The Henry Soil and Water Conservation District and the Henry County Pheasants
Forever Chapter had a very successful sign-up for the Wildlife Habitat Improvement
Project in 2003.

The project targeted four townships in the southwest quadrant of Henry County with
bonus dollars and free seedings of buffer strips signed up into the Conservation Reserve
Program (CRP) or the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
In 2003 100 landowners signed up 193.1 acres of buffer strips on 124 different fields.
These buffer strips protect and reduce runoff on over 55 miles of ditch banks in Henry
County. They also benefit the wildlife by increasing habitat acres and creating corridors.
Seeding the buffer strips is no easy task as the recommended cutoff seeding date is May
15th. In 2002 many of the buffer strips were seeded after this date (due to equipment
shortage) and failed.

Seeding the buffer strips this year was more efficient than the past. This was due to the
Lake Erie Protection Fund grant they received last spring. This allowed the District to
purchase a 10’ no-till drill to seed the buffer strips.
The 10’ drill is bigger than our existing drill which allows for a more timely seeding of
the buffer strips. During the critical spring seeding time, the District used both drills. This
increased our efficiency and dramatically improved the establishment of the grass on the
buffer strips. A very small percentage of the buffer strips were reseeded this fall. This
was directly due to the new drill and the timely manner in seeding the buffer strips last
spring.

Another benefit of the new drill is the ability to seed forages. We had several farmers use
it this late summer to establish hay fields.
The installation of buffer strips is a high priority for the Henry SWCD. This new drill has
shown a benefit in our effort of putting conservation in Henry County.