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ON THE COVER



Bert Hutson of Elk City, Okla., has worked hard all his life, beginning on his father's dairy, running his own trucking company, and producing feed efficient Angus cattle. At 80 years old, Bert shows no signs of slowing down. (Photo by Savannah Magoteaux)

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letter from the editor

March is the month when spring officially begins, although you might not know it from the weather. As the seasons change from winter to spring, the days get longer, and we're all able to be more productive.



I'll admit, I've searched for motivation to write this letter for the month, but between the stress of work, the anticipation of spring, and just life in general, I can't find it.

A good friend of mine has a great quote hanging above her desk. It says, "First drafts don't have to be perfect; they just have to be written."

So here I am, putting words on paper.

Away from work, I'm a barrel racer and a roper. I've learned that riding and writing have many similarities, and I have learned the only way to get them both finished is to start.

When we read about other people's success, it's hard to imagine that these people ever feel the same lack of motivation as we do. We don't see the times they've struggled to go out in the freezing weather to ride or take care of their animals. We don't know of the early mornings when their soft beds felt more inviting than a hard saddle and a wily colt. We forget that they've likely turned down friends' invitations to events because they felt their animals or home needed the attention more.

These people deal with the same struggles you and I face. They know that procrastination is the enemy of ranchers, farmers and cowboys, just as it is writers. They understand that the only way to get something done is to begin.

Over this wintry season you've no doubt debated putting off your responsibilities. Just remember although "things come to those who wait, but they are only the things left behind from those who hustle."

I enjoyed getting to visit with a great man who knows how to get things done. Bert Hutson may not have known everything he needed to when he bought his first set of Angus cattle from a sale, but he knew that to learn, he'd have to get started. You'll enjoy getting to learn about Bert in "Efficiency at its Finest."

Once again, our great contributors have penned some wonderfully informative, entertaining, and engaging articles. I thank them for all their work to make this magazine great.

If you have an idea for an article, please feel free to shoot me an email at editor@okfronline.com.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Savannah Magoteaux

Savannah Magoteaux, Editor
 editor@okfronline.com

(Photo courtesy of Hutson Angus Farm)

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What constitutes a "Ghost Town?" Well, according to some research, ghost towns can include sites in a variety of states, ranging from abandoned to barren, with the middle-ground being neglected. Some sites no longer have any trace of civilization and have become pastureland or even been flooded. Others are unpopulated, but their old buildings still remain. In a few cases, small populations might remain, but with much fewer people than in years past.

Read more about an Oklahoma Ghost Town here =====>>
<http://okfronline.com/2020/01/cardin-okla/>



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Cardin, Okla. – Oklahoma Farm & Ranch

Cardin, Okla. Ghost Towns of Oklahoma January 17, 2020 bowienews...

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January 23 at 6:55 AM · 🌐

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been saying for years that the average age of the American farmer is going up. The latest estimate of the average age is 59.3 years, as the baby-boom generation gets older. As a result, it has been estimated that 70% of the land in agriculture will change hands by 2031. This is a startling forecast and one worth contemplating in terms of how the transition will occur.

The number of farmers and ranchers in the United States has been decre...
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Salmonella in Backyard Poultry

By Barry Whitworth, DVM / Area Food/Animal Quality and Health Specialist for Eastern Oklahoma

As spring approaches, many of the local farm and garden centers will have their annual “chick” days. This is the time that many backyard poultry producers get excited to buy some new chicks. Unfortunately, another problem seems to coincide with arrival of the new chickens: Salmonella outbreaks in humans. Salmonella outbreaks associated with backyard poultry have been reported in the United States for many years.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the final report on the 2019 Salmonella outbreak associated with backyard poultry. The first case of Salmonella was reported on Jan. 1, 2019. Since the initial case, 1,134 cases of Salmonella infections in people from 49 states and the District of Columbia were found. Twenty-one percent of the cases were in children under five years of age. Of those 1,134 cases, 219 were hospitalized and two deaths were reported, one from Ohio and one from Texas. Oklahoma reported 14 cases of Salmonella infections. It should be kept in mind that the CDC believes that for every one Salmonella case reported, 29 cases go unreported (Scallan et al., 2011). In interviews, 67 percent of the sick reported contact with chicks or ducklings. This should be a warning to backyard poultry owners and young people involved in the exhibition of poultry.

Chicken, ducks, and other poultry carry the Salmonella organism. The bacteria do not normally make the birds sick, but when people accidentally ingest the organism, a severe illness may occur. The bacteria are in the droppings of poultry and can be found on the body of the birds. Bacteria contaminate cages, coops, feed



(Courtesy photos)

and water dishes and the area where the birds roam. People can be infected when handling poultry, entering poultry areas, handling equipment associated with poultry and gathering eggs. Salmonella infections in humans are associated with the digestive tract. Typical clinical signs are diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and abdominal cramps. If the infection goes from the intestinal tract to the blood, the disease will usually become more severe. Most with severe infections require hospitalization.

According to the CDC, children tend to be overrepresented in Salmonella infections associated with backyard poultry. From 1990 to 2014 Salmonella infections associated with backyard poultry in children less than five years of age accounted for 31 percent of the cases, and 42 percent of the cases were less than 10 years old (Basler et al., 2016). Although there are many sources of salmonella

contamination, animal contact Salmonella infections result in more people being hospitalized than food borne infections (Marus et al., 2019). This would indicate that children need to be carefully monitored when they are around poultry. Other groups of people who need to be careful around poultry are people over the age of 65 and people with a compromised immune system.

There are two reasons that children may be more at risk than the rest of the population for developing Salmonella infections from exposure to backyard poultry. One reason for the increase risk is that children’s immune systems are not fully developed. The other reason stems from the fact that children typically have poor hand hygiene practices (Basler et al., 2016). Coming in contact with poultry increases the opportunity for children to get their hands dirty and be contaminated with

Salmonella. One practice that might expose young children to Salmonella organisms is keeping chickens inside the home. The CDC reported in the 2015 outbreak of Salmonella associated with backyard poultry that 41 percent of those questioned indicated that they kept baby poultry indoors (CDC, 2015). Basler’s analysis reported that 61 percent (227/373) of all people who reported getting Salmonella from backyard poultry reported touching baby birds. Forty-nine percent (196/400) of the people sickened with Salmonella describe snuggling baby birds while 13 percent (53/400) admitted to kissing baby birds (Basler et al., 2016). Children should be discouraged from doing any of the above practices.

Parents and leaders overseeing 4-H or FFA poultry projects must ensure that children and young people wash their hands after having contact with poultry. The

following are some suggestions on how to reduce the chance of getting Salmonella:

- Wash hands with soap and water after having any contact with poultry or any area where poultry are located. If soap is not available, use a hand sanitizer.
- Do not allow poultry to enter areas where food and drinks are prepared, served and stored.
- Do not eat or drink where poultry are located.
- Cook eggs thoroughly.
- Clean equipment associated with poultry outdoors.

Having chickens in the backyard or exhibiting poultry at the county fair can be very rewarding experiences. However, poultry owners should be aware of the potential for a Salmonella infection and always practice good hygiene. If you would like more information on backyard poultry, contact your local Oklahoma State

University Extension Educator or visit the CDC Salmonella website at <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/outbreaks.html>.

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Tribal Soil Climate Analysis Network Projects of Oklahoma Tribes Providing Benefits for Today and Tomorrow

By Bryan Painter, Communications Director for Okla. Conservation Commission and Okla. Natural Resources Conservation Service

A breeze sways the marehail weeds and pushes past the bunchy little bluestem, side-oats grama and switchgrass.

Nathan Hart, business director for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, stands near the pointed tips of a yucca and on top of the dry High Plains soil.

Hart is thinking about the question of, “What does this weather, soil and climate network project called the Tribal Soil Climate Analysis Network (TSCAN) mean to your tribes?”

He was standing just a few feet from the unit that was being installed this past summer only about five miles from the Oklahoma-Texas state line near Reydon in Roger Mills County.

“We are on the far western side of our Cheyenne and Arapaho original Reservation, on an allotment called the Ora Woods Allotment,” he said of the tribe’s farthest west property in Oklahoma. “This combines both our heritage and the future. We do have a focus on our youth. We understand the importance of science and mathematics. That’s what we want to encourage our youth to move towards. So with this particular project, we want to get our youth involved so they understand what we’re doing out here with all the data that is being collected and how that is being used. Maybe it will encourage some of our youth to move into these various fields in an area with the weather or soil science.”

Hart went on to provide a more detailed explanation of the impor-



(Courtesy photos) tance of the soil.

“We are very interested, number one, in soil health,” Hart said. “We believe that everything starts with the soils, and if we take care of the soils, we’ll get good vegetation, good plant material, which translates to the animals, and of course the animals provide food for us. So our philosophy is everything starts in the soil. Having the ability to monitor your soils and particularly by precipitation, everything else in the soils is vitally important to us.”

TSCAN was initiated in 2017

to provide improved soil climate data to tribes in underserved locations around the U.S. Goals of the project are to provide localized soil and climate data to selected tribes for agricultural and forestry management decisions, strengthen tribal outreach to support production management as well as STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) education, and connect tribes with local entities – United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), USDA

Climate Hubs, extension, universities and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – to build and strengthen partnerships and alliances both locally and nationally.

There are now three TSCAN units on tribal land in Oklahoma, said Dr. Carol Crouch, USDA NRCS State Tribal Liaison for Oklahoma. Dr. Crouch has played a key role in assisting with this project. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, the Cherokee Nation and the Choctaw Nation have TSCAN units.

“These TSCAN units will be valuable tools to expand the interest for our American Indian youth in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM),” Dr. Crouch said. “This includes training on how valuable the units will be in forecasting climate conditions to Elders, tribal members and local producers.”

“By participating in this project, we can also furnish other data on the climate to all the other institutions, researchers and to the public, and that is important to us,” Hart said. “We believe in a system of reciprocity: we all share with each other and people will share with us.”

The BIA and NRCS combined their technical and financial resources through an Interagency Reimbursable Agreement to purchase and deploy 30 Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN) weather stations to eligible Tribes and Nations to support agricultural operations and STEM education. In addition the NRCS is working with three tribal partners to assist with outreach, education and community capacity building.

Native Americans are located across the U.S. (34 states and 567 federally recognized Indian tribes) and many are involved in agriculture. These tribal farmers and ranchers require adequate decision support tools to maintain productive and profitable systems. Management of water availability is one of the primary issues surrounding agricultural production.

Weather variables, such as rainfall, soil moisture and soil temperature are key to proper management and timing of operational decisions.

In limited locations, tribes have benefited from having access to advanced weather information from stations installed on their lands.

Again, in terms of education, the weather stations will also serve as a focal point for education of tribal youth using the STEM



model. STEM is an interdisciplinary and applied learning approach to integrate these four disciplines into a cohesive and real-world application. Age-appropriate STEM K-12 education and demonstrations using the weather stations, and resulting data will be supported by the tribes Department of Natural and Water Resources (DNR / DWR), USDA, NRCS, BIA and United States Forest Service (USFS). The USDA Hubs can play a key outreach role in this area.

“The life and culture of the Choctaw Nation has always had strong ties to the land. We see our participation in TSCAN as a learning tool for our students, particularly at Jones Academy, and a research tool to guide our efforts with soil health. TSCAN

monitors ‘the place where things grow – Nan Awaya’ and ties our past to the promise of the future,” states Donna Loper, Executive Director of Land Title and Natural Resources, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

“Our Tribal lands are inextricably linked to our history and culture. The TSCAN program is a unique partnership that ensures we are appropriately evaluating and monitoring soil health and climate conditions, which is fundamentally important to current and future generations of Cherokee Citizens,” said Chad Harsha, Secretary of Natural Resources, Cherokee Nation.

The benefits to the TSCAN program are so far-reaching.

For example, during installation of the unit, NRCS took the

opportunity to dig a T-shaped trench.

The purpose was to take a closer, literally deeper, look at this land and then be able to save this along with information about other areas, near and far.

“That’s our soil characterization sampling for that particular series,” said Steve Alspach, Oklahoma NRCS State Soil Scientist. “We describe the profile and then we sampled, bulk sampled, which they will do the chemical/physical tests on, and then we did some clods that we wrap in liquid Saran that they can do bulk density tests on. Those will be shipped to the lab and run through within the next year or so. We try to do as much sampling as we can on each series so that we have a data set to give ranges and texture.”

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

By Everett Brazil III

The stink bug family has long plagued agricultural producers across the state, attacking crops like soybeans and cotton and reducing yields as they feed on the plants. That family now has one more member in the state, the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), and Oklahoma State University (OSU) Extension researchers are now on guard to monitor the insect to prevent it from becoming a bigger problem.

There are an estimated 35 species of stink bugs in the United States, with about five already calling Oklahoma home. They range in color and have a pentagon, or shield appearance. They also have piercing and sucking mouth parts, which they use to feed on the plants' flesh and seeds, leading to yield loss in some circumstances.

