



# St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

Summer Newsletter: August 2024

Working for you to help sustain  
Maine's abundant natural resources  
since 1942 ...

St. John Valley Soil & Water Conservation  
District offers the following services :

- ◆ Soil test kits
- ◆ Water test kits
- ◆ Manure test kits
- ◆ Grass seeder rentals

## Conservation

## SOLUTIONS

**CONTACT: [sjvswcd@gmail.com](mailto:sjvswcd@gmail.com) (207) 834-3311 Ext. 3**



### Upcoming events & Important dates

**Tuesday, August 13th 9a.m.-12p.m.**  
for a free educational and fun Plant  
Paddle on Cross Lake. Sign up by using

#### 2024 IPP Workshops



the 2024 IPP Work-  
shops QR code

You can also help us  
as we survey ALL of  
Cross and Mada-  
waska Lake's  
aquatic plants.

Join for half or full day or more any-  
time from August 12 to 19, contact  
Cheryl St. Peter at Friends of Cross  
Lake if you can help at 207-768-6617.

## Credit Calendar

### Pesticide Safety and PPE

Monday August 26, 2024 6p-7p  
St. John Valley Technology Center

Credits: 1 Pesticide

Program fee: \$10, preregistration with  
SJVSWCD is required by August 23 by  
calling 834-3311

### Foundations of IPM

Monday Sept 9, 2024 6p-7p  
St. John Valley Technology Center

Credits: 1 Pesticide

Program fee: \$10, preregistration with  
SJVSWCD is required by Sept 9 by calling  
834-3311

## Rotations for Soil Fertility

Do you have a  
problem with:

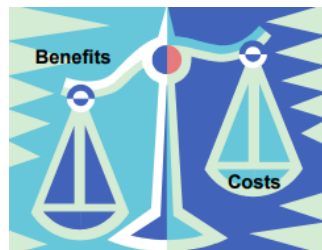
- Soil crusting
- Cloddy Soil
- Water Stress (too wet or too dry) for crops
- Soil erosion
- Soil compaction
- Low Yields

A crop rotation can help to manage your soil  
and fertility, reduce erosion, improve your soil's  
health, and increase nutrients available for  
crops.

### Benefits of Crop Rotations:

- Improve crop yields
- Improve the workability of the soil
- Reduce soil crusting
- Increase water available for plants
- Reduce erosion and sedimentation
- Recycle plant nutrients in the soil
- Provide better distribution of labor during  
the crop season
- Reduce fertilizer & insecticide inputs
- More money in your pocket!

**Call NRCS today, there is little to no cost to  
implement this practice.**



## Technical Help is Available

Your local Natural Resources  
Conservation Service (NRCS) office has  
experienced conservationists that can  
assist you with developing rotations for  
soil fertility. They can also help you  
develop a Conservation Plan to solve  
other problems you have identified on  
your farm. There is no charge for our  
assistance. Simply call your local office at  
(207) 834-3311 Ext. 3 to set up an  
appointment and we will come to your  
farm. You may also be eligible to receive  
financial assistance, through a state or  
federal program. Your NRCS office will  
explain any programs that are available  
so you can make the best decision for  
your operation. All NRCS programs and  
services are voluntary.

## Other Benefits for Soil Fertility:

- Reduces soil loss
- Reduces nutrient and pesticide  
contamination of streams and well  
water
- Improves crop emergence, growth, and  
health
- Reduces financial risk by using multiple  
crops
- Improves air quality

## WHAT IS THE ST. JOHN VALLEY SWCD?

The St. John Valley SWCD is one of thousands of SWCD's around the country, each governed by a volunteer Board of Supervisors. Our purpose is to use and coordinate all available technical, financial, and educational resources to address the needs of local land owners and users for the conservation of soil, water and other natural resources. In addition, we work with and assist governmental agencies and non-profit organizations.

**Our Mission:** *“To provide local landowners, land users, and other individuals and organizations with the information, education, and technical assistance they need to help protect and enhance Maine’s natural resources and to use them wisely. The St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District seeks to foster and encourage the development of an enduring land stewardship ethic among residents of the St. John River Valley.”*

**The St. John Valley SWCD is working for you and your community! Let us know how we can better serve you.**

**All programs and services of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the USDA are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political belief, gender identity, sexual orientation, or marital and familial status.**

### Diverse cover crop mixes increase the success of most agricultural systems.

Plant biodiversity helps to prevent disease and pest problems associated with monocultures. Using cover crops and increasing diversity within crop rotations improves soil health and soil function, reduces costs, and increases profitability. Diversity above ground improves diversity below ground, which helps create healthy productive soils.



### Cover Crops

Cover crops are grasses, legumes, and forbs planted for seasonal vegetative cover.

Well-managed cover crops can be an integral part of a cropping system. Cover crops can be managed to improve soil health, as they help to develop an environment that sustains and nourishes plants, soil life and beneficial insects.

Cover crops can be planted any time of the year, typically following cash crops. Examples of cover crops include rye, wheat, oats, clovers and other legumes, sunflowers, buckwheat. Planting several cover crop species together in a mixture can increase their impact on soil health. It's important to choose the right cover crop mix.



### Cover Crop Benefits

**Restoring Soil Health –** Cover crops help increase organic matter in the soil and improve overall soil health by adding living roots to the soil during more months of the year. Cover crops can improve water infiltration; for example, planting deep-tap rooted crops like forage radishes can create natural water passages. Also, fibrous rooted grass plants help break up compaction layers at the surface and allow water to percolate deeper in the soil. Legume cover crops serve as natural fertilizers while grasses scavenge nutrients that are often lost after harvest or during winter.

## 2024 Membership Dues—St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEDGE AMOUNT:  
 Valley Friend.....\$25.00  
 Valley Steward.....\$50.00  
 Valley Patron.....\$100.00  
 Valley Visionary.....\$250.00+  
 Other .....



Please return this form with your check payable to St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District, 139 Market Street, Suite 106, Fort Kent, ME 04743