

Farm Bureau to honor century-old family farms

Tradition and heritage is a big part of what makes agriculture such an attractive way of life for so many Kansans. The lifeblood of our existence, the farms and ranches in Kansas, provide food, fuel and fiber for the world. The history of these farms and ranches is rich, with many stories to tell. In that spirit, Kansas Farm Bureau is launching the 13th year of its program to honor those family farms that have passed down this heritage for more than a century.

The Kansas Farm Bureau "Century Farm" program will recognize family farms whose current owner-operator is related to the owner-operator of the farm in 1913 or before. Qualifying farmers will receive a farm sign designating "Century Farm" status and recognition from Kansas Farm Bureau. "As farmers and ranchers, we are proud of our legacy and heritage," said Steve Baccus, Kansas Farm Bureau president. "The Century Farm program will help

others better appreciate the strong family ties and tradition that we hold so dear." During the first 12 years of the program, more than 2,100 family farms qualified for the designation. The deadline for consideration is Wednesday, May 15. Contact Sue Draper, Thomas County Farm Bureau Association coordinator at 460-6332 for information. Applications and former designees may be found at kfb.org/getinvolved/centuryfarms.

Program takes applications

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development State Director Patty Clark says the program is seeking applications for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Money is available from the department's Rural Energy for America Program. Despite budget uncertainty, the department is working to strengthen the rural economy, she said. Authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, the program is designed to help farmers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet critical energy needs. The following applications are being accepted.

- Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grant applications and combination grant and guaranteed loan applications until April

2013.

- Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement guaranteed loan only applications until July 15, 2013.
- Renewable energy system feasibility study grant applications through April 30, 2013.

The program has funded nationwide over 6,800 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, feasibility studies, energy audits and renewable energy development assistance projects. For information on how to apply, contact Rural Development Business program specialist Doug Bruggeman in the Hays Area Office, (785) 628-3081, Ext. 1435or by e-mail at doug.bruggeman@ks.usda.gov.

Traps set in state for tree-eating bugs

In an effort to prevent further spread of emerald ash borer in Kansas, the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture will set 441 traps to detect whether the plant pest is present. Kansas is participating in the survey to monitor known emerald ash borer infestations and detect unknown beetle populations. "Emerald ash borer was detected in Wyandotte County in August 2012, but we are hopeful that we do not find any additional infestations in the state" said Laurinda Ramonda, state cooperative agriculture pest survey coordinator. "These traps are an important monitoring tool. In the event of infestation, early detection would help KDA limit the spread of emerald ash borer."

The purple, prism-shaped traps are coated with nontoxic glue. While they pose no risk to humans, pets or wildlife, the glue can be messy if touched. Kansans are encouraged to report downed traps to the Kansas Department of Agriculture at (785) 862-2180. The first-ever presence of emerald ash borer in Kansas was confirmed in Wyandotte County on Aug. 29. Since that time, the Kansas department has implemented a permanent intrastate quarantine for certain firewood, nursery plants and mulch that is shipped in and out of Wyandotte County to prevent further spread of emerald ash borer in Kansas. The quarantine prohibits movement of regulated items from the quarantined area, except under specific conditions

established in the quarantine order. Items under quarantine include the emerald ash borer in any living stage of development; firewood of all hardwood species; ash nursery stock; and green ash lumber. Emerald ash borer, which is a pest of ash trees that is native to Asia, was first discovered in North America near Detroit in summer 2002. Since that time, the pest has killed millions of ash trees. Financially, the United States risks an economic loss of \$20 billion to \$60 billion because of this pest. To learn about the emerald ash borer, go to www.emeraldashborer.info. For information on this year's survey go to www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/.

Take a walk!



MARIAN BALLARD/Colby Free Press
It was a great day for a walk around Colby, as William Dill and this female lab pointer mix discovered. The dog was brought to Colby Animal Clinic as a stray Wednesday evening and is available for the owner to claim or for adoption. For information, call the clinic at 460-8621.

Foundation sets up funds for schools, hospital

The Thomas County Community Foundation has announced the establishment of two new funds, the Citizens Medical Center Fund and the USD No. 315 Outstanding Teacher Fund. The Citizens Medical Center Fund is an endowed agency fund that has been established by Citizens Medical Center and Citizens Foundation to benefit the hospital's future projects and expansions. "By having this fund at the

Thomas County Community Foundation, we are giving donors another avenue to easily join us in providing compassionate care that promotes dignity and well-being for our community members," said, Kevan Trenkle, the center's president. The USD No. 315 Outstanding Teacher Fund is a new pass-through fund established by the local PEO group. Its purpose is to honor a teacher once a year by providing funds to the school dis-

trict specifically for that teacher's department, as recommended by PEO. Melinda Olson, director of the foundation, said that donations to any fund can be made by sending a check payable to TCCF to 350 S. Range Suite 14 Colby, Kan., 67701 and noting your fund of choice in the memo section. There is an online donation service for credit card and electronic check donations at www.thomascounty-communityfoundation.com.

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