"In soybeans, they can cause greening – the plant stays green. If they feed on a sorghum seed, it can cause abortion of the seed on the head as they are feeding," said Tom Royer, OSU Integrated Pest Management coordinator. "They can cause a lot of damage if numbers are large enough."

The BMSB is new to the state. A native of Asia, it was first discovered in the United States in 1998 and has now been discovered in more than 40 states. The BMSB has the same distinctive shield shape of other stink bug species, with distinctive marks and colorations. It features white and black bands on the antennae, as well as along the outer edges of the abdomen.

The female goes through several reproductive cycles each year, laying clusters of about 25 green-colored eggs on the undersides of leaves, which turn white just before hatching. The larva goes through five stages over about 538 days, with temperatures between 57-97 degrees, and 32-35 days above 86 degrees.

What sets the BMSB apart from other stink bugs is that it can feed on more than 100 agricultural and horticultural crops, including fruit such as grapes, apples and peaches, garden plants like peppers, tomatoes and eggplants and agricultural crops like corn, sorghum and soybeans.

It also has a tendency to overwinter in homes and businesses, making it a pest to humans, as well. "This insect is particularly nasty, because it has a wild pallet for preferred



(Courtesy photo)

host plants – fruits, vegetables, hemp," said Eric Rebek, OSU Horticultural Entomology Extension specialist.

"On top of that, it is a home invader. It'll invade people's homes, looking for a place to spend the winter in a secluded spot."

Although it has been a problem across the country for many years, it has only been found in a handful of locations in Oklahoma – near Edmond, in Oklahoma County, Guthrie, in Logan County and Stillwater, in Payne County.

Due to the risk presented by a large number of plant hosts, the OSU Cooperative Extension Service is teaming with the USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry to create a plan to monitor the pest in the state and find ways to control it and prevent it from becoming a problem. That will involve trapping to determine where it is and spraying if needed.

"We're just at the beginning stage of trying to determine where the BMSB is," Rebek said. "We're going to start setting up traps for

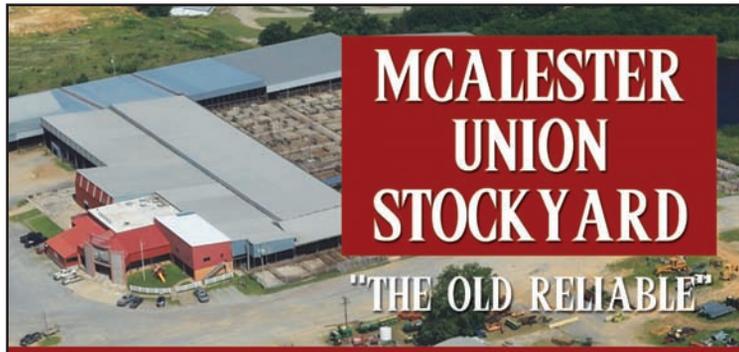
monitoring the insect, and see where it is in the state."

Producers unsure of what species they have in the field should contact their county extension office for verification. If it is determined to be a BMSB, the producer should begin scouting and monitoring it, and it can easily be controlled through insecticide.

"There is no need to spray unless they have a problem with BMSB. We need to get confirmation they have it," Rebek said. "There are insecticides, and they are primarily the route we'll have to go to manage them—anything that is labeled for stink bugs, in general, broad-spectrum control insecticide."

The three agencies are working together on the long-term research and management project to help producers identify and control the insect to prevent widespread damage to crops and other ornamentals.

"We have to figure out where it is, how much of an impact it is going to have in the state, and we have to make people aware that it is here, and it is a threat," Rebek said. ☞



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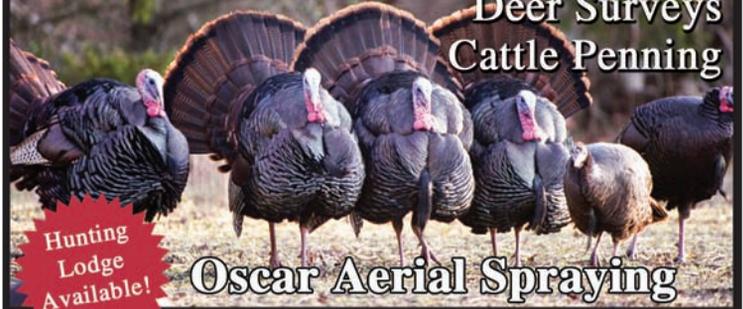
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From Urban to Agriculture Advocate

By Tia Rozell

An urban girl with no background in agriculture has won a prestigious award from a time-honored agricultural organization.

Gabby Barber was a member of the Lawton FFA Chapter located in Lawton, Oklahoma. FFA and agriculture is a core foundation of Oklahoma, said Lindsey Hoerbert, a Lawton FFA adviser. Barber had no knowledge or understanding of either until she was in the eighth grade, she said.

During her five years of involvement in FFA, the once misinformed and uninvolved consumer transformed into not only an advocate for agriculture but a national champion within the FFA organization.

In October 2019, Barber earned the National Championship Agricultural Communications Proficiency award.

“Gabby is not what many think of when they hear FFA member,” Lindsey said. “She is a non-traditional [Oklahoma] FFA member. She grew up in town walking on the sidewalks to school. She isn’t an exception in our chapter. She is the ‘norm.’”

Lawton is an urban area, Hoerbert said. The city’s population is more 150,000 people so this chapter is not a traditional FFA chapter for Oklahoma, she added.

The majority of the FFA chapter is comprised of urban students, Hoerbert said.

“I started FFA when I was in the eighth grade,” Barber said. “There was an ag exploration class, and my cousin Hannah showed sheep and was involved in FFA, so I thought I would give it a try. I thought showing animals was all you could do in FFA.”

As an eighth-grader, Barber was timid and shy, Hoerbert said. She was placed in an agriculture



Gabby Barber (Courtesy photo)

class she didn’t know much about, Hoerbert added.

“Of course, over time, Gabby bloomed with opportunity,” Hoerbert said. “She is an amazing public speaker and communicator. Gabby is really good at spreading the word of agriculture, whether it is the education aspect, what agriculture does, or the sustainability side.”

Barber said her agriculture teacher was the driving force that kept her in FFA.

“The first day of class my ag teacher asked if I wanted to do prepared public speaking,” Barber said. “I said sure, thinking I would give a speech at a banquet or something. I had no idea it was a contest.

“I fell in love with it and kept doing it and kept adding on more things,” Barber said. “I started to

realize I could really belong, and I found my place in FFA.”

Barber did not show animals during her time in FFA, but instead she focused her time on the communications for the chapter and other organizations she was involved in, Hoerbert said. She started as the chapter reporter in 10th grade, Hoerbert added.

Her agricultural communications Supervised Agricultural Experience project and proficiency was with her completing the reporter book, Hoerbert said. Being the communication committee chair, Barber managed the public relations for the chapter, she added.

“For my SAE, I was in charge of the newsletter we did for my city and also the one for my school and district,” Barber said. “I focused on writing, speaking and

photography within my SAE.”

In Lawton, no one was taking pictures of the livestock shows, Barber said. She had seen some of the bigger shows like Oklahoma Youth Expo and Tulsa State Fair, and they all had professional photographers.

“I love taking pictures,” Barber said. “This was a given, and my ag teacher had some connections with people who ran the livestock shows.

“I didn’t have a camera at the time, but my ag teacher did,” Barber said. “She lent me hers, and I started taking pictures at our shows. Eventually, we got a really neat technology grant at my school to where we got three brand new cameras.”

Barber’s passion for photography inspired her FFA adviser to contact a livestock photography company, Final Drive Photography, said Dusty Oldenberg, co-owner of Final Drive Photography and a mentor to Barber.

“We are a livestock photography company based in Oklahoma, but we travel all over the country taking photos of livestock shows as well as the Oklahoma FFA State Convention,” Oldenberg said. “Because of all the connections, Gabby came to work for us after her ag teachers asked if she could come in and help us out.”

The objective of Final Drive photography is to bring in youth who want to take pictures and teach them about how to use a camera, deal with the public and work in the industry, Oldenberg said.

“We usually have livestock kids who want to take pictures,” Oldenberg said. “So, it was kind of a whole new round for us and an eye opener for both Gabby and myself in the sense she had a different perspective of the industry



(Courtesy photos)

she wanted to show.

“She wanted to show people you don’t have to be a traditional ag kid; you don’t have to show livestock to do this thing,” Oldenberg said. “I probably learned more from Gabby than she ever learned from me.”

Barber’s focus is to communicate how agriculture works and its importance to the public, Hoerbert said.

“She had never been to a livestock show until we started teaching her how to photograph livestock,” Hoerbert said. “She had never been to a ranch until she was probably a junior in high school when she was giving speeches about different animal agriculture topics.”

Barber has a gift of relating to the public and explaining all aspects of agriculture, Hoerbert said.

“She was very good with the public, and her communication

skills are second to none,” Oldenberg said. “She has a love for agriculture, even though she doesn’t have the background, and she is adamant about educating the consumer, and I think it is something we as traditional agriculturists lack. I’m going to put all of us in this category.

“As agriculturalists, we don’t do a good enough job educating the general population,” Oldenberg said.

Barber was great at putting her own spin on it, making sure to show a side of agriculture the general public would understand and relate to, Oldenberg added.

“Every person she came in contact with would leave fully educated about agriculture,” Oldenberg said.

Barber’s background gives her the unique opportunity to relate with all sides and explain the truth to the public, Barber said.

“Only about 2 percent of the



population is involved in agriculture, so there are many who have been misinformed and misled,” Barber said.

“I’m a scientist and an agriculturalist. I have the confidence and education to correct someone when they say something untrue about agriculture. My background and knowledge of science allow me to do this.”

Barber is going to school at Oklahoma State University to major in biochemistry and molecular biology.

“She wants to do research to create genetically enhanced trees that have a natural fire retardant,” Oldenberg said. “She is very passionate about it. Her education has always been extremely important to her.”

On top of achieving what she has and educating others, Barber has consistently focused on her education, Hoerbert said. Of the more than 300 kids in her class,

Barber was valedictorian, Hoerbert added.

“Even though she is not majoring in agricultural communications, she has a love and passion for agriculture,” Oldenberg said. “She will never stop advocating for agriculture, for us as farmers and ranchers, and educating the public about the truth.”

Barber has set the bar high for all FFA members by proving non-traditional agriculture education students still have a place in FFA, and anyone can make a difference in agriculture, Hoerbert said.

“Gabby and others like her are the future for agriculture,” Oldenberg said. “We as agriculturalists need to understand this, accept them and help them.”

It is a new era in agriculture, and it needs to continue to be recognized if agriculture is going to survive, Hoerbert said.

“We need more Gabbys in agriculture,” Oldenberg said. 

Regenerative Agriculture Techniques Improve Citizen Potawatomi Land

By Mary Zook, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Public Information Department

Just like a building needs a strong, stable foundation to last, soil also requires a solid base to grow the plants necessary to feed and clothe the world's population. Indigenous agriculture techniques have understood this principal since time immemorial, but now modern agriculture is catching up.

“We as Potawatomi people, our traditional beliefs and our teachings — original teachings and original instructions — are as people to take care of all of our relatives. And that’s not just human relatives,” said CPN Community Garden Assistant Kaya DeerInWater. “We knew that growing monocultures perpetually was not going to work out long term. Our ancestors knew that, and that’s why we came up with a polyculture, multi-cropping system. We figured that out long, long before corn even got to us in the Great Lakes.”

Employing regenerative agriculture methods improves land quality by encouraging plant and organism diversification while decreasing land disturbance and increasing biodiversity and organic material. Planting cover crops offers producers an opportunity to incorporate those approaches. Because of this, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation co-hosted a Cool Season Cover Crop Field Day on Dec. 6 at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center to educate farmers from across the region on restorative methods that sequester carbon and rebuild the soil.

“As soon as we went down, saw what could happen, and saw the differences (cover crops) can make in your soil, and all the good that it can do, it immediately



Local contractor Lance Coker educates fellow producers during the cover crop field day.

became something that CPN was interested in,” said Tonya Kitchens, CPN Real Estate Services Agriculture Program manager. As a CPN tribal member and employee, Kitchens believes in the importance of mindful land management.

“It’s forward-thinking. It is working now for something that our children and great-grandchildren will benefit from,” she explained during the workshop. “If we don’t take care of the future of agriculture, no one else is going to.”

According to the Department

of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, five basic principles help maintain and improve soil health. These include ensuring year-round ground coverage and plant growth, no-tillage practices and diversified production including implementing rotations and sowing cover crops during non-cash crop growing seasons.

“It’s a big focus, especially with the legacy of the Dust Bowl that sadly Oklahoma is still trying to recover from,” DeerInWater explained. During the 1920s and ‘30s, approximately 350 mil-

lion tons of soil blew away from Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma and other portions of the Great Plains because of agricultural practices like sod busting that removed native plants and root systems. Cover crops serve as an opportunity to reverse the Dust Bowl’s impact across the region.

