

Camden Soil & Water Conservation

Annual Dinner Meeting Planned for March 18

You are invited to attend the Camden County Soil & Water Conservation District's annual appreciation dinner. The event will be held Tuesday, March 18, 2014, at the Knights of Columbus Bauer Hall. The hall is located on west Hwy. 54 in Camdenton, approximately 1/2 mile from the intersection of highways 54 and 5. Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m. The buffet style meal will be served at 6:30 p.m.

This year's program will be provided by Jerry Crownover. Raised on a diversified livestock farm, Jerry served as a Professor of Agricultural Education at Missouri State University for 17 years. In 1997, Jerry resigned his position at MSU to do what he originally intended to after he got out of high school—raise cattle. He now works and lives on a beef cattle ranch in Lawrence County with his wife and sons. In addition to ranching, Jerry writes a bi-monthly column dealing with agriculture and life that appears in many magazines and newspapers in the Midwest. He has also appeared many times on Public Television as an original Ozarks Storyteller and travels throughout the U.S., presenting both humorous and motivational talks to farm and youth groups.

Photo contest entries will also be displayed. Voting for the photo contest will be held during the meeting and winners will be announced before the evening is over. There will be two divisions this year, youth and adult.

So we can request the caterer to prepare the correct of meals, we are asking you to call or email the SWCD office indicating your name and the number of persons in your family planning to attend. Please call 573-346-5125 or email connie.luttrell@swcd.mo.gov. **Deadline for response is March 1**. We have an answering machine so you may call at any time, day or evening. Be sure and post this on your frig so you won't forget the date.



**Support Your Local FFA
Chapter
FFA Week-Feb. 15-22**

The FFA Booster Club of the Lake Career & Technical Center chapter will be having a fundraiser chili dinner, silent auction, and labor auction Friday, Feb. 21, 5:00 PM-9:00 PM. The dinner will be held at the Knights of Columbus building in Camdenton. Cost for the dinner is \$7.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children, ages 6-10. Five and under are free.

This year's FFA week theme is Ignite and it embraces more than 80 years of FFA traditions while looking forward to the organization's future. Today's FFA members are the innovators and leaders of tomorrow. Through agricultural and hands-on learning, they are preparing for more than 300 career opportunities in the food, fiber and natural resources industry.

Soil Stewardship Observance



The Soil and Water Stewardship Observance is celebrated in the United States to remind all people of their individual responsibilities to care for our soil and water resources. By its very nature, the observance is one to be joined in by everyone (regardless of religious beliefs) who share a sense of personal responsibility to care for our valued natural resources.

The roots of this special observance are deep in history. More than 1550 years ago in the city of Vienne, France, bad weather and natural disasters had brought crop failures and widespread hunger. The bishop of Vienne called for three days of prayer and penance. Word of what happened in Vienne spread throughout France and then to other countries. As the years went by, the annual practice of setting aside these special days was widely established.

Stewardship Week was established by the National Association of Conservation Districts, an organization that was founded to direct programs that protect renewable natural resources after the devastation to agriculture in the United States as a result of the Dust Bowl. Stewardship Week has been celebrated annually since 1955.

This year's stewardship theme is Dig Deeper: Mysteries in the Soil.

Soil is an amazing substance. A complex mix of minerals, air, and water, soil also teems with countless micro-organisms, and the decaying remains of once-living things. Soil is made of life and soil makes life.

To the farmer, soil is where crops grow.

To the engineer, soil is a foundation upon which to build.

To the ecologist, soil supports communities of living things.

To the archaeologist, soil holds clues to past cultures.

To the city dweller, soil nurtures grass and gardens.

To the soil scientist, soil is all of these things.

Soil has been called "the skin of the earth" because it is the thin outermost layer of the Earth's crust.

Like our own skin, we can't live without soil.

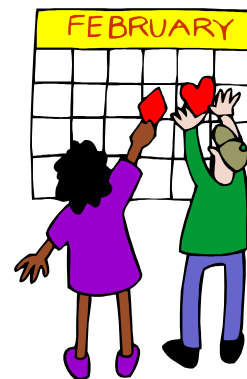
April 27
thru May
04,
2014

Source: Soil Science Society of America

If you would like to obtain bulletin inserts or other materials for your church, please contact the SWCD office at 573-346-5125

Fun Facts about February

- It is the shortest month of the year.
- The Welsh call February "y mis bach" which means "little month".
- It is the third month of winter.
- In the Southern Hemisphere February is a summer month the equivalent of August.
- The month is named for the Latin word februum which means purification.
- Together with January, it was the last of the months added to the Roman calendar.
- The largest American sporting event of the year, the Super Bowl, is held in February.
- The Saxon term for the month, Sol-monath, means "cake month". This is because they offered cakes to the gods during this month.



