



# St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

Spring Newsletter: March 2025

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 Seed mixes  
Marking Flags  
Grass seeder rentals



## Conservation SOLUTIONS

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



### Upcoming events & Important dates

**Climate Smart Ecological Designs for Farms**  
Wednesday, March 19th 11:00 - 3:00  
Morning session is (virtual or in-person) Register Here or by calling 834-3311, ext 3.

**Growing and Marketing Specialty Potato Varieties**  
Thursday, March 27th 11:00 - 1:00 PM  
(virtual webinar) Register here or by calling 834-3311, ext 3.

**Climate Smart Soil Management Workshop**  
Wednesday, April 2nd from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (virtual or in-person)  
Register here or by calling 834-3311, ext 3.

### Credit Calendar

**Foundations of IPM**  
Monday April 14, 2025 6p-7p  
St. John Valley Technology Center  
Credits: 1 Pesticide  
Program fee: \$10,

Preregistration with SJVSWCD is required by April 7 by calling 834-3311 ext 3.

**2025 Summer Field Day**  
Thursday August 7, 2025 9a-2p  
PI Research Farm 157 Johnson Road  
Presque Isle  
Credits: 2 Pesticide

Preregistration with Central Aroostook SJVSWCD is required by August 1st by calling 551-3687

### Cross Lake Watershed Grant for Conservation Practices

The St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (District), with the County of Aroostook, Friends of Cross Lake (FOCL), and others, is reaching out to ALL producers in the Cross Lake, Daigle and Dickey Brook watersheds with the opportunity to participate in a grant with reimbursement for implementing the conservation practices of multispecies cover, and/or single or winter cover in 2025.

The grant will reimburse multispecies cover at \$92.51/acre on ~480 acres and single or winter cover at \$74/acre on ~800 acres for a total grant amount available for these practices of \$103,600.

An approximate 40% match is required and all practices must be implemented by September 30, 2025.

This grant is Phase II of a multi-phase effort (until at least 2031) to restore Cross Lake's water quality to meet state standards and complements the 10-year USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service National Water Quality Initiative project in the Dickey and Daigle Brook, and Cross Lake watersheds.

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### 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.

**Fort Kent NRCS (207) 834-3311**

### Become Part of Our Database of forest landowners

Are you a forest landowner in northern Maine?

The St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District received grant funding from the Davis Conservation Foundation and is working to develop a database of forest landowners in northern Maine, categorizing them by property size, forest type, and interest in conservation. This important database will assist the district in their targeted outreach and marketing to achieve increased landowner participation. Facilitating engagement in sustainable forest management and enhanced forest health and conservation education. Call the district today to be included and supported.

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**Cross Lake Watershed Grant for Conservation Practices**

To find out more about participating in this Phase II grant, contact Henok Wehib at the District at 207-834-3311 or visit the District office at 139 Market Street in Fort Kent, or contact Andrew Carpenter at Northern Tilth at [andrew@northerntilth.com](mailto:andrew@northerntilth.com), 207-338-5500 or 207-323-2269. To learn more about FOCL and its projects, contact Cheryl St. Peter, FOCL Project Manager, at [countyee@fairpoint.net](mailto:countyee@fairpoint.net) or visit <https://www.friendsofcrosslake.org/> or [@facebook.com/friendsofcrosslake](https://facebook.com/friendsofcrosslake). Funding for this project, in part, was provided by the USEPA under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The funding is administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in partnership with EPA.

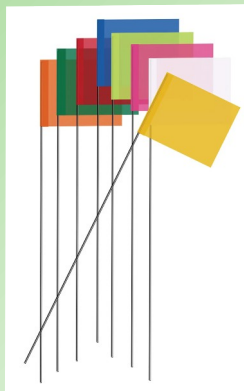


**Row Marking Flags for Sale**

Long flags (3Ft.) are \$18.81 per bundle. (This includes tax.)

Short flags are \$12.66 per bundle. (includes tax)

Call 834-3311 ext 3 to place an order



**District Seed Sales**

Contact the District at 834-3311 ext. 3 for your spring seed sale needs. Large and small projects are supported.

