

**Madison County
Soil Conservation District**
313 N Parkway
Jackson, TN 38305

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Chairman, Allen Verell
Vice-Chairman, Don Johnson
Sec. -Treas., Joel Haynes
Member, Don Pearson
Member, Alan Ewell

Serving to Conserve
Madison County's
Natural Resources
Since 1941



**Madison County SCD
Newsletter
Summer 2018**



NEWSLETTER

MADISON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Serving to Conserve Madison County's Natural Resources Since 1941



Volume 19, Issue 1, Summer, 2018



Excellent Stand of No-till Cotton Planted into Winter Cover - Griggs Farms 2018 (see article)

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Board of Supervisors

Allen Verell
Chairman

Don Johnson
Vice-Chairman

Joel Haynes
Secretary-Treasurer

Don Pearson
Member

Alan Ewell
Member

The Madison County Soil Conservation District does not discriminate on the basis of a person's race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

The District is a recipient of taxpayer funding. If you observe an agency director or employee engaging in any activity which you consider to be illegal, improper, or wasteful, please call the comptroller's toll free hotline: 1-800-232-5454.

Thanks for Making our Banquet Possible!

GOLD Sponsors

Mercer Gin
Don Johnson & Couch Farms

BEST ONE TIRE & SERVICE
Jackson, TN
Daryl Griffin

Silver Sponsors

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District Awards and Appreciation Banquet 2018

The Madison County SCD held its annual awards and appreciation banquet on Tuesday, March 13th. Over 100 guests attended the evening event. John Thomas Moore was recognized as the 2017 Outstanding District



Cooperator. Everyone enjoyed a steak or chicken dinner catered by Richard's of Bolivar. Stephen Raper was the guest speaker. Stephen gave an interesting and informative presentation on his Australia farming experience. The twenty floral plants that decorated the tables along with the banquet's beautiful floral centerpiece from Sand's Florist and four \$25 Four Seasons Nursery gift cards were given away as door prizes.

John Thomas Moore – Outstanding District Cooperator of 2017



John Thomas Moore, the District's Outstanding Cooperator of 2017, comes from a long line of farmers and soil conservationists. After graduating from Southside H.S. in 2000, Thomas set out farming on his own. Thomas raises cotton, corn, soybeans, and wheat on approximately 800 acres in western Madison County. Thomas works closely with the District and NRCS to control soil erosion and to improve the productivity of his soil. Thomas has no-tilled from the start. He rotates his crops, tests his soil regularly, and practices precision agriculture. He has installed several grade control structures, terraces, and basins. In recent years he has been planting a mix of winter cover on several fields. Along with being a fulltime farmer, Thomas is a first responder serving as a member of the Madison County Volunteer Fire Department, Station #3. He is a member of Farm Bureau and was a member of the Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers where he served as President and as Treasurer. In 2010 he received the Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher of the Year award for Madison County. Thomas is a lifelong resident of the Leighton community in southwest Madison County. He is the son of the late Pam and Terry Moore. His father, Terry, served on the Madison County SCD board from 1984 – 1994. Thomas and his wife Lauren attend Woodland Baptist Church with their two children, Hailea, and Austin.

District Cooperator Earns Statewide Award

Matt Griggs - TACD Tennessee's Outstanding Conservation Farmer 2017



Local farmer, Matt Griggs of the Mason Grove community, was recognized as Tennessee's 2017 Conservation Farmer by the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts (TACD). The award was presented to Matt at the TACD Awards Breakfast, during the TACD 74th Annual Convention held in Jackson on Feb. 25th. Presenting the award to Matt was Tim Williams, Sr. Vice President AG



Lending with Farm Credit Mid-America, the sponsor of TACD's Conservation Farmer Awards Program. Matt works closely with the District and NRCS. He earned the District Outstanding District Cooperator award for 2016, which was a prelude to the state award. Matt is very enthusiastic about Cover Crops and Improving Soil Health. He is one of [NRCS's Soil Health Hero](#), featured on the [TACD website](#), and is one of [NACD's Soil Health Champions](#). Matt was the [ASA Conservation Legacy Southeast Regional award winner](#) last year. Congratulations!

