



10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

MAY 2012

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

As Conservation Districts – one of our most important duties includes Education of both the young and old both in the rural and urban areas of our counties.

Ideas & Budgeting – First you have to identify exactly who you want to target, what you want to talk about, who is going to take care of it and how much money you will spend. Below are a few ideas for young and old.

- Publish articles – Public Media is by far the most beneficial for the adults – most read the news, listen to local news, have e-mail or are on Face Book.
- Enviroscope – Borrow an Enviroscope and go teach your 3-5 graders about water quality.
- Planting Trees – Give a way trees to young and old and show them how to plant and care for them. Have someone from Division of Forestry help you.
- Edible Soils – Visit 3-7 graders and tell them about the layers of the soil. Then have them make their own soil layers with cookies, pudding and gummy worms.
- Dig it – Go talk to students of any age about how the soil is important to us and related to everything we have.
- Soil to Spoon – Adults or Students of any age can be taught about where our food comes from.
- Start a Jr. Board, Water Watch Group or High School Envirothon team - No better way for High School students to further their knowledge of our natural resources.
- Fred the Fish – K-2 – Fred the fish teaches about water pollution and he can't survive in polluted water.
- Backyard & Water Conservation – Rain Gardens – Rain Barrels and clean water can be presented to anyone but this one is best with adults.
- Field Days & Cooperators Meals – Big or small this is a great opportunity to showcase what you do and provide some education about whatever you choose. Invite the traditional agriculture field but also reach outside of that and give the city folk a good reason to show up.
- Take students to a farm – have a safety day
- Arrange for the Department of Agriculture to come to your county and sponsor Ag in The Classroom (3-8 grades).
- Arrange for the Owensboro Museum of Science to come to your county with the Ag Adventures Program (3-6 grades).

- Food Tracing with high school students and adults – take a pizza and see if they can trace every ingredient then explain the processes that must take place to produce food.
- Wildlife Habitat K-5– build birdhouses – talk about what animals need to survive. Have Fish & Wildlife help you.
- Sponsor Environmental Education Certification – Project WET & Wild, Food Land and People etc. for teachers
- Organic & Innovative Farming & Soil Quality Workshops are good for adults
- Education for adults on resources, local, state and Federal Programs etc.
- Giveaways – There is a world of free info from all ag organizations (NRCS, Fish & WL, Soybean Board, Corn Growers Association, Dairy Council, Cattleman's', southern states etc. will all give promotional items, DVDs and information to use in schools.

How to get started

- **School System:** One of the most important tools we have at our fingertips is our local school systems. You may be surprised by the feedback you will get from teachers on how important conservation – agriculture and environmental education is to them but yet their curriculum doesn't allow a lot of time for these things. Most schools are willing to make time for activities like these.
- FYI – Kentucky law now requires that anyone that frequents Public School classrooms have a background check.
- Start with a teacher that you or your supervisors might know and go talk to them about what you have to offer. If they can't help – they will more than likely be willing to direct you to who you need to talk to.
- Talk to your superintendant or principal and start with one school at a time or do a county wide project.
- **POSITIVE Public Relations** – You see education is not just hands on – it is about information, articles and technology and they will take you a long way.
- E-mail is the most important tool that each District has. All school systems in KY are on the web and most of them have contact information for every teacher. Sending a mass e-mail is very effective.
- Newspaper: All small communities have one or more newspapers in circulation. This is a great way to get information out about events and everything that a District has to offer. You should be posting articles on a regular basis if you do not have a newsletter.
- Newsletter: Start your own quarterly or a couple of times a year or request a page in your local extension newsletter. This is an excellent opportunity to get to get information to the “non-traditional” customer.
- Facebook & Twitter: The world of technology! There are many conservation Districts that have a Facebook and Twitter page and it is a very quick way to get information out. Send it to your friends, schools, businesses – then it goes to theirs – and there you go, you have reached many people at one time.
- Local TV & Radio – Some communities have local TV and radio and they are excellent ways to get your name out there. Promote Field Days, Tree Giveaways, record a Public Information message – “Did you Know...”
- **Local Resources: There is a world of help at your fingertips – in your community.**
- **Local Library** – Every community has a library and most offer programs for youth and adults. Libraries also welcome information about science – agriculture and environmental issues.
- **County Fiscal Court, Chamber of Commerce & City Council: Team up with local government to promote and provide activities. Co-Sponsor Earth Day and Arbor Day activities – Promote Recycling – Clean Water – Farmers Market.**