February was added to the Roman calendar in 713 BC. The length of the month changed over time and, at one time, it had as few as 23 days. When Julius Caesar remade the Roman calendar, the month was assigned 28 days during normal years and 29 days during leap years which occurred every four years.

Low-Stress Weaning

By Kit Pharo

Good for the Calves... Good for the Cows... Good for You.

Weaning is the process of separating a calf from its mother. It typically takes place in the fall of the year. It can be a very traumatic time for both the cow and her calf. The key to success is to minimize stress. Calves that are stressed will go off feed, which causes them to be much more susceptible to sickness. Contented calves with a full belly will seldom, if ever, get sick. Cows that are stressed will lose weight and valuable body condition, which is needed to get them through the winter with minimum feed supplementation. I've also heard that ranchers who are stressed can become very difficult to live with.

Across-the-Fence weaning is a method we have successfully used for the 20 years. Properly done, it is a very low-stress method of weaning for both the cow and her calf. Once the cows and calves have been separated, they are allowed to have some contact with one another across the fence for a few days. Most good fences will work. We use a very simple electric two-wire fence.

I have heard of several variations of across-the-fence weaning, but my favorite involves leaving both the cows and the calves out on grass or other forages. If you can keep your cows and calves out of dusty or muddy lots there will be much fewer health and other stress related problems. It's not natural for cattle to be confined in lots, eating harvested and/or processed feed. You will also discover that calves are much less likely to spook and stampede if they are not shut up. In fact, we have never had our calves spook and try to run through a fence since we quit shutting them up.

We like to move our pairs into the pasture the calves will be weaned in, a few days prior to weaning so the calves will remain in familiar surroundings. This should be one of your better pastures. The calves will be able to locate all the water sources and perimeter fences while they are still with their mothers. For best results the primary water source for the calves should be located near the fence line. You should also avoid having corners in the dividing fence where animals on either side of the fence will tend to bunch up.

On weaning day we no longer ride out to gather pairs at daybreak. We relax after breakfast with a hot cup of coffee and allow the cows and calves to finish their early morning grazing routine. Around mid to late morning we slowly bring the pairs in to our sorting corral. Once the herd has been gathered, we go back to the house for another cup of coffee while the calves find their mothers for one last drink of milk. When we return, the herd will be quietly loafing. There won't be any bawling or signs of stress. Keep in mind, cows do not understand the concept of time. They may have some regular routines and habits, but time means nothing to them. Ranchers would do a much better job of handling their livestock if they threw away their watches. Why does anything have to be completed by a certain time?

The sorting facilities do not have to be fancy or expensive. All you really need is a big corral with two gates. One gate that lets the cows out to their pasture and another to let the calves back out to theirs. If you have allowed the herd sufficient loafing time, many of the cows will be ready to file out when you open their gate, especially if they think they are going to fresh pasture. This is no place for loud, whip swinging cowboys. If you are patient, the herd will essentially sort itself. Calves are less likely to go past you so they aren't hard to hold back. After the first jag of cows have left the corral you can let a few calves out the other gate. Before you know it, the sorting will be done and nobody will be stressed or upset.

A word of caution: If your cattle are not familiar with this type of handling, they won't handle exactly as I have described. Don't become discouraged, though. Throw away your watch, be very patient and work them as slowly and as quietly as you possibly can. The next time the herd is worked it will be much easier to handle. I've found that most cowherds are easier to train than most cowboys

Continued on next page

If possible, we like to leave two or three older animals with the calves to provide some reassurance and leadership. An old dry cow works best. On their own, a herd of freshly weaned calves has absolutely no sense of leadership or direction. Since the calves are returning to the same pasture they came from, they usually won't be the least bit bothered by the day's activities. It will usually take at least two or three hours before they realize something is amiss. After a couple of hours of grazing in their new pasture, some of the cows will realize their calves are not close by, and will go in search of them.

