75% cost share through the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program.

Note: Up to ten years ago the preferred practice for poultry producers was to deposit dead birds in dead wells which we now know poses a potential danger to drinking water.

The soil & water office sells the highest quality erosion control fabric filter cloth - 12 ½' x 360' roll (500 sq. yd.) for 90 cent a square yard plus you receive a free box of pins with each roll you order. Call our office to get information on other erosion control products available or to place an order.

Are you going to clear some woodland in order to plant crops or for pasture? If so, you need to request a highly erodible land and wetland determination by filling out Form AD 1026 at the Farm Service Agency. Clearing wetlands or planting a crop on highly erodible land without an approved conservation plan is a violation of the 2002 Farm Bill. You could lose your USDA program benefits (including buyout payments). Come in or give us a call before you do land clearing.

Mark your calendars – **NC Big Sweep Litter Free Watersheds** will be held October 1, 2005 from 9AM-12PM. For location & info. or if you want to report an area that needs to be picked up that is easily accessible contact Sara Jo Durham, Stokes Co. Coordinator at 336-593-2846 ext. 3.

Gloves & Bags
Furnished



SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION

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