Tribal Land Management

The Nation currently has several agricultural endeavors including a community garden, 2,000 acres of land set aside for row crops, 1,100 acres for hay production, 154 acres for sod and 3,200 acres in land leases. Lance Coker of Circle C Farms in Pottawatomie County leases 132 acres of land from CPN.

“I’ve always been reading about these cover crops, and in the past, I’ve just always done traditional agricultural practices. And I mean, I made money at it, but I knew there was a better way,” Coker said. “I’ve read about this stuff and I thought, ‘Man, I don’t want to use up all my water for my crops.’”

During a hunting trip to southwest Oklahoma, Coker learned about remediation techniques Russ Jackson uses on his family farm. After meeting Jackson, he began looking for ways to utilize the same production methods.

On 45 acres of CPN land near state Highway 177, Coker recently began incorporating no-till practices and in fall 2019, planted a blend of cool-season cover crops including wheat, rye, vetch, Austrian winter peas, alfalfa, and brassicas like daikon radishes and turnips.

As Coker has experienced firsthand, sowing cover crops can result in greater yields. For

example, according to Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program's 2017 Cover Crop Survey, corn farmers were able to harvest 2.3 additional bushels per acre.

"On one of my corn crops, I cut my nitrogen back a third and made 20 more bushels an acre than what I did on my conventional till," Coker said.

Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium are the "Big Three" primary macronutrients producers use to fertilize. Regenerative agriculture techniques seek opportunities to naturally restore key nutrient levels, decreasing the need to add synthetic chemicals to achieve adequate growing conditions.

"A lot of soil health can be like a car," said Shawn Fleming, NRCS resource conservationist, during the Dec. 6 workshop. "The main thing is, just don't keep it parked in the garage."

The concept is relatively simple: reduce the input. Rather than going to the local co-op or seed store to purchase inorganic nitrogen, regenerative agriculture seeks opportunities to use and increase the overall levels of organic nitrogen. This method also increases the number of living organisms under the earth by creating an environment that is more conducive to their needs.

According to a NRCS fact sheet, "An incredible diversity of bacteria, protozoa, arthropods, nematodes, fungi and earthworms create a hidden food web in the soil that affects how crops grow, how soil nutrients are cycled and whether rainfall is quickly absorbed into the soil and stays where crop roots can access that moisture."

Since DeerInWater began overseeing Bodewadmi Widoktadwen Gtegan (CPN Community Garden) in 2018, he has incorporated techniques to improve soil quality and influence overall garden health.

"When you use regenerative



Greg Scott, soil scientist for Oklahoma Conservation Commission, examines the health of soil on a plot of land owned by Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

agricultural practices, the land is more resilient. It's basically just mimicking nature in a way," DeerInWater explained. "It's using principals, but it's not exactly like nature."

Like most gardens, Bodewadmi Widoktadwen Gtegan produces during the warm season. To ensure year-round ground cover, staff and volunteers have planted a mixture of cool season cover crops the past two years.

"We wanted to keep live plants in the soil to keep the beneficial soil biota happy and active," DeerInWater said.

Drought and Flood Management

Conventional agriculture utilizes tillage, which removes underground root systems and decreases the ground's ability to absorb water.

"One of the big things that I've been trying to do on my farm is maximize rainfall capture," said Russ Jackson, farmer from Mountain View, Oklahoma, during the Dec. 6 workshop.

"When you're doing a tillage system like we've done for 130 years, it's always too wet or it's always too dry," Jackson said.

Jackson farms in southwest and western Oklahoma, and the region tends to be one of the driest in the state with only an average of 32 inches of rain per year compared to Pottawatomie County's average of 41. Western Oklahoma's precipitation often falls in large amounts over a very short period of time, and it is not uncommon to go more than 100 days with less than a quarter inch of rain.

Cover crops and regenerative agriculture techniques keep the root systems intact, loosening the soil, which results in greater water retention. Planting mixtures mimics the natural and diverse plants that once grew.

"You increase the soil health and you increase the water holding capacity, which decreases runoff and erosion. With the water holding capacity, if you ever had a drought, your lands - using those practices - are more able to with-

stand dry periods for longer because of that healthy soil structure and because of the healthy plant community," DeerInWater said.

Plant variety ensures the earth has root systems at different levels and offers the microbial organisms living below ground more opportunities to thrive. By incorporating these techniques, the Jacksons increased absorption rate on one plot of land from 6/10 an inch of rain per hour to 2.7 inches. The Nation hopes to have similar results.

"Using those practices that take care of the land and take care of the animals and the birds and the pollinators is culturally congruent with our teachings," DeerInWater said. "With all of our success, we are able to have the luxury to rethink about the way that we're doing things and to regain our cultural practices so that our values as a Nation are aligned with our management practices."

Learn more about CPN's garden programming and workshops at potawatomi.org/events. 

Core Vaccines Every Horse Needs

By Garrett Metcalf, DVM

There are many possible dreadful diseases that horses can contract through various insect vectors, ticks, wildlife and even wounds that are rather easy to prevent with routine core vaccinations. Oklahoma has just about every insect known to man to offer, as all Oklahomans are fully aware of especially in the spring and summer, making it a very good environment for some of these key viruses to spread. The five types of diseases that will be discussed in this article are commonly referred to as the deadly five, and that is why they make the core vaccine list because if one of these diseases is contracted it can be game over for your horse. Before spring arrives, the core vaccines should be on every horse owners to do list as a common health care checklist that should be just as routine as deworming and dental care.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) have established key guidelines for vaccinations for horses that are required based on risk to the public and to the horse themselves. The five diseases listed as core vaccines are Rabies, Tetanus, Eastern equine encephalomyelitis virus, Western equine encephalomyelitis virus and West Nile virus.

The AVMA defines core vaccinations as those “that protect from diseases that are endemic to a region, those with potential public health significance, required by law, virulent/highly infectious, and/or those posing a risk of severe disease. Core vaccines have clearly demonstrated efficacy and safety, and thus exhibit a high enough level of patient benefit and low enough level of risk to justify their use in the majority of patients.” (AAEP website)

The reason these deadly five diseases are listed as core vaccines is because they pose a possible public health risk, are highly virulent or infectious, have a high mortality rate and can be effectively controlled with routine vaccination with great efficacy. It’s important to remember that vaccines are not 100percent effective for every disease but well worth that risk when it comes to protect against these five deadly diseases.

There are many other diseases that horses may or may not need to be protected against with vaccinations. These diseases are listed un-



(Courtesy photos)

der “risk based” immunizations depending on travel, environment, geographic circumstances and even competition/racing venue requirements before entering into an event. With recent localized outbreaks of equine herpes virus at race tracks, shows and barrel races, many venues and race tracks require very recent vaccinations for these viruses before permitted onto the grounds. Here is a list of risked based diseases vaccinations are available for: Anthrax, botulism, equine herpes virus 1 & 4, equine viral arteritis, influenza, rotaviral diarrhea and strangles. These diseases and the risk of contracting them must be weighed on an individual horse bases versus the risk of the vaccine itself.

Many vaccines today that are available for horses have all core vaccines in one shot except rabies. One vaccine provider has developed the first all five core diseases in one single vaccine. Horses just like other species require multiple boosters to generate an appropriate immune response to be protective. For unvaccinated horses or horses that don’t have a documented vaccine history it is recommended to have at least one booster four to six weeks after the first dose to get an adequate response and then annually after that. In some endemic areas of

the country with higher cases of West Nile and other viral encephalomyelitis diseases due to prolonged mosquito vector season it is often recommended to have a booster in the mid-to-late summer to have added protection against these particular viruses.

Below is a breakdown of each disease and its importance for your horse and even yourself to be protected against.

Rabies

Highly deadly virus that is unsurvivable for any mammal that contracts the disease and begins to show clinical signs, even for humans. As of 2016 only four people have survived rabies infection after showing clinical signs, so the odds are very poor. One of the most difficult aspects of rabies in horses is the variability of clinical signs. Horses can display two clinical manifestations of the disease: Furious/Mad form or Dumb/Stuporous but really it can look like anything early on. Veterinarians are trained that rabies can display almost as anything and should always be on the list for a horse that presents with neurologic symptoms, especially horses with no vaccine history for rabies. Horses can display colic, ataxia, blindness, hypersalivation, depression, weakness and even lameness. Also there is no

ante-mortem test meaning there is no test to confirm rabies until the horse is dead or euthanized and the brain is collected for testing. Rabies is transmitted via bites from infected rabid wildlife such as skunks (highest transmitter in Oklahoma), raccoons, fox and bats.

EEE/WEE

Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis is transmitted like other viral encephalitis via the mosquito vector. Clinical signs are neurologic signs of ataxia, blindness, head pressing or head tilt, recumbency, seizures and paralysis of the throat/tongue. Only up to 15percent of horses survive EEE. WEE has a better survival rate up to 50percent and has very similar sign as EEE. Birds are common carriers of EEE/WEE and are the reservoir for these viruses.

West Nile

A very commonly know virus that is also transmitted by mosquitoes to horses, humans, birds and other mammals. Birds again are the largest reservoir for this virus. The virus affects the central nervous system by creating inflammation around the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms or clinical signs are fever, depression, muscle fasciculations, weakness and ataxia. The severity of the disease is horse dependent and not all horses get the disease but among those horses that do about 1/3 will die from it. Also almost half of horses will have lasting neurologic effects from the disease.

Tetanus

The causative bacterium was first discovered in 1884 by injecting wound exudates from humans with tetanus into animals leading to the discovery that Clostridium tetani is the causative bacteria. The bacteria is found everywhere in the environment including the soil and manure of horses. Horses are rather sensitive to the neurotoxin produced from Clostridium tetani that leads to the clinical signs of tetanus. The bacteria



enter the horse's body through wounds, cuts or even surgical wounds such as castration sites. The spores of the bacteria turn into the vegetative form when it begins to grow and replicate. The neurotoxin produced from the bacteria enters the central nervous system by peripheral nerves. The clinical signs of tetanus are muscle spasms, stiffness, prolapsed third eyelids, extended head and neck, elevated tail and retracted lips. As the disease progresses, horses will become recumbent and have difficulty breathing. Life saving treatments can be implemented to save the infected horses but still up to 75percent of horses will die.

What all these disease have in common besides death is that these deaths are extremely excruciating, painful and miserable. There is no doubt from seeing these cases personally and from watching teaching videos that these horses are suffering enormously. What makes it even more difficult and disheartening when we see these cases is that they are so easily preventable with vaccination. The bottom line is that vaccines can save your horse's life from these deadly diseases and vaccines are rather inexpensive especially

compared to the expense of trying to treat the horse once they are ill. Please talk to your veterinarian about getting your horse or horses

protected with core vaccinations and if any other vaccinations are necessary based on your situation. ☒

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No Excuses

By Ddee Haynes

“Great things come from hard work and perseverance. No excuses.” -Kobe Bryant

Strolling through Facebook this week I saw all kinds of quotes made by Kobe Bryant being posted by fans and the media.

When I saw the above quote, I had to stop and re-read it again. The quote touched me on a level I had not expected.

It is such a simple quote yet so powerful. While I know Bryant applied it to his sport of basketball, the quote fit the sport of rodeo like my favorite boots - perfectly.

The quote also made think of my young friend Payton Barnes. I do not know the exact day or year when I first met Payton, but I do recall she was a tiny little thing, probably around the age of seven, and rode a cute little horse by the name of Charlie. I remember watching her and thinking to myself, “That kid can ride and handles a rope like a pro.”

As I stated in one of my previous articles, the sport of rodeo is different from other sports. In other sports, such as basketball, there are several team members, making it easy to substitute players as needed. If one player is having a bad day, another member can be substituted in.

In rodeo you cannot substitute. It is only that contestant and his/her team player is the horse they are competing on in events such as barrel racing and the roping events.

In the rough stock portion of rodeo, the rodeo contestant is competing against the animal they are riding.

To make it even more difficult, in the sport of rodeo a ride/run from start to finish generally last less than 30 seconds.

That is not much time, and those contestants rarely get a sec-



Payton and her horse Charlie competing in the breakaway roping. (Photo courtesy of the Barnes family)

ond chance if it doesn't go well.

Rodeo is not for the weak of heart nor for the lazy. Rodeo takes hours and hours of practice. It requires skill, sacrifices, mental focus as well as the determination to keep going, even when it would be easier to quit. I have seen all these qualities in my young cowgirl friend Payton.

Today, Payton is now 13 years-old, an eighth grader at Calumet, Okla., and one of the best young ropers I have ever had the privilege to watch.

It has been fun to see her mature in age and in her roping

skills. When Payton backs into the roping box her entire demeanor changes. She literally goes from a carefree young girl who just minutes before had been laughing and chatting with friends to a fierce competitor.

When she backs her horse into the roping box, it is easy to see she and her horse are prepared and they mean business.

Payton and her parents, Billy and Wendy Barnes, have poured their time, energy, finances and heart into the sport of rodeo.

