



**LOIS AND BILL HEILMAN** are shown at their farmstead north of Jennings. The couple won the Soil Conservation Award sponsored by the Kansas Bankers Association.

—Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

# Jennings couple receives Soil Conservation Award

Bill and Lois Heilman of Jennings are this year's winners of the Soil Conservation Award, sponsored by the Kansas Bankers Association.

The Heilmans, who live on the Jennings Road north of town, raise corn and wheat. Mr. Heilman said that at one time, they also had a cattle operation.

In the last three to four years, he said, he has started to use more no-till practices and also has a terrace plow. They don't have a completely no-till operation, however.

Mr. Heilman said he tries to keep terraces in shape and plows them when needed.

Over the years, he said, they have also planted 2,000 trees.

Mr. Heilman said he has been farming since 1968 within about a 12-mile radius of their home. His great-grandfather homesteaded the land so the Heilmans have been in the area for

four generations.

The couple also won the Windbreak Award in 1991.

It is important to preserve the land, said Mr. Heilman. There is only so much soil, he said, and it needs to be kept where it is.

These awards draw attention to soil conservation and these practices, said Mrs. Heilman.

The couple said they didn't know their land or farming practices were being considered until they received a letter a couple of months ago so they were surprised.

The Heilmans have two kids Billy who lives in San Francisco and Kim who lives in Nebraska. They also have two grandkids.

Mr. Heilman said he didn't think either of the kids would come home to farm, but the grandkids might.

Mrs. Heilman works at Bus and Coach International in Jennings.



**Haley Schiessler, 6th grade**



**Morgan Jansonius, 5th grade**