

Cost-share funds available for farmers to earn organic certification

Kansas farmers who currently use organic production practices or would like to pursue organic certification are encouraged to apply for cost share funds from the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

The program, funded by the 2014 Farm Bill, is administered through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. The program is intended to assist Kansas farmers by offsetting costs associated with organic certification or recertification. Under the state's agreement with USDA, they are eligible for up to 75 percent of the cost of their organic certification,

up to \$750, for certification occurring between Oct. 1, 2013 to Sept. 30, 2014, as long as funds remain.

"This is a great opportunity for farmers to achieve this certification at a reduced cost," said Annarose Hart, marketing specialist with the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

To receive cost share funds, Kansas organic farmers and handlers must complete the Organic Certification Cost Share Program Application, and submit it along with a copy of the organic certification document, an invoice showing the amount paid for that

certification and a W-9 form.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture was allocated nearly \$73,000 in funds for the cost share program for farms certified between Oct. 1, 2013 to Sept. 30, 2014.

Upon receipt of cost share documents, the department will confirm certification and then provide reimbursement. Based on the receipt of the completed application packet, reimbursements will be on a first-come, first-served basis until the limited program funds are exhausted.

The program application is

posted on the Kansas Department of Agriculture's website, Organic Cost Share Program. The site is also a great resource for program updates.

Questions about cost-share funds for organic certification may be directed to Josh Roe at (785) 564-6707 or Annarose Hart at (785) 564-6755 or by email to Annarose.Hart@kda.ks.gov.

Information is also available from the National Organic Program website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop>.



TESTING OUT THE WATER DRILLER are Mike and Ben McGilvray, Bird City.

Herald staff photo by Norma Martinez.

Bird City family rebuilds water driller

By Norma Martinez

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Mike and Ben McGilvray are in to the puzzle rebuilding business once again. David Blake, from Densmore, Kansas, had brought them a box containing parts from a Water Well Driller. All the parts were original, with the exception of

the Mast and Table, which were wood, and had been burned in a fire.

Mr. Blake has had these parts stored for several years, after one of his employees got upset with him and burned his Water Well Driller. He recently decided he wanted to restore this piece of equipment,

and use it for demonstrating how wells were dug and constructed in the early days.

This piece of equipment could dig 100 feet per day with a good crew of workers. It was a slow process, as the operator had to bring the drill up from the ground and empty the bucket every 30 inches.

Mr. McGilvray said this piece of Historical Art was challenging, but not the biggest challenge they had ever delt with. That was the 1902 Horseless cart, which they had completed in the early spring, and that has been delivered to it's owner.



JULY FOURTH PARADE held at Sawhill Park in St. Francis had many participants wearing red, white and blue along with decorating their trikes and bikes in patriotic colors. Melissa Zwegtardt walks with her grandson Ryder. Leading the way is the great-granddaughter of Phyllis and Rowland Roelfs. Her name is Shayla Dawn Kisner.

Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper

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