

## FRITSCHI

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The Fritschis raise corn, soybeans, wheat, and a little bit of alfalfa. They also raise Black Angus cattle and feed out their calves to 850- to 900 pounds.

The brothers also cut trees and custom build fence.

The Fritschis focus on cross-fencing and rotational grazing. Many of their paddocks are 40 to 60 acres.

"It's difficult to find grass to rent, so you have to get more out of the grass you have," Ethan Fritsch said.

Martin Fritsch said

the biggest obstacle to rotational grazing is getting water to the paddocks.

Recently the family installed four spring-fed tanks on a half-section of grass several miles west of Hanover to accommodate their rotational grazing system there.

The paddocks on that piece are larger – 80-acre paddocks – because the spring-fed tanks are the only water sources. Before the tanks were built, those springs had nothing more than a pipe sticking out of a mud hole since the 1930s, Martin Fritsch said

said.

The Fritschis also use their excavator to clean out ponds and have cleaned out five ponds in the last few years.

They also use their equipment to fix ditches in their fields and repair terraces as needed.

The Fritschis try to clean trees from one farm each year and hand spray thistles, weeds and brush on rest of the farms in between, they said. They all have loppers in their trucks and said they stop and cut trees when they see them. They also burn pasture every few years.

The family said they

always have dreams to expand, but those plans are harder to put into place when it is so hard to find land to buy or rent, so it is important that they take care of what they have.

Martin and Janet Fritsch will be presented with this year's Range Management Award at the annual soil conservation banquet on Feb. 15 in Washington. In addition to their two sons who farm with them, they have sons Clinton Fritsch, of Bremen; Jacob Fritsch, of Hanover; and daughter Danielle Parsley, of Clay Center.



The biggest obstacle to rotational grazing is having water in the paddocks for the cattle to drink, Martin Fritsch said. The family has installed four spring-fed tanks, including the one above, on a half-section of grass west of Hanover.

## KOLLE

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the farm and were in 4-H and FFA. Their parents had a farrow-to-finish hog operation as well as cattle and crops, and the boys helped take care of hogs while in high school. They also drove tractors and cut cane.

Jim Kolle attended K-State for a year and filled his schedule with farming classes so that he could return home to farm full-time after that one year.

Royce Kolle purchased his first farm – 28.5 acres – from a great-uncle when he was a junior in high school. When he graduated from high school, he began farming full time.

The brothers have been farming together since about 1975 and took over the family farm when their father was ready to retire. They've purchased nearly everything to-

gether, they said, beginning with their first farm in 1985.

Fifty years later the brothers are still happily farming together, they said. They meet at the original farmstead that their mother, Marlene, owns, and they plan their day from there. Jim Kolle works more with the chemicals and fertilizers, he said, though they share all of the duties. They split up cattle chores based on what groups are closer to their respective houses, though they still do much of the work together. Jim Kolle lives in the same section as the original Kolle farmstead while brother Royce Kolle lives three miles away.

The brothers said patience is the secret to farming together all of these years.

Their father farmed and shared land with his brother, Marvin, and his son Keith, for many years until Mar-

vin was killed in a farming accident, proving that family farming is in their genes.

## CONSERVATION

The Kolles said their father put in a lot of terraces in his younger years. The work has been mostly hired out, though the Kolles have built some of the terraces themselves. The first farm the brothers purchased together did not have any terraces, so they built waterways and terraces on that farm. They've also built terraces on other farms or added to the terraces that were already there.

They said they've been doing work on fields that have erosion issues even though the fields aren't classified as highly erodible.

The Kolles said they also do general maintenance on terraces, adding that maintenance never ends when it comes to terraces.

They are doing more

tile drainage now and also keep busy filling in ditches in waterways.

They are "strictly no-till" and said they were one of the first farmers in the county to practice no-till farming in the 1980s. Jim Kolle said he had studied no-till farming and its benefits to control erosion and save moisture.

"We know it's important to take care of the soil," Royce Kolle said. "We try to improve it. We will plant rye in areas where we have ditches to keep certain areas in the fields from washing."

The brothers said they have been amazed at how many earthworms they have in their fields.

They use manure from Linn Willow Creek Dairy on their crop fields. The brothers helped fundraise for the dairy before it was built and have served on the board in the past.

They've now started planting cover crops the

last few years, which their feeder cattle graze. They then plant their grain crops right into the cover crops.