Construction mixes for lawns (Perennial & Annual Rye): \$125.00/50lb bag

Forestry Blend (for seeding ditches): \$165/50lb bag

Pollinator mix (25% Spring Maxx Pea and Oat Blend, 15% Purple Bounty Hairy Vetch, 15% Crimson Clover, 15% Buckwheat, 10% Berseem Clover, 10% Wildlife Sunflower Blend): \$180.00/50lb bag

Tillage Radish: \$125.00/50lb bag

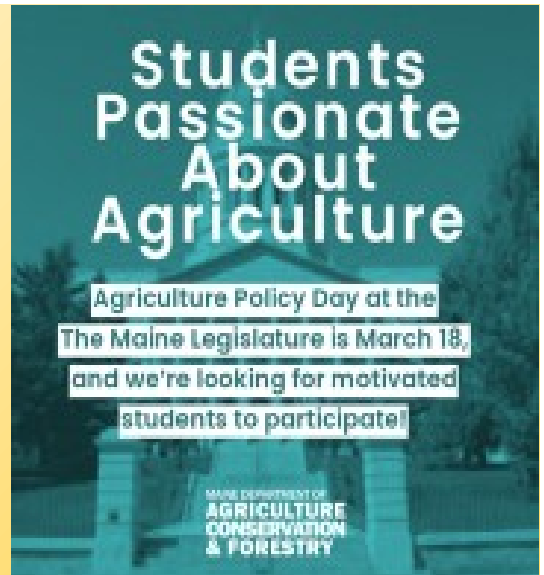
Clover Blend (Ladino White and Dutch White) \$325/50lb bag

- Receive at cost pricing for District members.
- All others at 10% markup.

**Cover Crops**

Here are some key science-backed facts from recent research on cover crops and soil health:

1. Boost Soil Organic Matter: Studies show cover crops can increase soil organic carbon by 0.1–0.4% per year, improving soil fertility and structure. (Source: USDA, NRCS)
2. Improve Water Infiltration: Research shows cover crops can improve water infiltration by 20–40%, reducing runoff and increasing drought resilience. (Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 2022)
3. Carbon Sequestration: Cover crops help sequester 0.3–1.5 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per acre per year, contributing to climate-smart farming. (Journal of Environmental Quality, 2023)



**Free Soil Health Testing**

The Maine Healthy Soils Program is partnering with Augusta-based Woods End Laboratories to provide no-cost soil health testing for Maine farmers.

Program staff will work with you to collect soil samples and review the test results with you. Soil health testing provides you with a data-based foundation for choosing, integrating, and adjusting your healthy soils best practices.

Appointments are available from April through November on a first-come-first-served basis. Sign up today by filling out our booking form and selecting the 'Soil Health Testing – Soil Sampling' service.

Contact Matthew Boucher for more information: [matthew.boucher@maine.gov](mailto:matthew.boucher@maine.gov)



**Time to Register!**  
**2025 Northeast Farm to Institution Summit : April 7-9**



Register now for the **2025 Northeast Farm to Institution Summit**, April 7-9, 2025 in Portland, Maine! More than 500 will gather to explore the theme "Belonging," and how we can collaboratively create a just, equitable, and regenerative food system. Join the movement of schools, hospitals, colleges, correctional facilities and other institutions to transform the food system - and advance the Northeast's farm, food, and sea businesses. Scholarships available. [Learn more at f2isummit.org](https://f2isummit.org).

## 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.**

### Maine Healthy Soils Program – Soil Health Implementation Grant

The **Maine Healthy Soils Program** offers financial and technical resources to farmers to adopt, improve, scale, and maintain healthy soils best practices on the farm. The Department's Division of Agricultural Resource Development has opened grant applications for the Soil Health Implementation Grant, which offers up to \$100,000 to eligible farms to address on-farm barriers to adopting, improving, and/or maintaining soil health.

A copy of the Request for Applications (RFA#ARDMHSP2025.SHIG1), as well any amendments and/or question and answer summaries can be obtained at the [Maine Healthy Soils Program website](#).

[Download RFA \(PDF\)](#)

Application forms must be submitted via the online form linked in the RFA, and supplemental files must be emailed to [matthew.boucher@maine.gov](mailto:matthew.boucher@maine.gov). Application submissions must be received no later than 5:00 p.m., local time, on April 4, 2025. Applications will open on February 14, 2025. Applications not submitted following application instructions described in the RFA will not be considered for award.

### Multi Species Cover Crop Benefits

Restoring Soil Health – Multi Species 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.

### 2025 Membership Dues—St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

NAME: _____	PLEDGE AMOUNT:
ADDRESS: _____	Valley Friend.....\$25.00
TOWN: _____ ZIP: _____	Valley Steward.....\$50.00
EMAIL: _____	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