

School Children Celebrate Earth Day at Aberdeen Plant Materials Center
Loren St. John, Aberdeen PMC Team Leader

On April 22, 1998, approximately 90 fifth graders from the Aberdeen Elementary School visited the PMC Farm to learn about the Plant Materials Center. One of the teachers who accompanied the students reminded the students that it was Earth Day and how appropriate it was for the students to be learning about the Plant Materials Center.

David Wedel, Chairman of the South Bingham Soil Conservation District welcomed the students. Loren St. John, PMC Team Leader then explained to the students how plants protect the soil from erosion as well as provide us other benefits such as forage for livestock and cover for wildlife. He also explained to the students that the PMC develops plants and establishment techniques for conservation uses. After the introduction, the students were split into 4 groups and were rotated among 4 stations to learn more details about natural resource conservation.

Kurt Cates, NRCS Soil Conservationist discussed windbreaks and how they help the environment. The students looked at the windbreak at the PMC Farm and he explained to them how windbreaks work and the benefits they provide.

Paul Muirbrook, South Bingham Soil Conservation District Technical Assistant, showed the students the grass display nursery and explained why there are so many different grasses and how grasses help protect the soil from erosion while providing food and cover for livestock and wildlife.

Brent Cornforth, PMC Farm Manager, demonstrated the seed cleaning process to the students and explained the importance of producing high quality seed. He showed the students many different kinds of seed and how challenging it can be to clean the seed after it is harvested from the field.

At the final station, Loren St. John showed the students the woody display nursery and discussed the benefits that trees and shrubs provide. They also discussed the factors that determine plant adaptability and why there are so many different varieties.

The students were excited (and very well behaved) about what they learned and asked a lot of questions. The South Bingham Soil Conservation District sponsored the tour of the PMC.

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