

## 2020 Soil and Water Conservation Week Talking Points

*Use these talking points to submit a letter to the editor or call your local radio, newspaper, environmental/commodity publication or news station and schedule a time to talk to them about Soil and Water Conservation during the week of April 26 – May 3, 2020.*

- This year Iowa celebrates its 79<sup>th</sup> Soil and Water Conservation Week. The celebration is part of the nationally celebrated Soil and Water Stewardship week. The Theme this year is “Where Would We Bee Without Pollinators”



- About 1 out of every 3 bites of food exists because of our precious pollinators. Insects such as bees, wasps, moths, butterflies, flies, and beetles are the most common pollinators, but as many as 1,500 species of vertebrates such as birds and mammals also serve as pollinators. The total value of pollination services rendered by all insects globally comes in excess of 100 billion US dollars.
- Every week is Soil and Water Conservation Week for the state of Iowa's 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Soil and Water Conservation Districts were established after the dust bowl to ensure sustainable agriculture and clean water.
- Insert information about your Soil and Water Conservation District:
  - Tell a personal story about Soil and Water Conservation
  - Indicate the acres or types of conservation practices installed by the district over the last year
  - Promote your district fundraiser(s) or outreach efforts
  - Invite people to attend future district activities
  - Encourage listeners to nominate a farmer for a local or statewide award!

- Insert some interesting facts about the work your office does to promote pollinators or conservation practices: For example:
  - How many watersheds projects is your district currently (or historically) involved with and what type of work is done?
  - Talk about healthy soil, cover crops, and or other water quality improvement practices landowners can implement on their farms. Discuss financial incentives available to them.
  - Improving existing and providing new habitat for pollinators has become a major focus for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in working with private land owners. The 2014 Farm Bill contains many incentive-based conservation programs that can be used to create or improve pollinator habitat!
  - Discuss activities that everyone can participate in such as urban conservation and volunteer opportunities
  
- The Van Wall Group of Perry will again be donating the use of a John Deere 6E Series Utility Tractor for up to 12 months or 200 hours for the Conservation Farmer of the year! Contact your local SWCD to nominate a neighbor!
  
- The Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award celebrates its 9<sup>th</sup> year in 2020! A joint effort the Governor, Lt. Governor, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to recognize the exemplary volunteer efforts to Iowa's farmers as environmental leaders committed to healthy soils and improved water quality.
  - Provide your district's contact information so people can find out more
  - Post award info to your website so people can download and submit!