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Pottawatomie County February 28 Tour To Highlight Winter-Feeding Practices and Local Cost-Share Program

On Tuesday February 28, the Middle Kansas WRAPS Program will sponsor a tour of two area farms featuring practices they have implemented to improve livestock winter -feeding areas and improve water quality. Glenn and Jennifer Brunkow, Westmoreland, and Harry and Lisa Moser, Wheaton, will host the tour. The free educational tour, including lunch, will highlight a spring development as a safer, cleaner water source, winter feeding pads, frost-proof water tanks below a pond, and use of buffer strips below feeding pens—all practices which protect water quality and make winter livestock management easier. Tour participants should meet at 10 a.m. at the Pottawatomie County Extension Office parking lot, 612 Campbell Street, Westmoreland, Ks. to caravan to the tour stops.

According to workshop organizers, livestock producers have to balance the costs and benefits of protecting the health of their animals and the quality of their water resources. Confined winter livestock feeding operations often contribute to high levels of bacterial contamination in streams from November to May when livestock are brought closer to home for feeding. Unfortunately, significant storm events wash manure, loose soil and excess feed material into local streams—contaminating the water and washing away topsoil and valuable nutrients. With a few changes in herd management and feeding procedure, the manure and sediment that relocates from feeding sites to streams will be greatly reduced.

Presentations will include: Low and No Cost Best Management Practices for Livestock Producers – Dale Kirkham, Kansas Rural Center; “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly of Winter Feeding” -Site relocation and options – Will Boyer, KSU Watershed Specialist; and “Watershed Opportunities” - John Bond, Middle Kansas WRAPS.

Cost share opportunities currently available to producers in the watershed will be presented. These funds can help with fencing a pond or stream, laying pipe, installing tanks, and putting down geotextile fabric and rock around the tank to stabilize the area, and/or designing new feeding sites.

At the conclusion of the meeting producers who are interested in looking at improving their operations can visit with presenters and WRAPS Staff about their ideas. Please bring a current farm map and legal description to improve the discussion. Producers needing help designing winter feeding sites can visit with Will Boyer and Mary Howell- service providers for the watershed.

A free meal will be served. RSVP's are appreciated to plan for food and handouts. Please respond with names, phone numbers and the location you would like to attend. Please send an email to Mary Howell marshallcofair@gmail.com or call 785-562-8726. Or call the Pottawatomie County Extension Office at 785-457-3319.

The Middle Kansas WRAPS is funded by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Water and Watershed Management. Tour co-sponsors include Pottawatomie County Extension and Kansas Rural Center