

These productive soils in Cheyenne County, Kansas are hidden beneath a protective cover crop. While growing, cover crops feed and improve the soil. While decomposing, they maintain soil temperatures, shield against erosion and control weeds.

Conserve America

Farmers Harness Benefits from Cover Crops

in Kansas have "discovered the cover" and for some very good reasons. By "cover," I'm talking about cover crops, which are plants established when cash crops are not being grown.

Cover crops are planted because of their excellent benefits, including improving the health and function of soil. This leads to better nutrient cycling, improved water infiltration and more consistent yields over time. Cover crops also suppress weeds, prevent erosion, control diseases and pests as well as help pollinators.

Farmers not familiar with how mixtures of cover crops work towant to plant a cover crop that uses up all my water?" But using diverse annual cropping rotations and cover crop combinations increases soil organic matter. And for each 1 percent in organic matter, there is a 25 percent increase in water holding capacity and up to 30 pounds an

the soil structure by building for the soil surface, and recharg-

though increased infiltration. About 600 farmers surveyed

Refreshments

Served

AUGUST 7-8

8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

without cover crops.

sas include peas, oats, vetch, was granted in the 2014 Envitillage radish, sorghum sudan ronmental Quality Incentives grass, buckwheat & alfalfa. Planting cover crops is one of several key steps that farmers in farming, visit the NRCS field can take to improve soil health. office for help on choosing the The other two are rotating crops, right conservation efforts for including cover crops that are planted, and not tilling.

are planted, especially when a few seasons on their fields. 10-12 plant species are planted, They are a great resource for ungether might ask, "Why would I they increase the soil biology derstanding local conditions and and speed soil health improvements. The more diversity you in Cheyenne County. have, the more plant balance you have above ground, the two sites for more information better soil biology balance you on cover crops: website "http:// have below ground. Plus, cover www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/porcrops can help reduce compaction without deep tillage.

When only one cover crop acre more of available nitrogen. species is planted, the single While cover crops use some crop – or monoculture – will water in the soil profile to grow, struggle in a drought or when they simultaneously improve facing pests. Many farmers are working with USDA's Natural soil aggregates, providing armor Resources Conservation Service to choose the right mix of cover ing the water in the soil profile crop seeds – or "cocktail" – for their farm.

The Cheyenne County Local

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AUGUST 9

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A growing number of farmers in 2012 on the impact of drought Work Group recently requested reported an average increase of that Kansas NRCS consider pay-14 bushels of corn per acre and ing producers for implementing five bushels more of soybeans cover crops for three consecuper acre where they had a cover tive years, since it requires this crop as compared with fields amount of time for a farmer to start seeing significant gains in Common cover crops in Kan-soil organic matter. This request

Program for Kansas. If you farm or are interested your land. We can also put you in touch with local producers When a variety of cover crops that have grown cover crops for which species of cover does best

You can also check out these

Bird City post office faces closure or reduced hours

Amanda Miller

amiller@nwkansas.com Bird City residents are in danger of losing their post office or hav-

ing reduced services much like McDonald's post office last year. This Thursday, July 31, at 4:30 p.m., local management from the

regional post office will be holding a meeting with Bird City residents in the Legion Hall to determine the future of the Bird City post office. Questionnaires that were sent out will be reviewed as residents voice their opinions and concerns. McDonald residents faced a

similar problem last January when they were given the option of four choices on a questionnaire that was sent out. Residents rallied together, and because of the participation in the meeting that was held, their post office was kept open. Changes were made, however, and the McDonald post office is now open shorter hours.

Currently, the Bird City mail is sorted and picked up at the St. Francis post office. Residents of Bird City still have a post office in town, and residents can currently receive all their mail there. The

Bernadette

Luncsford

District Conservationist

tal/nrcs/detail/national/soils/

health/?cid=stelprdb1077238"

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/

portal/nrcs/detail/national/soils/

health/?cid=stelprdb1077238 or

website "http://www.sare.org/

Learning-Center/Topic-Rooms/

Cover-Crop-Topic-Room"

http://www.sare.org/Learning-

Center/Topic-Rooms/Cover-

lobby is open 24 hours a day, ev- to capitalize on growth opportunieryday. Window hours run from 9 a.m. to 12:30. They then close for lunch for half an hour and return enterprise, the United States Postal from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Bird City residents requesting that reaches every address in the mail to be held have to call or go to the St. Francis post office to have their mail held at the St. Francis post office rather than Bird City. McDonald is being sent to North Platte, Neb., for processing.

Having a post office in town is vital to the community. The United States Postal Service has been closing the smaller, rural post offices over the last few years that have not been profitable. Unfortunately, it tends to be these rural post offices that are most needed by the town's residents.

The United States Postal Ser-2013 fiscal year with a net loss and voice it. Without Bird City enth consecutive year in which the agement for the regional post ofpostal service incurred a net loss, fice may make a decision without highlighting the need to continue the community's input.

ties and reduce costs.

A self-sustaining government Service is the only delivery service

This Thursday, residents of Bird City are urged to attend the meeting. The number of concerned citi-Mail at Bird City, St. Francis and zens may help keep the post office open and leave things as they cur-

> rently are. The questionnaires must be returned to the Bird City post office by July 31. The questionnaire gave Bird City residents four options, including closing the post office. keeping it open reduced hours based on workload, or having a local business contract with the post office and offer services.

Whatever your preference, it is vice reported that it ended the important to attend the meeting of \$5 billion. This marks the sev-residents present, the local man-

Colorado begins sale of hunting licenses

Hunters seeking tags for ei- centers, online or by calling ther bucks or bulls, or simply a 1-800-244-5613. In addition to cow elk for the freezer, can look a current and valid photo ID, forward to an ample number of proof of residency and social seleftover big-game licenses for curity number, anyone buying a the 2014 seasons.

has approximately 6,000 deer, 30,000 elk, 5,000 pronghorn and 1,800 bear licenses available for the fall hunting seasons. Leftover licenses are surplus licenses that went unsold during the limited drawing.

For the first time ever, both http://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/BigGame.aspx leftover and over-the-counter 15 minutes once the sales pro-(OTC) licenses go on sale the cess begins Aug. 5. same day. In addition, hunters may purchase licenses online hunt Colorado this fall! For without having to wait an additional day as in years past.

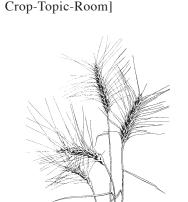
All leftover and OTC licenses go on sale Aug. 5 at 9 a.m. Mountain Standard Time. Licenses may be purchased at statewide license agents, Colo- Colorado Parks and Wildlife go rado Parks and Wildlife service to: http://cpw.state.co.us.

license must have a Hunter Edu-Colorado Parks and Wildlife cation card, unless the hunter was born before Jan. 1, 1949. Bring this card with you for inperson sales. A list of available leftover li-

> censes may be accessed at http:// wildlife.state.co.us/Hunting/ BigGame/Leftovers. http://cpw. state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/ hunt.aspx) The leftover list updates every

Don't miss your chance to more information about biggame hunting in Colorado and license availability, click http:// cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/BigGame.aspx.

For more information about



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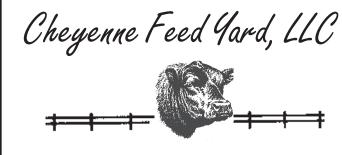
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