As a rodeo parent myself, I know the sacrifices that are made

not only by the young contestants, but also by the parents of those contestants. The old term “anything worth doing ain’t easy” is an understatement.

Through all her hard work and her parents’ support, Payton has had a very successful career for such a young cowgirl, despite the heartache of losing her best horse and partner, Seven, to a traumatic case of colic.

Seven was the step-up horse from her pony Charlie, whom Payton first started roping on. Losing Seven was devastating. However, being the tough cowgirl that she is, Payton climbed onto her current horse, a mare named Bunny, and kept moving forward.

Payton competes in the Heart of Oklahoma Youth Rodeo Association, (HOYRA) in break-away roping, ribbon roping, tie down roping, steer stopping and team roping. In team roping she can rope either the head or the heels.

Payton is also a member of the Oklahoma Junior High School Rodeo Association (OKJHSRA) where she competes in the girls’ break-away roping, ribbon roping along with her ribbon runner Brody Thiessen, and in team roping with her partners Cutter Cain and Trigger Hargrove.

In addition to rodeo, Payton enjoys playing basketball, doing day-work with her dad, helping her granddad with his western pleasure horses as well as working with her colt.

A few of the big successes Payton has made in the HOYRA are 2018 10-13 Girls’ All Around, Champion Break-away roper, Champion Header in the team roping, Champion Steer Stopping, and second in the Tie-Down roping.

In 2017-2018 season of the OKJHSRA Payton ended the

season as fifth in the girls' break-away and sixth place, along with her partner, in the team roping.

With the 2019-2020 OKJH-SRA about to kick off, it's spring season, Payton has her sights set on qualifying for the National Junior High School Rodeo Finals. In order to qualify she must be in the top four of the state of Oklahoma.

Payton's long-term goals are to continue to rodeo all the way through the college level and to eventually become a veterinarian.

I have no doubt in my mind, as I have witnessed it firsthand, that Payton not only has the skills to accomplish her goals, she also has the determination, work ethic and perseverance needed.

Remember the name "Payton Barnes" because I have no doubt this girl is going to be big things!

Until next time.... ☞



Payton catching some heels. (Photo courtesy of the Barnes family)

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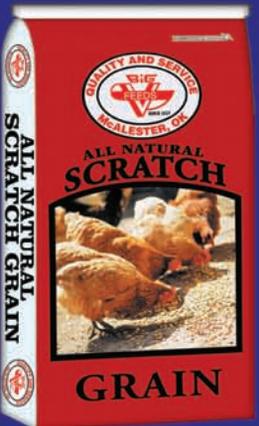
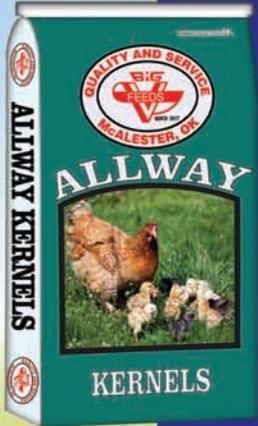
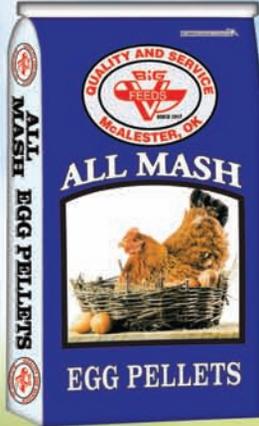
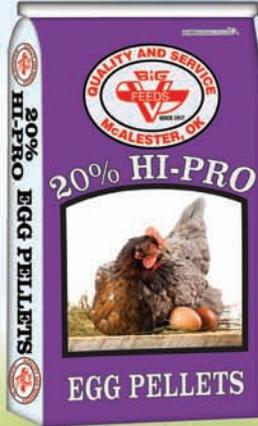
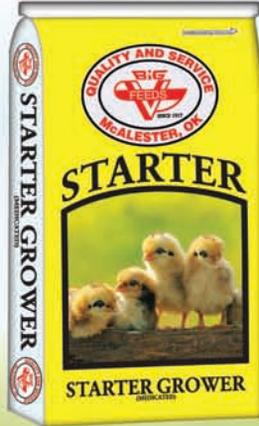
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By Jesse Kader

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WESTERN HOUSEWIVES

By Summer McMillen

Let me start off by saying that I am not a sentimental person. I have buried horses and dogs without ever so much as a tear because I know that everything has its time. I encourage my husband to sell horses, old saddles and bits when money is a little tight because what good is something if you can't sell it anyway? Very rarely do I stop to take in the sight before me because after all, it's the same land I have lived on for years. That is, until I moved to Oklahoma.

Particularly, spring in Oklahoma. It is a natural phenomenon like none I have known before. That is when the new year really starts for me. The dead grass and leaves seem to disappear before your eyes and are replaced with vibrant flower buds and the smell of new Bermuda sprouting in the pasture. It's like nature itself is encouraging you to start fresh screaming, "If I can do it, so can you!"

The North Canadian River sits right behind our house, and I can count on it coming alive every spring. The nightly downpours fill it to the brim making it my alarm clock every morning. This is one of those rare moments where I let the land move me to tears. I allow myself to walk outside and be sentimental because God has allowed me to live in such a place: a place where water and grass are abundant for the well-being of the livestock and the enjoyment of the people.

A few springs ago, we let ourselves roam the North Canadian when we couldn't take the roaring



(Photos courtesy of Summer McMillen)

any more. We climbed down its bank with our fishing poles and saltines and sat there taking in the warm sunset. Of course, our hopes were not entirely sentimental. We had our sights set on a big, juicy catfish. Where I come from, there is no fishing to speak of so you could say I was slightly disillusioned with visions of myself filleting the catfish on the riverbank and roasting it over an open fire with lemon and salt. My husband humored me, and we sat there for

hours before he finally caught a record-breaking alligator gar. By "record breaking" I mean the smallest one I have ever seen. We threw it back in the roaring river, deciding to let it live another day and headed into town for a Sonic cheeseburger.

I have not been disheartened, but instead I have redirected my efforts to packing our picnic before we go fishing. Beef and potato burritos with a side of stewed apples are much more appealing

than alligator gar with a side of alligator gar.

I am a western housewife, true, but every spring I spend in Oklahoma I become more and more like a little cowgirl again. No worries and no burdens except for the ones that are telling me I must go outside before anyone else so I can be the first to see what the day holds. So, let me be the first to say hello to spring. This non-sentimental lady has missed you greatly. ☺

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Efficiency a





at its Finest

Bert Hutson has always had an affinity for livestock nutrition, a passion that can be traced back to his days as an FFA member and working on his father's dairy farm. That interest has helped Huston create and grow a large herd of Angus cattle that regularly bring premium prices not only at his annual sale but also in private treaty transactions.

At 80 years old, the Elk City rancher has no plans to slow down. His seventh annual bull sale, held in January, averaged nearly \$1,000 more per bull than the previous year, and he and his team are constantly working to improve their product.

While Bert himself is progressive, he also believes in doing what works for his program – not following in the path of others.

Continued on page 32



Efficiency at its Finest

Continued from page 31
The Beginning of the Cattle Business

Bert was born in 1939 and grew up working on his father, Martin Hutson's, dairy farm in the early 1940s. "It was hard work. Whether you liked them or not, you milked cows every morning before you went to school. I fed silage with a pitchfork and a little trailer and dipped it out. I would feed and milk in the morning and smell like silage all day at school," he recalled.

That first dairy farm was near Canute, Okla. "We milked cows so we could have a little money to buy groceries with. We didn't have electricity then and milked cows with a gasoline motor running a vacuum pump. We got electricity in the latter part of 1948, and we felt like there'd never be another poor day," Bert shared.

Soon after, around 1950, the elder Hutson built a dairy barn with a concrete floor. A health inspector named Troy Hicks came out to inspect the operation. "There was a lot of milk being sold in Elk City at the time, but it was Grade C, which is what they make cheese with. My dad got to sell the first Grade A milk in Elk City to Braden Dairy," he said.

The dairy business rocked along steadily for several years, but when Martin received a terrifying diagnosis, it seemed that life was going to change.

Bert himself had just graduated high school and was only four days into a job of unloading lumber for a lumberyard in Clinton. "In 1959 dad was having some trouble seeing, and it wound up that he had pituitary gland cancer. He got a message that he had to go to the doctor in the city then or it would be too late," Bert said.



Back then, a daily trek to and from Oklahoma City would have been too much, and Martin was advised to sell his dairy. "I told him 'No, you're not going to do that.' I knew my job at the time wasn't important, so he went to the doctor and I went to the dairy and milked his cows and fed them," he said.

A couple months went by before Martin was able to travel home to check on his dairy, including a small herd of heifers Bert had been caring for. "You know, back then you just raised everything as poor as you could. He didn't have much money, but I went and bought some cottonseed meal and mixed it with his silage and fed those heifers." He added, "What was real funny was when he came down to the lots and looked around. He saw those heifers and asked where I got them.



Top photo: A few of the bulls at Hutson Angus Farm. Bottom: Bert and Sue Hutson have been married more than 50 years. (Photos courtesy of Hutson Angus Farm)

He didn't believe they were the same ones that were there when he'd left."

Bert knew the cottonseed meal

would add some much-needed protein to the heifers' diet. "We just fed them silage, which wasn't

Continued on page 34



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Efficiency at its Finest

Continued from page 32

high protein, so I just added some stuff to it. I was always interested in that stuff in FFA. We'd figure out rations and things. He (Martin) always said, 'I can't believe those heifers look like that,'" Bert said.

Luckily, the Hutsons managed to save the dairy. Martin finally sold it in 1964 and moved north to Kansas. "He always liked to farm the black land and he took all his dairy equipment. He tried to get me to come up there and help him with a dairy, but I never did go," he said.

Bert stayed in Oklahoma working as a truck driver for his uncle and dipped his toes into several other ventures. "I was into one thing and then the other. I did a little custom hay baling. I had a little trouble where they couldn't keep my heart slowed down, and they told me I had to get out of the trucks and exercise, so I bought a 24 hour truck stop, and I got a lot of exercise doing that," he said.

While the truck stop business was doing well, tragedy struck when one of the workers was shot and killed during an armed robbery.

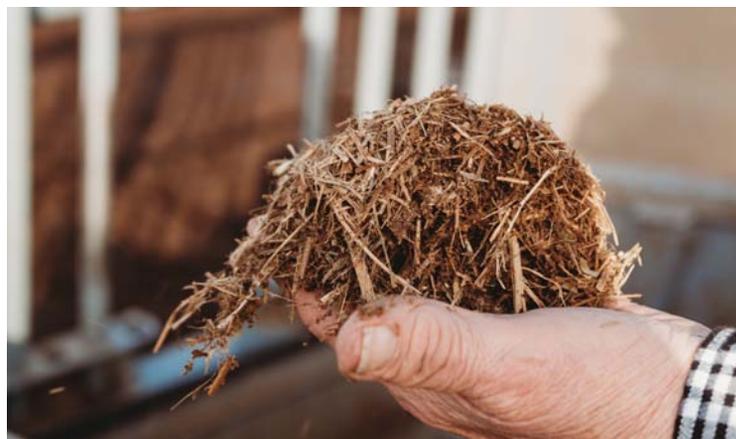
After that, Bert had trouble finding anyone to work overnight. Luckily, he had many friends who wanted him to get back into the hay business, so he and a friend started custom cutting and baling.

"Then in April of 1971, I had a neighbor move here from Texas who was an oilfield guy who was a mud engineer. He called me up and said, 'You kick that hay off that truck and come haul mud for us.' I said, 'Well, golly, it's nine o'clock at night,' and he just told me that's the mud business," he laughed.



After agreeing, Bert took off to Canadian, Texas, but it was raining and misting, and his truck didn't have a heater or a defroster. "So, I just turned around and came back. I said, 'Hey, you want your mud hauled? Call during the day,'" he laughed. "They told me to fix the heater and that was in the fall of 1971, and I haven't been caught up since. I started out with an old \$400 GMC hay truck."

Bert was custom baling and hauling mud, which meant that his wife, Sue, and his son, Johnny, also had to pitch in. "The oilfield guys would call me at three or four in the afternoon, and I'd have to get on the truck. If I was baling or cutting, I'd tell my wife and she would come finish running the baler or the swather. When our son got a little older, around nine, he and a neighbor boy would come with my wife and she would let one of them run the tractor one round, and then the other would run it one round. The last guy that I can remember that was always telling people about Sue baling



Top photo: Bert next to one of the GrowSafe Systems on the farm. Bottom: The cattle are tested on a high roughage ration that contains mostly hay and silage (grown at Hutson Angus Farm), along with wet distillers and very little corn or cottonseed. (Photos by Savannah Magoteaux)

passed away about six months ago at 91 years old," Bert said.

Hutson Angus Ranch

Bert and Sue were married in 1964, and lived just outside of Elk City on three-and-a-half acres for several years. In 1975, some land west of Elk City came up for sale. It was in bad shape; grown up with no buildings, save for two small sheds. Still, the couple didn't

think it would be something they could afford.