An Excellent Stand in An Excellent Cover -

Matt Griggs – if first you don't succeed



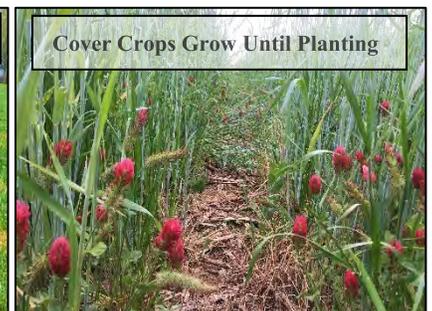
Matt Griggs of the Mason Grove community has been experimenting with the use of cover crops going on about 5 years. Matt wants to significantly increase his soil organic matter. To do so he produces high biomass cover crops and allows them to grow until planting. Matt has consistently obtained good stands of corn and soybean in his covers. However, cotton has been a different story. Although his cotton yields were okay his cotton stands looked horrible, they were certainly not a ringing endorsement for cover crops. In the heavy cover consisting of Cereal Rye, Rye Grass, Crimson Clover, Winter Peas, Vetch, Radishes, and Buck Wheat it was hard to get good seed to ground contact. After three years of trying different things with disappointing results Matt had an idea. Instead of strip till, as practiced in the Midwest, what about strip spraying? This past winter Matt rigged up a hooded sprayer. The rig was set to roundup 10-inch-wide strips where he would later plant his seeds. The hoods would shield 28-inch-wide strips of cover crops that would continue to grow until planting. In mid-March Matt sprayed the strips. He used his GPS guidance with sub inch accuracy to record his spray paths for planting cotton. Six weeks later, during the first two weeks of May, Matt sprayed, crimped and planted, all on the same day. Finally, after four years, Matt had high biomass, excellent ground cover, and a stand he could be proud of. Matt said that there were no significant weed problems in the 10 inch spray strips but he wishes that he had waited a week or two before he had sprayed them.



Strip Spraying – Mid-March



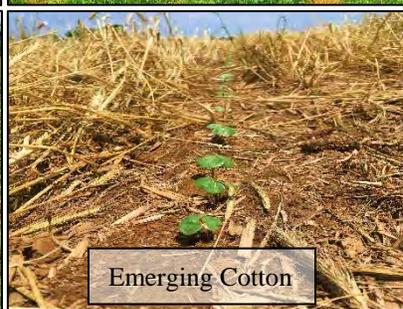
10" Planting Strips & 28" Cover Strips



Cover Crops Grow Until Planting



Crimp, Spray, Plant – 1st two weeks of May



Emerging Cotton



Excellent Cover – Excellent Stand – High Biomass – Increased Soil Organic Matter



Don Johnson Appointed to the Madison County SCD Board –

In March the State Soil Conservation Committee appointed Don Johnson to serve on the Madison County SCD Board. Don is a life-long resident of the Denmark community. Don is a full-time farmer and is manager of the Mercer Gin. Don looks forward to serving his 6th term on the Madison County SCD board.



Please Welcome Paula Combs -

– Office Secretary, Madison County SCD

As you contact the District office you will be greeted by a new voice and a new face. Please welcome Paula Combs to the Madison County Soil Conservation District staff. Paula began work with the District on May 16th. She will serve as the District's office secretary. Paula looks forward to meeting everyone and assisting farmers, landowners, and others with their conservation needs.

Interested in Local Soil Health/Cover Crop Round Table Discussions with other farmers?
Give us a call 731-668-1544 ext. 3

Conservation Cost - Share Programs Available



NRCS - provides financial assistance **to farmers and landowners** for conservation work to address soil erosion and to improve water quality. Funding is through the USDA-EQIP program. Practices include **soil health-winter cover crops**, gully control structures, livestock watering facilities, grass establishment, cross fencing, terraces, and others. You can apply now but it is essential that you apply before October 1st. For details contact the Jackson NRCS Field Office, 668-1544 ext. 3.

Madison County SCD - provides Cost-Share Assistance **to District Cooperators who apply** conservation practices that address soil erosion and improve water quality. Funding is provided through a Tennessee Department of Agriculture – Agriculture Resources Conservation Fund – Best Management Practice Grant. Practices include **soil health-winter cover crops**, gully control structures, livestock watering facilities, grass establishment, cross fencing, terraces, and others. Those that are interested can apply now. Contact the district office, 668-1544 ext. 3.

WRE – NRCS has an on-going sign-up for purchasing easements to convert certain cropland back to wetland through the establishment of bottomland hardwoods. Easement acquisitions for Madison County are around \$2,400/acre for crop and pasture land and \$1,480/acre for woodland. For details contact the Jackson NRCS field office, 668-1544 ext. 3.