

Esslingers to be honored for soil conservation

By VERONICA MONIER
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Esslinger Ranch was chosen to receive the 2007 Kansas Bankers Association Soil Conservation Award. The ranch is operated by Dean, Scott and Kevin Esslinger, their wives and their ranch hand, Jimmy Daniels.

Esslinger Ranch incorporates about 11,200 acres. Of that, about 2,600 acres is farmed and the rest is grassland and CRP land.

The ranch owns most of the property, but rents a few 100 acres that is not in the family.

Almost all of the farmland is no-till. The Esslingers also do a lot of rotational grazing. They have also planted windbreaks, put in waterlines and cross fencing, and recently added a new feedlot.

They use the CRP program, but have also planted some of their land to grass on their own.

"We've probably planted about 300 acres to grass on our own," said Scott.

To help pay for the new feedlot, which holds a maximum of 3,500 head, the Esslingers used EQUIP money through the Norton County Natural Resources Conservation Service. The new feedlot was added mainly for expansion purposes, said Kevin. They are shutting down the older, smaller feedlot.

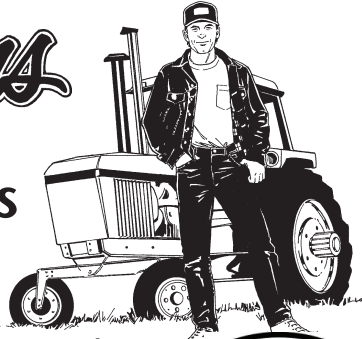
Come help honor Esslinger Ranch at the Norton County Conservation District's annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 19 at the Norton American Legion.




Esslinger Ranch is a family business and all of the family pitches in to get the work done. Above are (from left) Dean, Scott, Kevin and Ashley Esslinger. As head of the family, Dean (bottom left) still does his share of the work taking care of ranch business, including helping at the new feedlot the family recently built. Esslinger Ranch will be honored with the other winners Saturday, Jan. 19 at the Norton County Conservation District's annual meeting at the American Legion. Dinner is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. with the award ceremony to follow.

— Telegram photos by Veronica Monier

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