"Everyone in the country had looked at this property. Two years before, cotton had been up to 60 or 70 cents, and in those days, that was a lot of money, so the cotton farmers made a lot of money in that time, but they all bought new tractors and equipment. Well, come to 1975, and cotton was at 18 cents, so they were having to

make payments on those tractors. I didn't have a lot of people bidding against me.

"The morning of the sale I was kind of disgusted, and I told Sue, 'I don't believe we'll go with everybody looking at the place.' She said, 'Nope, we've looked at it so much, we're going over there.' It's the best thing we ever did. We bought it for a song, and I don't sing very well," he said.

Although Bert was focused on his trucking business, the Hutson family began to venture into the cattle industry, starting with Limousines. "I don't remember exactly how we got into that business, but we'd see them around the shows and stuff, and they looked pretty good. They would have a good rear end on them and a lot of meat. One thing led to another, and we'd go to a sale and buy a better one. Then we got to showing them because my kids were young. You know, we'd go to town and could get reserve grand champion right behind the big boys, so we enjoyed it," he said. "We never put all the effort out like a lot of the show people did. I can't recall exactly why I started out with them, but knowing me, there's no telling. I probably saw one somewhere."

While daughter Angie had a lot of success showing Limousines, Bert noticed the cattle industry was changing to favor the Angus breed. In 1997 Bert and his son Johnny headed to the Burch Angus Sale in Mill Creek, Okla., intending to buy a few head of Angus he had seen in Clarence Burch's catalog. "We thought we'd buy a trailer load. You know, maybe 10 or 15 to get started," he said.

However, the quality of Burch's cattle made it impossible for Bert and Johnny to differentiate between them to pick out what he wanted. "I just set myself a price limit so that I wouldn't pay over \$1,800 to \$2,000 for a cow," Bert laughs. "We went down there to buy 15 head, and we came back with two-and-a-half semi loads.

You couldn't separate them. One looked just as good as the other. They were the true old Aberdeen Angus breed, and they had never crossbred."

Those first loads of cattle became the foundation of the herd that the farm runs today.

Feed Efficient Cattle

In 1999, a cattle nutritionist and founder of Darlings Nutrition Co. Don Southerland convinced Bert to send a group of bulls to Profit Maker Bulls in Paxton, Neb., to evaluate the growth, performance, and average daily gain. All parameters were carefully measured, and based on the results, Bert decided to shift his breeding focus to produce feed-efficient stock. His aim was now to breed higher-gaining cattle that require less feed.

"I started out sending six bulls or so up there, and I'd add another one or two each year. The Burch Angus cattle were showing up those high numbered cattle up there. We got to leasing a bunch of cattle up in Nebraska and the leasing deal got really good. A company came by with a GrowSafe System and so we started testing our bulls and climbing the ladder," Bert shared.

It wasn't long before people were really after the BH branded bulls because they could wean more weight off their cows. "Then we started sending heifers up there and testing those, and when we started doing that everything began to improve. We were breeding the feed efficient heifer to a feed efficient bull, and it's really added to the deal," he said.

About seven years ago, the Hutsons began having a sale for the three-year-old bulls tested at Profit Maker Bulls, and in 2016 they installed a GrowSafe Individual Feed Intake Measurement System and GrowSafe Beef to be able to test more cattle.

The GrowSafe System is a company based out of Canada. Scales are built into the feeders



Operation Overview

Hutson Angus Farms is more than just a top cattle producer; farming is also a very important part of the operation. At the age of 18, Johnny Hutson, son of Bert and Sue, took over the farming end of the business. Together with Bert he is constantly looking at how to best utilize their nearly 9,000 acres of land. The land produces enough feed to provide the cow and bull rations for the entire year. This mix consists mainly of either tritcale, Mega Green hay and silage.

In a normal year the farm is able to not only feed the herd, they usually have enough surplus to sell - whether it be wheat, tritcale and sorghum, or a variety of grasses for hay.

Angie, Bert and Sue's daughter, is accounts payable for the cattle/farming operation, while Jennifer, Johnny's wife, does the paperwork for the farming aspect of Hutson Angus Farms.

Joe and Krista Sanders, with daughters Jaycee Jo and Nealli have been managing all aspects of the Hutson Angus Cattle operation since 2011, including AI'ing, pregnancy checking, managing the GrowSafe system, heifer and bull development, sale preparation, and much more.

and waterers. "One animal can put their head in one node; they have an EID tag that reads which animal is eating or is at the waterer. When they put their head in it starts recording, and they know what each animal eats. Using the GrowSafe Beef, which gets a half weight and can get within one percent of actual body weight, cuts our test time by 21 days. Extra handling can knock an animal off feed, so this makes it easier," Bert said.

No longer testing only the bulls, Hutson Angus now tests all heifers that are kept for replacement females, furthering their aim to use and market only the most feed-efficient bulls and heifers. "We have stayed with

one deal. We're going to work for our customer, and if you get the feed efficiency and they see it, they're going to come back and get your bulls to wean a few more pounds," he said. "Now, we don't have the biggest, fattest bull in the world because fat and pretty might always sell, but it won't always produce in the pasture. You have to have something that will convert forage to meat."

Bert is passionate about the cattle business and encourages all ranchers of any size operation to be informed about what is happening in the industry. Always willing to visit with fellow ranchers, the gates to Hutson Angus Farm is always open for visitors. ☞

WHERE THE PAVED ROAD ENDS

Sleepless in the Country (Part 1)

By Beth Watkins

Because we live at the end of a dirt road, we are forced to adopt people's unwanted pets. Currently we have a medium sized black and white dog called Blue. I gave her that name because when she first came around she seemed very blue. She kept her tail between her legs and her head down. She most generally stayed curled up in the front yard. I had seen her walking down the road toward a neighbor's house a few times, so I begged Gdubb not to feed her, let someone else claim her.

One day I came home and she was sleeping next to the garage, and for a week it seemed, she stayed right there. Well, of course she stayed right there, because that's where my soft-hearted husband had placed her new food bowl. It wasn't long until our old lab, Tootsie, had invited her to the back porch, which was about the same time Biscuit, our barn kitty, felt comfortable enough to bring up her newest two kittens to the back porch.

Blue is a real sweetheart, I can't imagine why anyone would want to separate themselves from this little lady, she doesn't dig, and she doesn't chase cows, were my first impressions. Since Blue has fallen in love with the other occupants in her life, she has switched gears from sweet mild-mannered lady to aggressive protector, either that or she is afraid of the dark. At night, she barks at any little sound, and that is possibly the reason someone kicked her out of their life.

I'm trying very hard to appreciate her tenacity, because I actually caught Blue protecting



(Photo by Jitze Couperus/Flickr/Creative Commons Attribution)

the kittens. A coyote came up on the back porch trying to get the kittens and Blue came to the rescue and attacked. She then chased the coyote through our yard. The coyote saved itself by jumping on top of a round hay bale. It seemed Blue was going to hold that coyote there, so I ran to get a gun, while calling Gdubb on the phone to tell him what just happened and that I was about to shoot a coyote from our bathroom window. He laughed and then got real serious in his instructions, "Do not shoot out of the bathroom window. I can't picture you having a clean shot with my tractors and feed truck between the house and the hay." I assured him I had a straight shot, but I could tell he meant business when he told me to shut the blinds and step away from the window. I

think he has silently regretted not letting me take the shot because night after night our sleep is interrupted with Blue's barking. She must smell a coyote nearby.

One night I heard Blue relentlessly barking outside our bathroom window, while my Romeo appeared to be resting comfortably in a blissful sleep so I got up to check on the situation.

It was not a coyote that was causing the disturbance. Blue was standing there barking and wagging her tail; she was talking to another dog a half mile down the road. I remember grumbling on my way back to bed, "I have a straight shot now."

In the midst of our coyote nightmare, some friends of ours came for a weekend visit. As we were all getting ready to call

it an evening and head to bed, I felt I should apologize ahead of time in case Blue disrupted their sleep. With the morning sun, I was relieved to find that Blue had a quiet night and our guests slept well. We were not so lucky the next night.

Blue began her call of duty around 2 a.m. Gdubb grabbed his spot light and disappeared out the door to check cows. The rest of the evening was fairly quiet until about 4 a.m. That's when the barking began, and it seemed like Blue was chasing something around the yard. Gdubb jumped up. I listened to his footsteps and could tell he went straight to the bathroom window.

He must have spotted the coyote because I could tell his hurried footsteps took him straight to the

gun cabinet. The next sound was a bolt engaging. Then sure footsteps headed back to the bathroom and the window blinds made a zipping sound as they flew up the cord. The opening of the window followed. I stuck my fingers in my ears and hoped that our guests were heavy sleepers.

Thankfully we didn't have to find out, because as quick as the barking started, it stopped and Blue was spotted, tail wagging coming back to the house.

My momma called and asked me what we were doing this weekend, I told her Gdubb had just left to try to call up a coyote and I was doing laundry and had just found a new recipe for chicken and dumplings made in the crockpot. A friend of mine makes hers that way with canned biscuits. (Silence on the other end of the phone) "Have you ever made chicken and dumplings like that?" (Still silence, making me nervous, so I

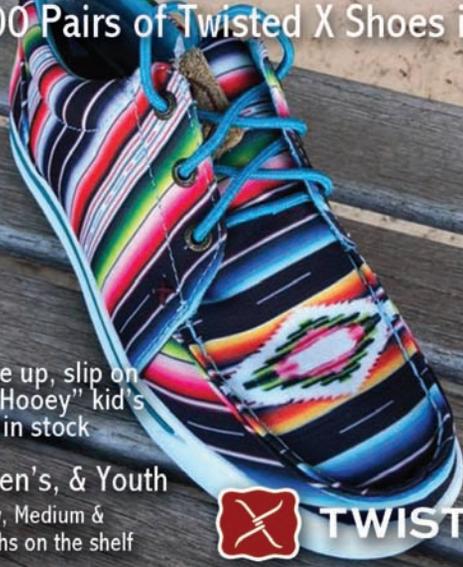
began to ramble) "Of course I feel lazy using canned biscuits; Granny would roll over in her grave if she knew I was using canned biscuits, but it's worth a shot, right? Mom! Are you still there?" Momma then answered, "I'm sorry hon, I'm just trying to figure out how and why George is calling a coyote."

I went on to explain to momma that we have a coyote problem. We lost a calf to a coyote, and it is probably sniffing around for more. Gdubb has borrowed a coyote call. It's a small megaphone looking gadget that makes sounds like mice. He strategically hides the call then sits and waits, armed and ready.

As I hung up the phone, I realized, the phrase "calling up a coyote" just flowed out of my mouth in casual conversation. I think the process of transformation from city girl to country girl has completed its cycle.

To be continued.... ☞

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Lacey's Pantry

By Lacey Newlin

Sun-Dried Tomato Pasta with Chicken and Creamy Mozzarella Sauce

Time: 40 minutes

Servings: 5

Ingredients

- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 oz sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 lb. chicken breast tenderloins , sliced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1 cup half and half (or use 1/2 cup heavy cream + 1/2 cup milk)
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese , shredded (do not use fresh Mozzarella, use pre-shredded)
- 8 oz penne pasta (for gluten free, use gluten free brown rice pasta)
- 1 tablespoon basil
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/2 cup reserved cooked pasta water or more
- 1/4 teaspoon salt to taste

Directions

1. In a large skillet, sauté garlic and sun-dried tomatoes (drained from oil) in 2 tablespoons of olive oil (reserved from the sun-dried tomatoes jar) for 1 minute on medium heat until the garlic is fragrant.
2. Remove the sun-dried tomatoes from the skillet, leaving the olive oil.
3. Add sliced chicken (salted and lightly covered in paprika for color) and cook on high heat for 1 minute on each side. Remove from heat.
4. Cook pasta according to package instructions. Reserve some cooked pasta water. Drain the pasta.
5. Slice sun-dried tomatoes into smaller pieces and add them back to the skillet with chicken.
6. To make creamy pasta sauce, add half-and-half and Mozzarella cheese to the skillet, and bring to a gentle boil.
7. Immediately reduce to simmer and cook, constantly stirring, until all cheese melts and creamy sauce forms.
8. Add cooked and drained pasta to the skillet with the cream sauce, and stir to combine. Add 1 tablespoon of basil and at least 1/4 teaspoon of red pepper flakes. Stir to combine.
9. If the creamy sauce is too thick: Add about 1/2 cup of reserved cooked pasta water to the skillet to thin it out. Do not add all of pasta water at once - you might need less or more of it. 

