

## Windbreak Award

This year's winner of the Windbreak award is Ed and Paula Gaugh, for their project that has been put in around their farmstead.

This award is selected on the following criteria:

- a. The primary purpose of the windbreak(s) will be to provide protection from damaging winds for residential (or other structures) areas, livestock, or fields.
- b. The original windbreak must consist of planted trees or shrubs. Volunteer trees shrubs may be utilized to increase density, fill in gaps, or otherwise supplement the original planted trees and shrubs.
- c. The plants must be managed and in healthy condition with no significant gaps in the windbreaks.
- d. Windbreak location, density, and length must be adequate to provide the desired protection.
- e. Windbreaks should be a minimum of three years old.

The Gaugh's windbreak was established in 2004 and is north of Dighton.

For those that have not taken a look at the windbreak they have established, they have put a lot of work into it over the years. When they first began working on the project, Ed and Paula had some older trees north of their yard that had died and were wanting to establish a nice windbreak to not only slow down the wind and snow from reaching the house, but to also protect their horses in the pen to the south and bring some wildlife closer to their home.

The tree rows are made up of both trees and shrubs, begins west of the house and is almost U shaped as it travels east. The north row was planted to varieties of olive and plum. The middle rows are mostly eastern red cedars, with more plum and olive planted on the east end. The south row was originally planted to cotoneaster shrubs, which unfortunately died, but were replaced by lilacs.

To get the windbreak started, Ed borrowed a plow to first break the ground then a small cultivator to smooth and firm up the area. Weed barrier, and a drip line were then put in. Unlike many drip irrigation lines, this windbreak still has the original, for the most part, that is still run regularly.

The trees started as be root seedlings between 6 inches and a foot tall, and have grown to 8 or 9 feet in places. One of the biggest challenges has been to keep the drip irrigation operating so the trees can be watered regularly.

The biggest benefits they have seen so far, as I mentioned earlier, the tree rows have been able to catch some of the snow before coming into the yard. The windbreak has also provided a good place to let the dogs run and chase some wildlife.

Ed mentioned that if nothing else “they sure have made it nice for the next guy.”

Will you please welcome Ed and Paula Gaugh to accept this award.