

Chester

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Biggest Achievement of 2023

Chester Soil and Water Conservation District participated in and sponsored several local events to encourage positive conservation practices to people in the community. Of special note, an Irrigation Field Day was sponsored by the South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts in cooperation with the district, SCDNR, and NRCS. The day was spent outdoors learning how Soil and Water Conservation Districts educate landowners about successful conservation practices, how USDA-NRCS provides technical assistance to put these practices to use, and demonstrations on how irrigation can be used by anyone no matter the size of the operation with experts on hand. Vice Chairman Jeff Wilson's farm, Cotton Hills Farms, hosted the event to illustrate how good conservation practices such as no-till, cover crops, and water conservation can work together to make a farm more resilient, profitable, and beneficial to the environment. With more than 100 participants, this event was a great opportunity for landowners to meet local district commissioners, partnership staff, and irrigation suppliers to recommend the best management practices.

Chairman Allen Beer, Vice Chairman Jeff Wilson, and Commissioners Mac Turner and Ethan Bedford made sure everyone enjoyed their day and left with valuable knowledge.



Conservation by the Numbers

- Chairman Allen Beer is the longest serving active commissioner in South Carolina beginning his service in 1973
- 468 acres in Chester County planted through district's no-till drill rentals
- Received 84 entries to District Conservation Contests
- District Coordinator Beth Harris of almost 8 years retired and was replaced with Susan Lalli.

Other Notable Accomplishment



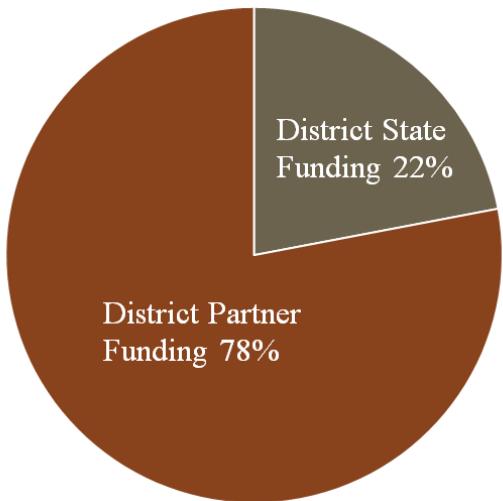
On Arbor Day, over 50 fruit trees were given away to be planted in Chester County. Local landowners were excited to be able to plant a new tree on their property. Participants were given a choice of a peach, pear, apple, or fig tree.

2024 District Plans

- Increase participation in conservation education contests
- Build partnerships to increase outreach efforts
- Encourage no-till planting as a conservation practice
- Work with Rocky Creek and Tinkers Creek Watershed Directors to maintain watershed dams

South Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Districts - 2023 Impact

State FY24 Conservation District Funding



For every \$1 of state appropriated funds to Conservation Districts, \$3.40 on average is leveraged to implement conservation programs in South Carolina.

Conservation Districts assist with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Farm Bill Programs which brought more than **\$55 million** to South Carolina's private lands for conservation implementation in federal FY23.

More than 190,000 students were reached by conservation district youth oriented programs such as school gardening, seed libraries, SC Envirothon, Arbor Day and Earth Day events, stormwater education, scholarships, and conservation related contests, etc.

More than 2 million adults were educated on conservation topics including Farm Bill Programs, pollinator promotion, stormwater mitigation, invasive species control, prescribed fire, water quality and conservation, habitat restoration, land easements, etc.

More than 10,000 acres statewide were impacted by conservation rental equipment available through conservation districts (no-till drills, prescribed fire equipment, hog traps, etc.).

SC Envirothon State Champions from Spartanburg Day School represented South Carolina at the 2023 international NCF-Envirothon Competition competing against teams from the US, Canada, Singapore and China.

Programs involving land easements, habitat restoration, invasive species removal, water conservation, watershed improvement, litter removal, and conservation education are just a handful of the vast conservation topics implemented statewide by Conservation Districts.