101 Ranch Wild West Show Remembered at Blackwell Event

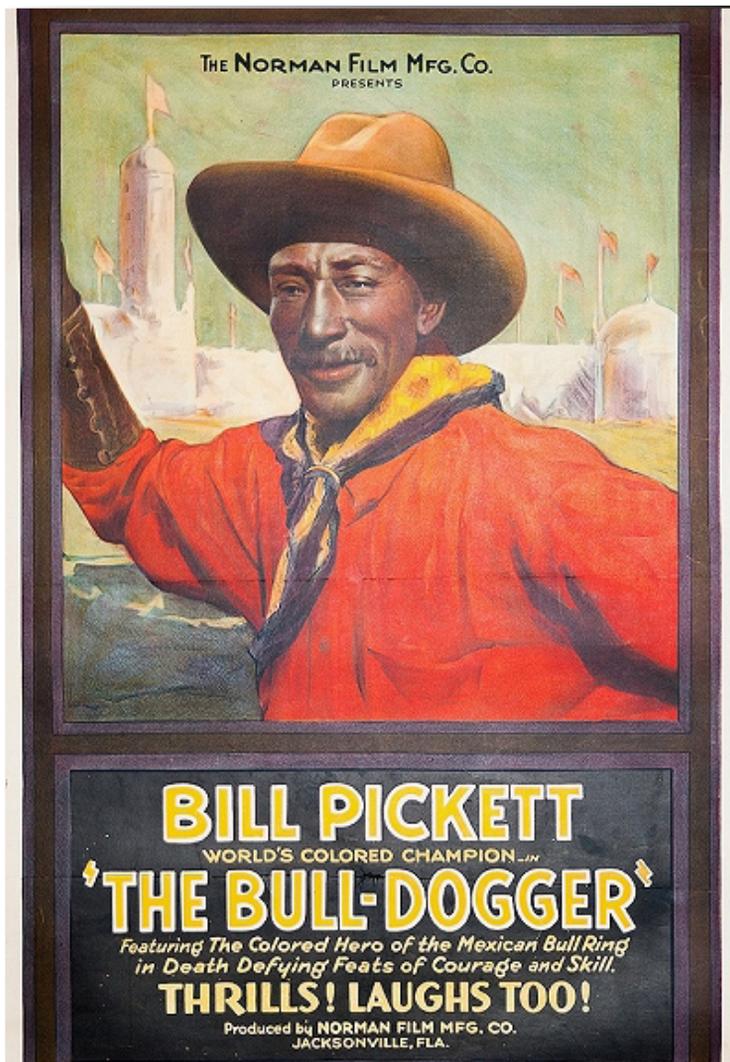
By Jim Fulbright

101 Ranch founder George Miller always encouraged his three sons to think big, and in 1905 Joe, George and Zack Miller took his advice to heart. The three boys gave the already highly diversified 101 Ranch a new direction when they conceived the idea of going into show business, staging what they called “Oklahoma Gala Day.”

By this time, the ranch, first founded on leased property in Indian Territory in 1879, was located on thousands of acres that sprawled across both sides of the Salt Fork River south of Ponca City. In 1904 the brothers had visited the St. Louis World’s Fair where they witnessed large crowds taking in spectacular displays of Western showmanship.

They also accompanied a traveling Wild West Show to New York in early 1905, and those two trips gave rise to plans for their own spectacle at the 101 Ranch. It would showcase the skills of their cowboys and ranch employees, as well as draw on Oklahoma’s large Native American population. Thanks to the consent of the U.S. Army, their plan included the appearance of captive Apache leader Geronimo, who was brought to the ranch from Ft. Sill to shoot a buffalo from an early-day steam-driven car called a “Locomobile.”

To assure the show’s success, Joe Miller found a way to cast the national spotlight on the new enterprise. He began publishing the ranch’s own newspaper, the Bliss Breeze, in the nearby town of Bliss. The scheme earned him an automatic membership in the “National Editorial Association,”



Bill Pickett show poster. (Courtesy photos)

enabling him to forge an alliance with several newspaper writers and persuade them to hold their 1905 national convention in the Oklahoma Territorial Capital of Guthrie. A side-trip included a visit to the 101 Ranch, where the brothers played host to newspapermen and the public, entertaining them with a rodeo and Wild West Show that featured emerging stars of future movie and rodeo fame.

When the dust settled that day in June 1905, the reported 65,000 people witnessing the first “101 Wild West Show” got their money’s worth and so did the Millers. The dozens of national newspaper editors present had more than enough material to write stories that excited audiences all over the country, propelling the 101 Ranch into the world of big-time show business.

Future movie star Tom Mix

was one of the featured performers in the Miller’s first show. The former Guthrie bartender knew horses and riding from his boyhood days in Pennsylvania and had earlier been invited to work at the 101 Ranch. His initial reviews as a working cowhand were less than flattering as some Miller cowpunchers claimed they had to teach him to properly saddle a cow pony. One even observed he was “really not much of a cowboy,” because “he could get lost in an eight-acre pasture.”

He said it was Mix’s job to “hang around the ranch and look pretty,” and there was no doubt Mix’s penchant for showmanship was the primary reason for his hiring. As the Millers prepared for their first show, Mix and other would-be performers traveled to New York with the already-established Wild West Show of Oklahoma rancher Zack Mulhall who billed Mix as “Tom Mixco, the Mexican horse runner.” The odd description may have taught Mix and, later, his publicist, how easily he could reinvent his life story, something he did many times over during his career to the consternation of his biographers who still have trouble separating fact from fiction.

The handsome, dashing young cowboy sporting his trademark white hat excelled as a horseman and pistol shot in several subsequent Miller shows and eventually was offered a role in the 1910 Hollywood silent film, Ranch Life in the Great Southwest. It started a long and successful movie career that forever featured him as a “rough and ready cowboy.” Mix made a reported 336 films between

1910 and 1935 and historically is viewed as Hollywood's first Western megastar, credited with helping define that genre for all cowboy actors who followed.

The first "101 Wild West Show" also starred Lucille Mulhall, whose family had moved to Oklahoma Territory from St. Louis in 1890. The Mulhalls quickly adapted to ranch life and Lucille's father Zack began staging roping and riding contests that featured his own children. By age ten, Lucille was considered a top cowhand. Even though her mother tried to raise a "proper lady" by sending her to boarding school in St. Louis, her father gave in to her pleas to come home and enrolled her at a private school in nearby Guthrie so she could visit the ranch on weekends.

In 1899, "Colonel" Mulhall, as he was known by honorary title, started his own traveling troupe, dubbed the "Congress of Rough Riders and Ropers." Naturally, the show starred daughter Lucille who rode her trained horse, "Governor," dubbed "The Wonder Horse" by her adoring public. Later that year, the family was invited to play the county fair in their hometown of St. Louis, and their show eventually signed a young, mixed-blood Cherokee trick roper named William Penn Adair Rogers, later better-known as Will Rogers. It was Rogers who described Lucille Mulhall as the "world's first cowgirl and greatest rider of all time." Lucille went on to fame as a world champion roper and the only woman to rope steers competitively with men.

Another cowboy-showman in the first 101 Ranch show was the incomparable Bill Pickett. The second of thirteen children born to former slaves Thomas and Mary Pickett, Bill attended school in his home state of Texas until the fifth grade, then went to work as a ranch hand to help put food on the family table.

Early on, the young cowboy



Left: Lucille Mulhall. Right: Tom Mix (Courtesy photos)

observed how local ranchers sometimes used a special breed of bulldog to hold cattle down by biting their upper lip until they could be roped for branding. Pickett tried the technique on young calves by riding alongside the animal, dropping from the saddle and grabbing their neck. He then twisted the calf's head upward and bit it on the lip, forcing the animal to the ground.

As he grew to manhood, the small but well-muscled Pickett perfected this technique on the beef cows and longhorn steers that roamed the brush country of Texas. When he was eighteen, he performed in county fairs, demonstrating his "steer wrestling" method, which he called "bulldogging." Bill and his brothers then formed the "Pickett Brothers Bronco Busters and Rough Riders Association." By the 1890s, he had performed his "bulldogging" specialty throughout most of Texas, leading to bookings at rodeos and shows across the Southwest.

Aware that blacks were automatically barred from entering most rodeo contests, Pickett's agent focused on Bill's mixed-Indian blood, promoting him as the "Dusky Demon." After his ap-

pearance at the famed "Cheyenne Frontier Days" in 1904, the Miller Brothers signed him for their 1905 ranch extravaganza. On show day, spectators watched in awe as Pickett entered the arena and coaxed his horse into a full gallop behind a running steer.

Riding alongside, he slid from the saddle, grabbed a horn in each hand, dug in his boot heels, twisted the head up, and gnashed his teeth on the steer's lip, forcing it to fall on its side. The crowd gave him a standing ovation, and "steer wrestling," or "bulldogging," soon became recognized as an official rodeo event. In the years since, Pickett's technique has been modified to eliminate the actual biting of the steer's lip, but it remains one of the seven official rodeo competition events.

In 1907, Pickett became a full-time 101 Ranch employee and signed a permanent contract with the Miller show. When not on tour, Pickett fell into the familiar routine of a regular ranch hand. When he died in 1932, Pickett's funeral was said to be one of the largest ever held in Oklahoma. Zack Miller paid the ultimate tribute by calling him "the greatest sweat-and-dirt cowhand that ever lived." Pickett was buried on

a hill not far from the 101 Ranch house where his cowboy comrades placed a marker.

In 1971 the legendary Bill Pickett was inducted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Museum, and in 1989 he was named to the Professional Rodeo Hall of Fame.

That first 101 Wild West Show on thirty acres of pasture near the Salt Fork River led to several years of national and world tours and launched the careers of many famous rodeo and motion picture stars.

The history of the show and the 101 Ranch will be celebrated in Blackwell, Okla., Friday and Saturday March 27 and 28, 2020, at the Kay County Fairgrounds Event Center. Among many show and ranch artifacts will be Bill Pickett's chaps, Lucille Mulhall's riding skirt and mementos from Tom Mix's enduring career. Other Western memorabilia for display and on sale include original cowboy gear, firearms, assorted antiques, rare photos and ephemera.

The show, presented by the 101 Ranch Collectors' Association, is open to the public Friday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. ☒

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

MARCH

McAlester Union Stockyards Sale

McAlester Union Stockyards. 2515 Standard Rd., McAlester, OK 74501. The Old Reliable. Regular sale every Tuesday. Beefmaster Sale - March 21. Brangus Sale - March 28. OQBN Weaned Sale - April 21. For more information call **918-423-2834** or visit www.McAlesterStockyards.com.

MARCH

OKC West Sale

OKC West Livestock Market. 7200 E Hwy 66, El Reno, OK 73036. Cattlemen serving cattlemen. Cows and bulls sell Mondays, calves and stockers sell Tuesdays, and feeder cattle sell Wednesdays. Call **405-262-8800** or visit www.OKCWest.com for more information.

MARCH

Tulsa Stockyards Sale

Tulsa Stockyards. Tulsa, OK 74116. North-east Oklahoma's largest and finest livestock market. Sale every Monday at 9 a.m. View the sale online at www.cattleusa.com. Visit www.TulsaStockyards.com for more information.

MARCH

Oklahoma National Stockyards Sale

Oklahoma National Stockyards. Oklahoma City, OK 73018. Stockers and feeders sell Monday. Single stockers and feeders sell Tuesday, followed by stock cows, packer cows, and packer bulls. Call **405-235-8675** or visit www.ONSYS.com for more information.

March 5

Beef Quality Assurance Certification

Noble Research Institute, Entry 5, Kruse Auditorium, 2510 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 73401. The Noble Research Institute presents Beef Quality Assurance Certification from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. on March 5 at the Noble Research Institute, Entry 5, Kruse Auditorium. Beef Quality Assurance raises consumer confidence through

proper management education and guidelines for the beef industry. This workshop will give insight into BQA standards for animal care, record-keeping, nutrition and carcass quality. You can become BQA certified with successful completion. There is no registration fee for this event, but we ask that you preregister prior to the event. Visit www.noble.org.

March 6

2020 International Super Sale

HLSR NRG Center. Don't miss the 2020 International Super Sale at the HLSR NRG Center at 6 p.m. on March 6. Quality females consigned. The Santa Gertrudis herd bull you choose today will improve tomorrow's profits. Choose from Wendt Ranches - the Herd Bull Replacement Center. Email wendtranches@hotmail.com.

MARCH 7

Heritage Rodeo

Stephens County Fair & Expo Center. 2002 S 13th St., Duncan, OK 73533. Head to the Stephens County Expo Center in Duncan to experience the excitement of the Heritage Rodeo. See cowboys and cowgirls compete in rodeo events like bareback riding, ranch bronc riding, tie-down roping, steer wrestling, ladies barrel racing, team roping and bull riding. Even the smallest cowpokes get in on the action with mutton bustin. Don't miss this fun event, where nearly \$5,000 will be up for grabs. Call **918-402-5208** for more information.

MARCH 7

Full Moon Night Hike

Roman Nose State Park. 3236 S Hwy 8A., Watonga, OK 73772. The Full Moon Night Hikes at Roman Nose State Park invite everyone out to enjoy up to a 4-mile hike to Inspiration Point. Meet at Roman Nose Lodge and come dressed for the weather with at least one liter of water. The Full Moon Night Hikes are fun and informative with each hike starting after dark and lasting up to three hours.

