

Grassland Award – Greg Strong

Greg Strong is this year's winner of the Grassland Award.

The purpose of the Grassland Award is to recognize an individual, organization or business providing exceptional service and support to the conservation, management and/or education of the grasslands of Kansas.

To be recognized for the award, the recipient must be working with, managing or supporting grasslands. The service and support to the conservation, management and/or education of Kansas grassland must be above and beyond that normally expected. The contributions of the recipient must have been provided over an extended period of time.

Greg's contribution to conserving the grasslands in Lane County include the management of a 369 acre pasture northwest of Dighton, that has been enrolled into EQIP a couple times to complete some projects. To conserve the grasslands he actively rotates his cattle among four grazing blocks throughout the year.

Greg began pursuing his rotational grazing practices and improving the land he had after he read an article on grazing wheat and it made him think about how he managed his acres. Starting in 2006 Greg enrolled into the first round of EQIP where he added some pipeline to supply water to a couple existing tanks along with some cross fencing to set up the grazing paddocks. Then in 2011 he enrolled the acres again to add a couple more tanks.

As part of the plan there was a prescribed grazing plan implemented for greater or equal to 74% rest during the growing season and implemented for a minimum for 3 years. This type of rotational grazing has allowed Greg to have a renter in place year around, leaving behind good grass and not allowing the acreage to be over grazed.

It was mentioned that one of the biggest challenges he has faced is the same all producers in the area have been up against and that is the lack of water, which limits what you can do with the grasslands. He added that not having enough moisture doesn't allow your grass to recover as quickly.

In addition to the benefits of having grass year around, Greg has also noticed an increase in wildlife activity. Along with the tanks that were installed, there are several wildlife guzzlers that have been placed in the area. He has witnessed various wildlife from pheasants to deer drinking from the guzzlers. Greg mentioned that the management of the grasslands has been as important for the wildlife as it has for the cattle.

Greg also added that he has had tremendous help throughout the years from his dad Bob and Scott Whiting, and without their help the project could not have been so successful.

At this time, will you please welcome Greg Strong, to accept the grassland award.