Most people will say, "You can't wean a calf across the fence from its mother. It will never work. They will tear down the fence. It will create even more stress for the calf and the cow." Over the years I have spent considerable time watching individual cows and calves. Both will leave the fence to eat, but after a while the cow will return to check on her calf. When summoned by his mother the calf will come back to the fence. As soon as they get across the fence from one another most of their anxiety will disappear. Often, you'll see a cow and her calf lying down on opposite sides of the fence, both contentedly chewing their cud. The next time you notice them they will probably be out grazing.

What if a couple of calves slip through the fence? Relax, it's not the end of the world. Whenever it is convenient just walk the pairs back to your sorting corral and separate them again. In 20 years, we have had very few animals that refused to stay where they belonged. After the second escape, we shut the fence-crawling calves up until the cows were moved. The fence-jumping cows will be loaded up and hauled to the sale barn.

After three days, fewer and fewer cows will come back to the fence. They know where their calves are, but they are becoming less and less concerned about them. Likewise, the calves are beginning to realize they don't really need their mothers any more. It's as though you have allowed them the opportunity to gradually break the bond that has held them together for the last six months.

We always wait at least four days before we move the cows away from the calves. By this time they are usually so excited about going to fresh pasture that all we have to do is open the gates ahead of them. Very few, if any, will consider turning back for their calves. If the cows are not ready, leave them another day or two.

In just four or five days, weaning is over. The cows are happy and storing up fat for the winter. The calves are healthy and adjusting well to life without mom. There is no shrink or weight loss. Some friends and customers of Pharo Cattle Company, Don and John Palmer, weighed their steer calves one year at weaning and again ten days later. Those steer calves gained a remarkable 1.5 pounds per day while being weaned on native grass across the fence from their mothers. This is something most of the so-called experts will never be able to achieve.

Don Palmer suggests that you avoid riding or driving through the calves for the first few days of weaning. Whenever the cows see you out there they will all come running to the fence. Don says, "Go back to the house and drink a cup of coffee while you observe the weaning process through a pair of binoculars." What are you going to do out there anyway? The calves don't need fed, don't need doctored and don't need you.

Weaning doesn't have to be as difficult or as stressful as we have been led to believe. The only thing that would be less stressful than across-the-fence weaning would be to not wean at all. Some of our customers are doing just that.

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Kit Pharo is a no-nonsense seedstock producer in Eastern Colorado. He shares his philosophies and opinions in a bimonthly newsletter that is mailed out to over 20,000 ranchers. To receive this free and very opinionated newsletter, call 1-800-311-0995 or send an email to Kit@PharoCattle.com.

Livestock and Woodland Don't Mix

Livestock producers may have encountered a problem with livestock poisoning caused by acorns from certain species of oak trees. This problem, worse in some seasons than others, can cause economic losses for livestock producers due to poor animal weight gains or poor performance and even livestock deaths.

One way to prevent this economic pitfall is to exclude animals from wooded areas. Cost-share is available to construct fencing to exclude livestock from existing woodland areas that are susceptible to excessive erosion due to livestock grazing. Other areas which may qualify are riparian areas along stream banks.

There are many reasons for excluding livestock from woodland. Livestock can damage marketable timber stands and other plants and increase soil erosion problems. Exclusion prevents livestock from browsing and loafing in nonproductive areas, thereby enhancing the utilization of more highly productive areas, improving livestock productivity and profits. Wildlife habitat can be enhanced while livestock graze more productive areas. It is also easier to manage your herd by keeping your animals from wandering off where you have to look for them.

The Camden Soil and Water Conservation District can assist landowners with this program by evaluating areas and assisting with cost-share applications to exclude designated areas. If you would be interested in fencing out your woodlands, contact the Camden SWCD office at 573-346-5125 or come by the office, located on south Hwy 5, Camdenton, across from the Laclede Electric Coop building.



NRCS Announces February 21 Deadline for EQIP Funding in Missouri

COLUMBIA, MO – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced a cut-off date of February 21 for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and four tie-in initiatives.

More than \$11.8 million is available through EQIP, including \$100,000 each for the On-Farm Energy, Seasonal High Tunnel, and Organic Initiatives. An additional \$9.8 million is designated for the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI).