MARCH 10 - 20

Oklahoma Youth Expo

State Fair Park. 3001 General Pershing Blvd. Oklahoma City, OK 73147. The Oklahoma

Youth Expo has drawn thousands of youth to its annual show since the 1920s. Now, OK Youth Expo is recognized as one of the largest youth livestock events in the state. Head to this free event to see 8,000 exhibitors along with their educators and families from all of Oklahoma's 77 counties. Over the course of the 10-day event, young exhibitors will compete to sell livestock and enter the "Sale of Champions" category. For more information call **405-235-0404**.

MARCH 12 - April 26

Tulsa Botanic Blooms

Tulsa Botanic Garden. 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., Tulsa, OK 74127. Enjoy fresh fragrances and a kaleidoscope of color when more than 120,000 blossoms usher in spring at Tulsa Botanic Garden.

MARCH 13 - 15

Timed Event Championships

Lazy E Arena. 9600 Lazy E Dr., Guthrie, OK 73044. Guthrie's Lazy E Arena plays host to the exciting Timed Event Championship, an annual event featuring the top 20 PRCA cowboys competing for the title of "World's Best All-Around Timed Event Cowboy." One of the most prestigious events in professional rodeo, this event includes three days and five performances of competition. Dubbed the "Ironman of Pro Rodeo," the event has crowned some of the greatest champions in rodeo history since 1985. Secure your seat in the stands and enjoy a marathon of team roping including heading and heeling, tie-down roping, steer wrestling and steer roping. Join thousands of fans from across the country to see the world's toughest cowboys battle the clock and test their talents on one of rodeo's most exciting stages. For more information, call **405-282-3004**.

March 21

007 Charolais Bull Sale

Double G Sale Facility. Rush Springs, OK Join us for the 007 Charolais Bull Sale, selling 70 purebred Charolais bulls, including purebred herd sire prospects. Sale Manager Greg Hubert can be reached at 785-672-3195. For more information, you can email 007charolais@gmail.com, or call Cody at **580-450-7572**, Buck at **580-695-3696**, or Steve at **580-861-2121**.



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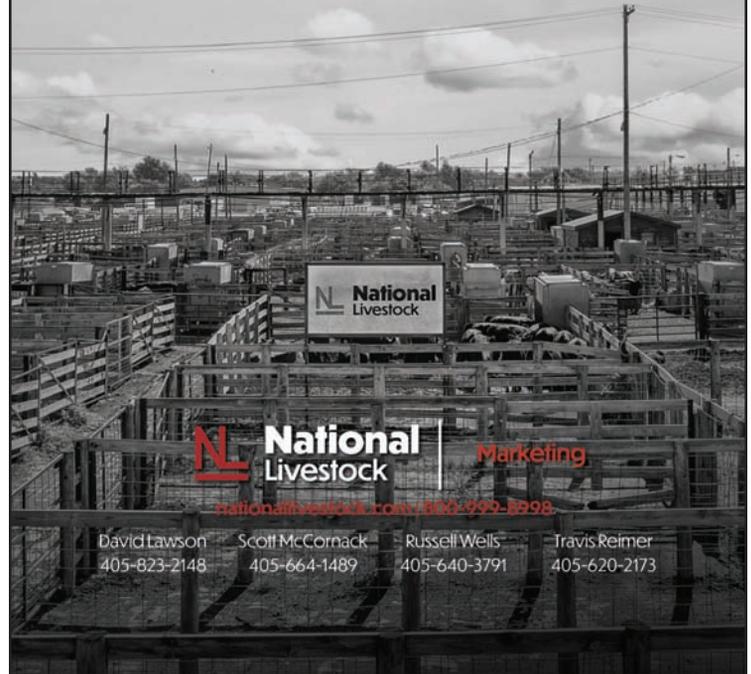


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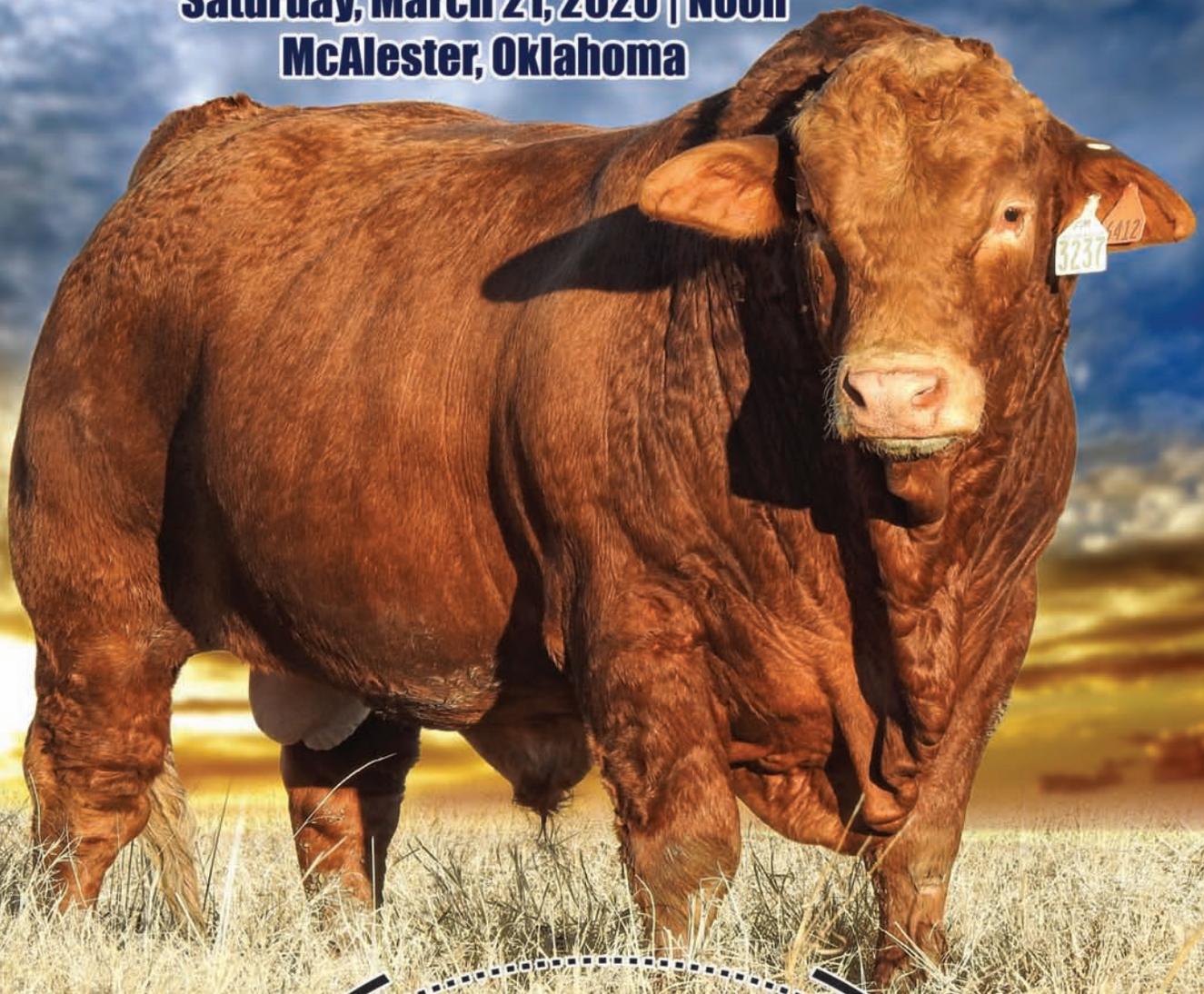
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 21

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MARCH 21

BEEFMASTER Beef on Forage Bull Sale

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MARCH 20 - 21

Pre-War Auto Swap Meet

Grady County Fairgrounds, Chickasha, OK 73023. One of the largest pre-war swap meets in the world, Chickasha's Pre-War Auto Swap Meet features over 1,000 vendors from multiple countries.

MARCH 26

Lone Star Angus Spring Bull and Female Sale

Cooke County Fairgrounds, 1901 Justice Center Rd., Gainesville, TX, 76240. Selling 70 powerful, ranch-raised bulls ready to go to work. Also featuring the customer appreciation commercial female sale. Over 150 head of top quality replacements from quality Lone Star genetics. Video and EPD spreadsheet available online two weeks before the sale. For more information, visit www.LoneStarAngus.com or call 940-367-0064.

COWBOYS AND COBBLER THROWDOWN APRIL 4



March 27-28

Cowboy True

The Forum, 2120 Speedway, Wichita Falls, TX 76301. The mission of Cowboy True is to educate the region about the honor, art and beauty of the cowboy's daily life. Cowboy True is a celebration to honor working cowboys and the artwork that comes from their daily lives. Cowboy True was originally inspired as an effort to raise awareness and funding for The Forum, formerly the home of The Woman's Forum, which has a long association with the women and families of the North Texas cattle industry. Friday night events include the artist' reception and opening, Saturday evening will consist of a night dinner, live auction and entertainments. All proceeds go to The Forum to assist with programming and mission fulfillment. For more information, call 940-766-3347 or email cowboytrue@artscouncilwf.org. Visit www.artscouncilwf.org/cowboy-true for more information and a complete schedule for this annual exciting event.

April 4

Deleu Ranch 1st Annual Open House and Private Treaty Sale

Deleu Ranch, 899 Patton Rd., Collinsville, TX, 76233. Join us for our first annual open house and private treaty bull and heifer sale at our ranch in Collinsville, Texas. For more information, contact Kevin Deleu at 903-651-1481, Carlos Deleu at 903-651-8329, or visit the website at www.DeleuRanch.com.

APRIL 4

Cowboys and Cobbler Throwdown

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan, OK. A new event, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cobbler contest, live music, longhorns on the property and a bit of cowboy poetry peppered throughout the day to keep things lively. This tasty, fun fundraiser is open to ALL cowboys, cattle queens, and of course, bakers, youth ages 10-17 and adults, 18 and older. Bakers must enter their own home-cooked cobbler. Bakers are limited to two different recipes. Dutch oven cobblers, large casserole and deep dish cobblers are all acceptable, but pies will not be accepted. There is no early entry fee with all registration forms due by Friday, March 27. Non-monetary prizes to be awarded in four different categories, including a People's Choice award, for both youth and adults divisions. The cobbler in both youth and adult divisions with the most tickets will win the People's Choice awards. Entertainment throughout the day will include cowboy performer Jay Snider and emcee; flutist Duane Paul, and Two Belle. A finale 2 hour concert will feature Gary S. Pratt. A "Quickdraw Poetry Showcase" provides cowboy poets of all ages a chance to share their best or favorite poem. There will be opportunities throughout the day for cowboy poetry performances. Forms will be available on our website and in our main lobby beginning March 1. All necessary information will be on the form (cobbler arrival deadlines, winners announced, etc.) For information, contact Leah or Toni at the Heritage Center, (580) 252-6692.



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Tales from an OUTDOORSMAN

By Andy Anderson

When Nothing Seems to go Right

You ever have a day when nothing goes your way? It just seems like you can't do anything right, and just when you think you're making progress, something happens that just knocks you back down?

We have gotten a lot of rain lately, probably the wettest winter I can remember in a long time. Everywhere I went was standing water, a swamp or marsh that just never dried up. Some places were deceiving, dry and dusty dirt on top, but pure mud underneath.

I was driving my pick up out to go deer hunting one mid-December morning. I got out into the ranch about seven or eight miles from the nearest good road when I felt that all too familiar sensation of the truck sliding in the mud and the rear end sinking down. This is where it all started going downhill.

In my efforts to get the truck unstuck, I fell in the mud and lost a boot. As I sat in the mud trying to dig my boot out, I felt water begin to saturate my clothes. It was cold outside and the water was cold as well. The chains and come-a-long, covered in mud and hard to grasp or handle, made things even more difficult.

I tried to call for help, but of course no cell phone signal. I was on my own and now my phone was covered in mud. On my own I kept at it, inch by inch I hoisted my truck forward.

After about three hours of work, soaking wet and covered in



(Courtesy photo)

mud, I had gained only about 60 yards progress and no better position to drive back out or forward. I reset for a new pull, tying onto a good size post oak tree.

Suddenly the truck hit some dry ground, like a speed bump. After attempting to drive it forward over the ridge, I tried to winch it up a little more.

With no warning at all, the post oak tree just slowly started falling over towards the pick-up. Like watching a wreck in slow motion, the tree fell down, coming to rest just in front of the truck, blocking all hopes of forward progress. Watching that happen was the most helpless feeling. There was just nothing that could be done to

stop it. With no chainsaw, I now had to start working back the way I came.

After nearly eight hours of winching and working in the mud, soaking wet and cold, I finally freed the pickup from the grasp of the earth.

I got everything loaded up, covered in mud, wet and cold, I decided to just strip down, throw my clothes in the bed of the truck and head home.

I got to the front gate and just stared at it, knowing that I had to get out in my underwear to open and close it.

