

Snyder CCD & Two Farms Host AG BMP Tour



**Snyder County
Agricultural
BMP Tour**



The Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD, Snyder CCD), in cooperation with local Snyder County farm operations and USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) Middleburg Field Office staff, held a farm conservation practice tour for farmers on Thursday, April 28, 2016. It was advertised as the Snyder County Agricultural BMP (Best Management Practice) Tour, or AG BMP Tour.

Participants met at the Middlecreek Area Community Center (MACC) parking lot in Beaver Springs. To practice safe farming, participants either car pooled or rode in a rented van.

The tour stopped at two dairy, crop and pasture farms that had conservation practices, called best management practices (BMPs), installed on their farms to prevent nutrient and sediment pollution. One tour stop was at Carper Acres main farm near McClure where Warrencrest Holsteins are located. Waite-N-Ce Farm north of Beavertown was the second tour stop.



Left: Glen Carper of Carper Acres (far left, brown jacket) shows his septic tank that collects and pumps milkhouse wastewater to a circular concrete liquid manure storage. Shane Eia, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician (fourth from right, blue jacket) explains how this and similar treatment systems work.



Visitors were able to see actual BMPs such as dairy liquid and bedded pack manure storages, improved barnyards, stormwater and roofwater controls, milkhouse treatment systems, streambank fencing and pasture improvements and expansions. Questions were answered by the host farmers, Shane Eia, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician, Middleburg Field Office and by other NRCS and SCCD staff.



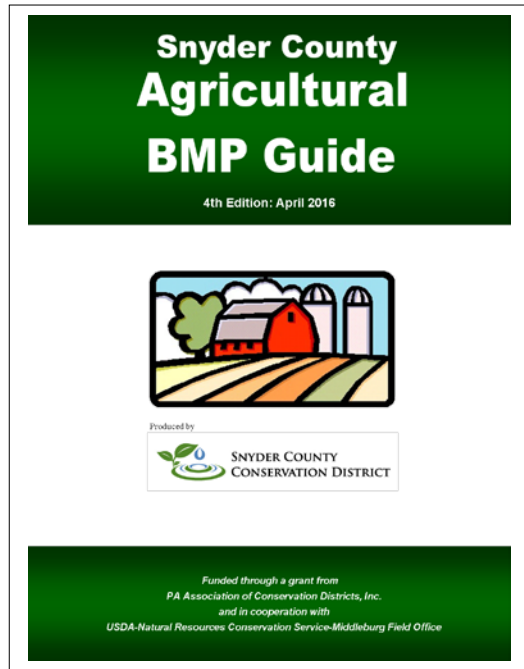
Above: Shane Eia (center, standing, blue jacket) stands in front of a group of tour participants explaining how some of the installed BMPs function as well as answering their questions.

Other BMPs not seen at the dairy farms were shown during a slide presentation between farm tour stops and before lunch. It was given by Shane Eia with help from Barry Spangler, SCCD Ag. Conservation Technician. These BMPs included reinforced gravel pads for horse sacrifice lots; spray nozzle distribution systems for milkhouse wastewater treatments; poultry manure storages; and mortality composters.



Left: Shane Eia (standing, center) shows participants examples of BMPs, such as a poultry mortality composting structure, not on the AG BMP Tour. This and other BMPs are pictured in the "Snyder County AG BMP Guide" developed by Barry Spangler (sitting), SCCD Ag. Conservation Technician.

Spangler also gave a brief talk about the importance of manure management in lieu of PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations. Craig Bingman, SCCD District Manager, (*standing, right photo*) updated the group about PA's "Chesapeake Bay Reboot" and the potential changing role conservation district may have in regards to farm compliance.



A "Snyder County Agricultural BMP Guide" ("AG BMP Guide") was distributed to visitors. These included ones shown during the BMP Tour and during the slide presentation, as well as other BMPs such as cover cropping, no-till planting, reinforced gravel roads, diversion, grassed waterways and chemical handling facilities. (All photos inside the "AG BMP Guide" were taken in Snyder County.) Other brochures regarding agricultural compliance, mortality composting, manure testing and manure spreader calibration were also handed out.

Many of the BMPs mentioned during the AG BMP Tour or printed inside the "AG BMP Guide" were installed with technical and financial assistance from local conservation districts and NRCS.

This was the first time an AG BMP Tour was sponsored by the SCCD since 2005. The "AG BMP Guide" was updated from an earlier version first printed as part of the 2005 AG BMP Tour and reprinted in 2006.

Questions or comments about this event should be forwarded to [Barry Spangler](mailto:Barry.Spangler@snyderconservation.org), SCCD Agricultural Conservation Technician, at 570-837-3000, extension 118. Copies of the revised "AG BMP Guide" can be secured by visiting the SCCD Office at 10541 Route 522, Middleburg, the Middleburg Field Office at 401 West Market Street, Middleburg, or downloaded from the SCCD's website at www.snyderconservation.org.

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Note #1: Financial and other support for this project is provided by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Note #2: A special thanks goes to those who helped out with the AG BMP Tour:

- *Shane Eia, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician, Middleburg Field Office (Main Tour Presenter)*
- *Glenn & Barb Carper, Carper Acres and Warren & Crystal Faus, Warrencrest Holsteins (Farm Tour Co-Hosts)*
- *Barry & Crystal Waite and Jeremy & Roxanne Waite, Waite-N-Ce Farm (Farm Tour Hosts)*



Above: Barry Waite (fifth from left, brown jacket), owner/operator of Waite-N-Ce Farm, explains the reasons a grassed waterway was installed on his farm and how it reduced sediment loads from reaching a nearby stream while Shane Eia looks on.

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Note #3: Special thanks to those who provided technical and financial assistance for projects shown during the Tour, pictured in the AG BMP Guide, and other projects completed in Snyder County from 1999 to 2016:

- Snyder County Conservation District Staff
- NRCS Middleburg Field Office Staff
- Union County Conservation District Engineering Staff
- Other NRCS Field Office Staff (Sunbury, Mifflintown, Burnham, Lewisburg, Montoursville)
- NRCS Bloomsburg & Lebanon Technical Offices & Bloomsburg Area Office Staff
- NRCS Grazing Specialists in PA
- NRCS State Conservation Engineering & Ecological Sciences Staff, Harrisburg
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) Snyder/Union Office Staff, Middleburg
- PA State Conservation Commission & PA Department of Agriculture, Nutrient Management Program Staff
- PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Regional Watershed & State Grant and Funding Staffs
- Penn State Extension Staff in Central PA & at University Park
- Retired and relocated individuals who had worked among the above agencies over the years.
- Anyone else from an organization that this publication inadvertently missed.

Note #4: Also, thanks goes out to the Snyder County farmers & landowners who worked with the SCCD & NRCS programs in improving, and events in promoting our local water quality.

Note #5: All USDA and SCCD programs and services are offered on a non-discrimination basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

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Additional photos taken of the AG BMP Tour held on April 28, 2016.



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