Missouri State Conservationist J.R. Flores says, "EQIP is a versatile program that helps all types of land users throughout the state in their efforts to preserve the quality of the natural resources upon which all life depends."

EQIP is the agency's largest Farm Bill conservation program. It helps producers of agricultural products improve water quality, build healthier soil, improve grazing and forest lands, conserve energy, enhance organic operations, and achieve other environmental benefits.

NRCS accepts applications for EQIP on a continuous basis, but producers must file applications by February 21 for consideration for the next round of application funding. Applications filed after February 21 will be considered in the next ranking period if funds are available.

EQIP offers farmers, ranchers, and forestland managers a variety of options to conserve natural resources while boosting production on their lands. EQIP also provides financial assistance for a variety of conservation activities, such as irrigation water management, reduced tillage, field buffers, rotational grazing systems, animal waste management systems, and much more.

MRBI is available through EQIP in 19 watersheds in north-central and southeastern Missouri. It provides incentives for farmers to use farming practices that can improve the health of the Mississippi River Basin, including water quality and wildlife habitat. Through MRBI, NRCS and its conservation partners help farmers who voluntarily implement conservation practices that avoid, control and trap runoff, while continuing to maintain agricultural productivity and improve wildlife habitat. Visit www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov, or contact your local NRCS office, to see if your land is within one of the eligible watersheds.

Applicants can sign up at their local NRCS service center. The service center for landowners in Camden County is located on Deadra Lane in Lebanon, MO. Their phone number is 1-800-203-4467.

Multi-Species Grazing Workshop To be held Feb. 4

Anyone interested in adding sheep or goats to their cattle operation should attend the multi-species workshop to be held Feb. 4 in Camdenton, MO. The workshop will begin at 7:00 PM in the meeting room of the Laclede Electric Building on South Hwy 5. Mark Kennedy, retired NRCS state grassland conservationist, will present the program. Topics to be discussed include improved pasture quality, weed control, predator control, fencing, and profit potential. The event is free but please call the SWCD Office if you plan to attend. Leave your name and phone number.



Bridge Loan Program

The Bridge Loan program allows Missouri producers who have been approved by USDA NRCS, through the USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) or the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be eligible for a short term loan from the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority (MASBDA). Loans will be available at a fixed rate of 5.9 percent for the amount obligated to the producer by USDA NRCS or SWCD for a term up to one year.

Producers must first apply at either their local USDA NRCS office or their Soil and Water Conservation District office. Once approved by NRCS and/or SWCD producers may apply to MASBDA for the Bridge Loan Program. Upon receipt of the required documents, loan funds will be dispersed to the producer. The producer applying for the loan will be responsible for the monthly interest, plus an application fee of \$25.00. Applications for this program are available on the Mo Ag & Small Business Development website: www.mda.mo.gov They can also be contacted by calling 573-751-2129.

30th Annual Spring Forage Conference set for February 25th in Springfield

The 30th annual Southwest Missouri Spring Forage Conference will be held Tuesday, February 25th, 2014 at the University Plaza Hotel in Springfield, MO. Each year this conference attracts an increasing number of people interested in learning more about management strategies for forages and livestock.

This year's keynote speaker will be Jim Gerrish, Grassland Consultant. Jim is well known throughout the United States and the world for his extensive knowledge of all aspects of managing pasture forages, as evident in the number of awards, publications, articles, and speaking events. Jim spent 20 plus years in Missouri conducting research and educating producers at the Missouri Forage Systems Research Center near Linneus, Missouri. While in Missouri, Jim operated his own 260-acre livestock grazing operation in the northern part of the state. He now resides in Idaho and continues to be actively involved in the livestock and forage industry through his private consulting business and busy schedule as a featured speaker and author for numerous grazing publications. His topic will be "How do you know a change in your management will be profitable?"

The conference will also feature several breakout sessions throughout the day. Topics will include: pasture renovation, quality hay production, managing what you have, dairy grazing opportunities, poisonous plants, strip-grazing as a management tool, economics- how to cut costs, soil health and grazing, addressing misconceptions with agriculture, and a producer panel on getting started with a grazing system. More than 30 companies and organizations will have exhibits, and have representatives available to discuss their products and services.

