

# Little Arkansas River WRAPS

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## Harvesting Knowledge: Little Ark's Productive Producers

In this issue, we are highlighting the work of **James Anderson**. James grew up farming with his dad, Frank, at the age of six. He began farming in McPherson County on his own in 2001. James raises wheat, milo, and soybean crops and just this year, he started grazing steers with his father. James shared a little bit of what they do for cropland and livestock.

James says that they [he and his father] try to keep plenty of residue on their ground most of the year, with beans being planted no-till in milo stalks or wheat stubble from the previous year. Milo ground is worked clean and sprayed with Degree Extra in June after planting. James shares that crop rotation is extremely important to him. Wheat following beans is either planted by no-till or after a vertical tillage pass. Continuous wheat is planted into worked ground to reduce the risk of tan spot and septoria. James goes on to say that “I have built terraces on our ground since returning from

college. It is nice to be able to use some of what I learned in school to improve our operation. We are usually short on water and in our heavy clay soils, compaction is a huge issue, therefore, the amount of no-till we do is usually limited to beans and wheat, if conditions allow for the use of no-till drill. I am not opposed to no-till, but with the weeds becoming more resistant to herbicides, I find it more challenging each year to make it work financially”.

James shares that on the livestock front, they are fine-tuning their operation. He says, “we only have cattle from the middle of March to beginning of August. We double stock the pasture to take advantage of the warm season grasses before the protein level degrades and the grass is fried from summer heat”.

James and Frank have been a part of the Little Arkansas River WRAPS Atrazine and Sediment/soil health programs. They utilized the program to change their atrazine application method to a late application in efforts to avoid spring runoff events.

James plans to continue to farm but also stays busy with his wood business in the winter months. His wood business, which has grown from a college project of cutting trees, selling firewood, hedge posts, and pasture clearing, into a full-time winter job that includes products. James says that “the conservation of the pasture is one we continue to improve as I clear trees. We also try to burn it off at least once every five-years”. James goes on to share that “after almost 20-years of tree cutting experience, I designed and started manufacturing and selling Anderson Axe tree saw blades to fit most tree saws on the market. I also enjoy using my sawmill to provide customers with osage orange (hedge) lumber. It is fun to do the whole process from dropping the tree to milling it into a usable product that people can use which out-lasts the store-bought treated lumber”.

When asked for advice that he might want to share with fellow producers in the watershed, James said “know your cost of production, market your production well, and enjoy the life of being your own boss”. **Thank you, James and family, for your continued dedication to improving agriculture and protecting our water resources in the Little Arkansas River Watershed!**

## Weather Forecast: HOT and DRY, with a chance of HOT!

Did we mention it's HOT? Oh Kansas summers, you are full of blue skies, sunny days, sunflowers, lake days... excessive humidity, sweat, and drought. Wait, what? This summer has been another dry one, following the 2022 year of being the second driest year since 1956. According to drought.gov, 83 of our 105 counties have been given USDA Drought Disaster Designations, affecting 1.9 million Kansas residents. The northeastern part of Kansas has not fared quite so poorly when it comes to rainfall, however, they are experiencing some intense temperatures along with the rest of us. How does this combo effect our agriculture?



Cropland is obviously suffering from these extreme dry, hot conditions. According to Agriculture Dive on August 3rd, Ignacio Ciampitti, a Kansas State University agronomy professor, “we will be seeing a large impact on yields” if the heat lingers around the state. He estimated potential yield losses up to 40%, but numbers could improve as corn moves out of the silking stage and temperatures begin to regulate. Ciampitti also states that soybeans starting to produce pods may abort seeds due to heat stress. Ciampitti said irrigation can help reduce plant temperatures, but it doesn't really take away the direct effects of the heat wave.



Livestock is also negatively impacted by the excessive heat, causing stress and weight loss in cattle. One thing that helps livestock manage the heat is having ample water. Well, creeks and ponds are drying up. The weather we can not help BUT watering your livestock is within our realm of expertise! If you are a livestock producer and interested in an alternative watering system on your farm, contact us for more information, and possible financial assistance! Ole Bessie, the stressed-out cow would say thanks!

# Flickner Innovation Farm Field Day Success!

The Flickner Innovation Farm (FIF) was hoppin' on August 10<sup>th</sup> at its summer field day event! Despite the warmer temperatures, nearly 80 attendees were present as topics on weed management were discussed and research was shared. The field day began near Moundridge and after a few presentations on the John Deere See and Spray, the group loaded up in two Village tour buses and headed out to the fields! Highlights included presentations on the Redekop Weed Seed Destructor (delivered by Curt Gottschalk), Dave Button's presentation of the Row Shaver and Trimmer, and a live-demonstration of John Deere's See-and-Spray by Brian Ganske of John Deere, and Sarah Lancaster, of Kansas State University. K-State's very own soil diva, Deann Presley, was back in the soil pit for an exciting demonstration, while Peter Tomlinson (also of K-State) and Lancaster's research students shared their cover crop and wheat studies nearby.

A catered lunch, provided by the City of Wichita's water education funding for the Little Arkansas River WRAPS group, followed the field tour in Moundridge. Presentations and videos were viewed during the lunch hour. Presley gave the group an update on the NASA acres in the area and a video showing the Row Shaver at work was presented by Dave Button. Ron Graber, the Little Arkansas River WRAPS Coordinator shared a WRAPS update with the group and told them about current funding opportunities. Over 15 door prizes were handed out, including a pair of K-State football tickets provided by the Kansas Wheat Commission! The day concluded with a few words from our gracious hosts, Ray and Ryan Flickner. Special thanks to the FIF for hosting and to those that sponsored this event including: Ag360, the City of Wichita, Kansas Corn Growers Association, Kansas Grain Sorghum, Kansas Soybean Association, Kansas State Research and Extension, and the Kansas Wheat Commission.



*Top, left to right:*

- 1) Dr. Deanne Presley of K-State is back in a soil pit.
- 2) Mr. Owen Flickner (age 9) found himself a worm in the soil pit! He certainly inherited his grandfather and father's love for field days and agriculture.
- 3) Dr. Peter Tomlinson and Alexis Correia of K-State presented on their cover crop study.

*Bottom:*

Prairieland Partners share a live demonstration of their John Deere See and Spray Ultimate.

*Photos provided by  
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