I convinced myself that I was out in the country, and no one ever comes down this road. It will be

okay. I got out, popped the lock of the gate and heard the distinct sound of a vehicle approaching. In a hurry to open the gate and get back to the truck I tripped up, fell in the gravel road and rolled as the gate flew open. As I came to a stop, the gate hit its limit and came back at me. Before I could get my hands up to defend myself, wham! Right in the head.

Then my heart sank as I heard a voice call out, "Are you okay?" I looked up to see a well pumper stopped in the drive looking at me, trying to keep from laughing. Embarrassed, I got myself up, my pride hurt more than my body. I thanked him for my concern as an-
Continued on page 48

Continued from page 47
 other truck cruised by slowly, starting at me as I stood in the drive, in my underwear, covered in mud. I can only imagine the thoughts going through their minds.

I explained the situation and series of events to the gentleman who was so kind to stop and check on me as he erupted into laughter. He offered to close the gate so I could get on my way.

As I headed home down the road reflecting on what I had just been through, I started laughing at myself. After all, what else could you do, and what else could possibly happen, right?

On the highway just a mile from home my heart sank as I saw the red and blue lights in my rearview mirror. I said to myself, "Dang it. Why me Lord? What did I do to deserve this?" I pulled over and waited to explain myself. Texas finest, a state trooper, approached

the truck and began to explain I was pulled over for dirty license plate. I started laughing as he realized my current predicament.

I told the trooper that license plate wasn't the only thing that was dirty as his look of confusion began to change to a refrained expression of laughter. A very compassionate and amused trooper gave me a warning and sent me on my way.

I got home, jumped in the shower and warmed up. By this time, it was late in the evening, and I was exhausted. I sat in my living room thinking about the day I just had and realized that despite it all, the mud washed off and what I thought was a horrible day could have been a lot worse. In the end, we all have bad days.

Sometimes we get covered in mud, but it all washes off and we get another day to try again. I now have an electric winch. ☺



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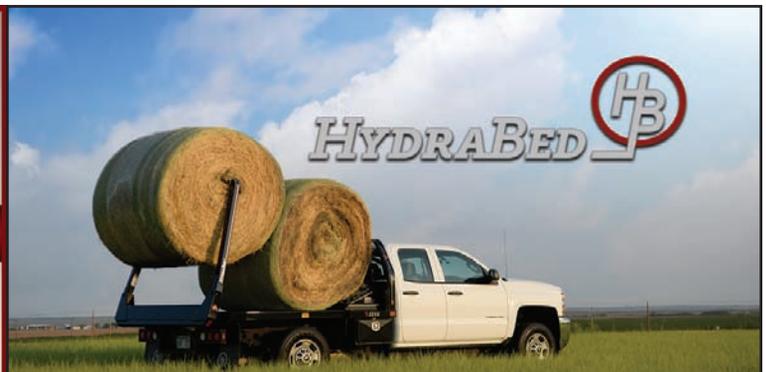


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Noble Learning:

5 Protected Ag Technologies That Help Fruit, Vegetable Growers Face Harsh Weather

By Steve Upson, Senior Soils and Crops Consultant

Bob Dylan penned the words to his smash hit, “The Times They are A-Changin’” in the fall of 1963. The lyrics reflected Dylan’s views on social injustices and the growing awareness that change was inevitable.

As predicted, a lot has changed since the release of Dylan’s song, including the climate. As a child growing up in Tulsa during the 60s, I recall cold snaps lasting longer during the winter months in contrast to present day. We expected snow, and Old Man Winter delivered. Every kid on our block owned a snow sled, and we actually got to use them. Not so much today.

Climate In Constant Flux

According to the Oklahoma Climatological Survey, annual statewide temperatures during the 60s, 70s and 80s were lower on average than the long-term average going back to 1895. Beginning in the mid-90s, annual statewide temperatures began to rise and have remained above the long-term average to present day. The point is when it comes to climate, change is inevitable. The climate has been in flux for thousands of years and will continue to change.

Several years ago, I had a conversation with Al Sutherland, former Oklahoma Mesonet Agriculture program coordinator, about extreme weather events and the unpredictable nature of these events that we are currently experiencing.

According to Sutherland, many climatologists believe these events are a manifestation of the current round of climate change and will continue to escalate in frequency and magnitude over time. Doesn’t paint a pretty picture for agriculture, does it?

Protected Ag Technology Helps Mitigate Risk

Fortunately for specialty crop growers,



Fortunately for specialty crop growers, there is a plethora of crop protection technology available to assist in these changing and challenging times. (Courtesy photo)

there is a plethora of crop protection technology available to assist in these changing and challenging times. The application of these technologies enables growers to be better risk managers because they can exercise more control over Mother Nature.

Protected agriculture can be defined as the use of active and passive technologies/practices to protect crops and animals from harsh weather conditions and pests in order to maximize yields and enhance product quality.

Active technology, like greenhouses, requires the input of an energy source such as natural gas and/or electricity. While greenhouses offer the highest level of environmental control, they are expensive to install and operate.

Passive technologies provide less protection but can be utilized without the purchase

of an energy source. A few of these popular technologies include raised beds equipped with plastic mulch film, floating crop covers, low tunnels and high tunnel hoop houses.

Passive Technology Options

1. Raised beds and container systems

Raised beds, shaped and permanent, protect crops from flooding rains by limiting the occurrence of soil saturation. The same can be said of container culture. The effectiveness of a raised bed growing system is maximized with the use of plastic mulch. With shaped beds, the mulch film cover insures bed integrity by eliminated the possibility of erosion during flooding rains.

2. Crop covers

Floating crop covers offer protection during frost and freeze events. These covers are light enough to be laid over the top of plants.

Various thicknesses (weights) of covers can be used depending on the degree of protection desired. Depending on soil temperature and cover elevation above the soil (plant size), heavy weight covers can provide up to eight degrees of protection. Lighter weight (thinner) covers that transmit more sunlight are commonly used to hasten crop development during periods of unseasonably cool temperature.

3. Low tunnel structures

Low tunnels are temporary hoop structures fitted with either floating crop covers or greenhouse film. They typically range in height from one to three feet depending on crop type and maturity stage. In addition to freeze protection, tunnels equipped with crop covers provide a degree of wind protection. Tunnels equipped with greenhouse film provide protection from wind and rain.

4. High tunnel structures

High tunnel hoop houses are low tunnels that have grown up; they are larger, stronger and can do more work. These greenhouse-sized structures are typically covered with a single layer of greenhouse quality polyethylene film. Greenhouse films can be purchased tailored



A high tunnel hoop house is moved onto a raised bed plot in preparation for establishing a tomato crop. (Courtesy photo)

to a grower's specific needs. Growers can choose a light diffusing film, a cooling film, a thermic (heat retaining) film, an anti-drip film or a combination of the above. They also have a choice of different film thicknesses and types: standard, woven or bubble. Factors used in film selection include crop(s) to be grown, location (latitude), season and service life requirements.

A fully equipped and properly managed hoop house is a working definition of synergy. When equipped with plastic mulch, covered raised beds and low tunnels, a hoop house is ca-

pable of providing a degree of crop protection greater than the sum of its parts. This synergy is the product of increasing efficiency with the layering of each technology.

5. Netting

Another protective technology involves the use of netting to shelter crops from hail, to shade crops from intense sunlight and to reduce wind speed. Netting is available in different mesh sizes and strengths depending on its intended use. It is typically suspended over the crop using a network of cables or placed over the top of a low or high tunnel.

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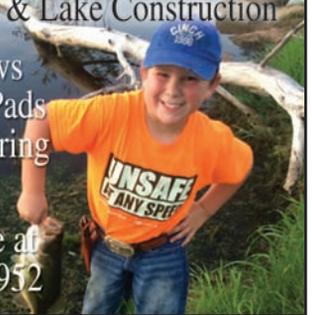
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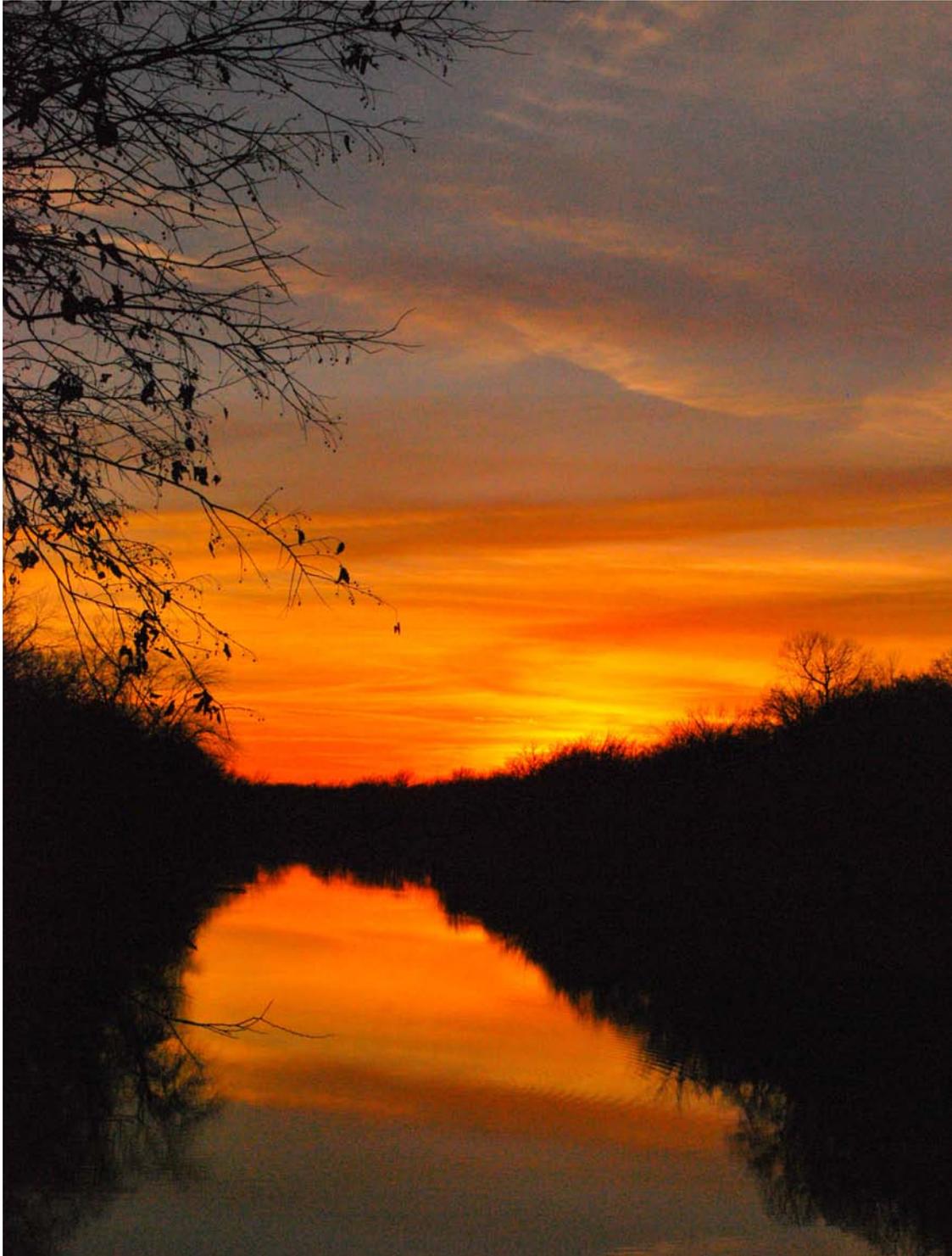
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A Beautiful Sunset

Photograph by Janice Russell

As I was headed home one evening while out looking for deer, I crossed the Phillips bridge northeast of Kingfisher and captured this beautiful sunset over the Kingfisher Creek. Oklahoma has some absolutely beautiful sunsets and sunrises. ☺

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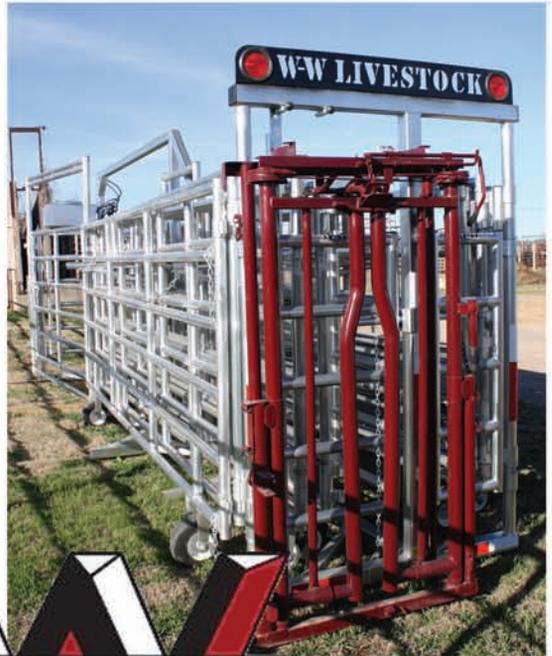


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