Conference registration begins at 8 a.m., with sessions running from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A banquet luncheon is included with the registration. The cost is \$35 per person in advance or \$45 at the door. To pre-register (by February 18th) or to get more information, contact the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District at (417) 831-5246, extension 3. Additional conference information, lodging information, maps, and registration forms can be found at <http://springforageconference.com/>.

The conference is co-sponsored by several southwest Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Missouri State University, University of Missouri Extension, Missouri Department of Conservation, Lincoln University, and the USDA Farm Service Agency.

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State Women in Ag Conference Held in Farmington

The state conference for WIA was held September 16-18 in Farmington, MO. On the first day there were many vendors available and a silent auction. The conference opened with a Flag Presentation by Air Force Junior ROTC Color Guard and the National Anthem. Ladies were able to enjoy workshops on Backyard Beekeeping, Using Fresh Greens & Fence Row Finds to Decorate for the Christmas Holidays and Pumpkins, Squash & Gourds. The evening banquet speaker was Susie O, a motivational speaker whose motto is: "If You Rest, You Rot!"

Tuesday the ladies boarded buses and made their way to the Bonne Terre Mines & Boat Tour and the St. Joe Museum Tour & Gift Shop. The guest speaker for lunch was Colleen Meredith, Program Director for the Mo Soil & Water Conservation. The afternoon consisted of a tour of Paso Fino Equestrian Center at Hacienda de Molinero. The evening ended with entertainment by Good Time Oldies Band.



Hacienda de Molinero

Eight ladies from Camden County attended this educational conference. They are: Joann Smith, Connie Russell, Roberta Woodall, Margaret Young, Donna Short, Doris Murray, Cherie Wiater, and June Burton.

Healthy Life in the SOIL = Healthy Life From the SOIL

Many of the things we take for granted in our daily lives depend upon soil. For example; some components of both cell phones and computers are manufactured using materials mined from soil, our homes are built with materials that grow in soil, the air we breathe is produced by plants tha grow in soil, and most of the food we eat grows in or on soil. For all of these reasons and many more it is important that our soil is healthy. Healthy soil needs air, water, minerals, organic matter, and living elements such as insects, worms, and microbes.

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|------------|---------|-----------|
| AIR | ANIMALS | COMPOST |
| CONSERVE | CROPS | EARTHWORM |
| EROSION | FOOD | GROW |
| HEALTHY | HOME | LIFE |
| MULCH | ORGANIC | PLANTS |
| RECYCLE | SOIL | TREES |
| VEGETATION | WATER | |

Healthy Soil Word Search

W A T E R G T Z R V V F E L R H M S G O
 A L W L F S Q E E Y L W B V I S E L R R
 X S V Y O H C G M C T I G K R O S A O G
 E G H P D Y E M R O W H T R A E S M W A
 Y Y M E C T E R O S I O N S E A S I B N
 S O K L A M I D Q P X B K R P B L N X I
 C Q E T H L D Z G C T P T J D O T A O C
 L H I O C Y T P C Z A B Y V R O R L B C
 G O M P L F T H S T N A L P I R B C J Q
 N E X A U Y O U Y E F I L H A Q G U Q S
 U C D B M E Q O N X A K N H B C O F I E
 T R Z E B C Y E D V V Z P I G C E W U D

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SWCD
Board of
Supervisors**



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SWCD assistance is available without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, or marital status.

Funds for this publication are provided by Missouri's parks, soils, and water 1/10 of 1% sales tax.



**Photo
Contest**

Grab your camera or look through your file of pictures! You could be a winner in the SWCD's photo contest. The pictures could depict any natural resource related subject (trees, plants, landscapes, wildlife, education) or even a conservation problem. Maximum size limit is 8" x 10". Black-and-white and color prints will be judged together. Photos should be taken in Missouri. There will be two divisions-one for 18 and over and anyone under 18. Photos may be dropped off at the SWCD office before March 05. Each participant may enter three photos.

Four cash prizes will be awarded in each division at the district's annual meeting on March 18. Winners will be determined by popular vote of attendees.

**Camden Soil & Water
Conservation District**

**275 Old South 5
Camdenton, MO 65020
573-346-5125**

Inside This Issue

Annual Dinner Meeting	1
FFA Dinner/Silent Auction	1
Low-Stress Weaning	3
Multi-Species Grazing	6
Forage/Grazing Conferences	6
Photo Contest	8