The Kolles got out of the cow-calf business back in the '80s and now background steers that they purchase at about 600 pounds and sell at about 900 pounds. They have a few groups of cattle they cycle through during the year. They said grazing cover crops works well for the steers because it helps keep the calves out of the feedlot.

They said they try to graze the cattle every day they can and had the feed wagon out only about 5 days last year. The brothers said they used to pen the cattle up every day, and now they try not to pen them up and feed them, which they said has resulted in healthier, better-growing cattle.

They've used NRCS for assistance with cover crops and nutri-

ent management, and they've participated in cost share programs for conservation work.

They clear trees with a skid steer and use side by sides to spray small trees, brush and thistles. They also do some burning and said they hope to burn some pastures this spring.

The brothers' wives and children have all helped on the farm over the years, including Jim Kolle's wife, Gina, who helps during harvest and "runs" Jim around.

Royce Kolle's wife, Deanna, is a teacher at Linn and helps on the farm as needed.

Jim Kolle's son, Kyle, helps the brothers farm.

The Kolle family will be honored for their commitment to soil conservation during the annual conservation banquet on Feb. 15, which will be located in the basement of FNB Washington.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Published in the Washington County News on February 13, 2025

## Invitation For Bid

The Washington County Veteran's Memorial Airport Board, Washington County, Kansas, will accept sealed bids for the MOWING (2 year contract for the 2025 & 2026 seasons) of airport property located at 1150 Quivira Rd. in the NW Quarter of Section 1, T4S, R3E. Mowing will need to be done every other week starting May 1 st and ending September 30 th .

Successful bidder for mowing shall be required to furnish a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$500,000.00 and will be held responsible for all damages. Washington County has the right to refuse any and all bids. Bids not received and recorded with the county clerks office prior to bid opening will be rejected.

All bids should be sealed and clearly marked "MOWING" on the envelope containing the bid proposal. Bids must be received at the OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK, COURT HOUSE 214 C ST, WASHINGTON, KS by Friday, February 28 th at 5:00 pm. They will be opened Monday, March 3 rd at 9:00 AM. Pick up bid sheets at Washington County Public Works – 1561 Rainbow Rd. Washington, KS.

## GRANTS — SCHOLARS —

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of the local teams were able to advance to state.

At the Class 1A, Div. 2 regional meet in Beloit, Linn went 6-4 and Hanover went 3-7. Linn was fourth. Winning the meet was St. John's Catholic School, Beloit, which went 10-0 in pool play.

At the Class 1A, Div. 1 regional event in Frankfort, Washington County went 4-2 in pool play, while Clifton-Clyde went 2-4. Neither team advanced to the finals, which was eventually won by Northern Heights, with Onaga in second.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

First published in the Washington County News on February 6, 2025; Last published February 13, 2025.

## Notice of the annual meeting of the Washington County Conservation District

To all qualified electors residing within the boundaries of the Washington County Conservation District, notice is hereby given that pursuant to K.S.A. 2-1907, as amended, on the 15th day of February 2025, at 6:30 p.m. an annual meeting of the Washington County Conservation District will be held at the FNB Washington basement, 101 C Street, Washington, KS.

The meeting agenda shall include the following business items:

One: The supervisors of the Washington County Conservation District shall make full and due report of their activities and financial affairs since the last annual meeting.

Two: The supervisors shall conduct an election by secret ballot of qualified electors there present, of one supervisor to serve for a term of three years from date of said meeting.

The term of Mark Goeckel is expiring.

All in the county of Washington in the State of Kansas.

Signed, Trenton Winter, Chairperson Washington County Conservation District

Attest, Nina Meyer, District Secretary, Manager

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FUTURE —

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The first coffee was scheduled for this week on Feb. 12 in Hanover, but that date has postponed because of weather.

The following is a schedule of the community coffees:

• Hanover – Feb. 19 from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Kloppenberg Center.

• Barnes – Feb. 26 from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Hometown Café.

• Clifton – March 12 from 8 to 9 a.m. at County Divide Café.

• Palmer – March 26 from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Community Building.

• Linn – April 9 from 8 to 9 a.m. at the City Building.

• Greenleaf – April 23 from 9 to 10 a.m. at the café at the mall.

• Washington – May 14 from 8 to 9 a.m. at the FNB Washington basement.

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