

# Achieve organic certification with available cost-share funds

Kansas farmers who currently use organic production practices or would like to pursue organic certification are encouraged to apply for cost share funds from the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

The program, funded by the 2014 Farm Bill, is administered through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. The program is intended to assist Kansas farmers by offsetting costs associated with organic certification or recertification. Under the state's agreement with USDA, they are eligible for up to 75 percent of the cost of their organic certification, up to \$750, for certification occurring be-

tween Oct. 1, 2013 to Sept. 30, 2014, as long as funds remain.

"This is a great opportunity for farmers to achieve this certification at a reduced cost," said Annarose Hart, marketing specialist with the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

To receive cost share funds, Kansas organic farmers and handlers must complete the Organic Certification Cost Share Program Application, and submit it along with a copy of the organic certification document, an invoice showing the amount paid for that certification and a W-9 form.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture was allocated near-

ly \$73,000 in funds for the cost share program for farms certified between Oct. 1, 2013 to Sept. 30, 2014.

Upon receipt of cost share documents, the department will confirm certification and then provide reimbursement. Based on the receipt of the completed application packet, reimbursements will be on a first-come, first-served basis until the limited program funds are exhausted.

The program application is posted on the Kansas Department of Agriculture's website, Organic Cost Share Program. The site is also a great resource for program updates.

Questions about cost-share funds for organic certification may be directed to Josh Roe at (785) 564-6707 or Annarose Hart at (785) 564-6755 or by email to Annarose.Hart@kda.ks.gov.

Information is also available from the National Organic Program website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop>.



THRESHER COMBINE sitting out. Antique steam engines and tractors have begun to show up in preparation for the Antique Steam Engine and Thresher Show.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

# Fire departments receive funds to help in case of tragedy

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger is currently making the annual funds distribution to state and local firefighter relief organizations.

Nearly \$12 million will be distributed among 569 local Firefighters Relief Associations across the state. That is nearly \$342,000 more than the 2013 total.

In Cheyenne County, \$20,285.48 will be distributed. Some other local county distributions include Rawlins county, that will receive \$17,670.57, and Sherman county, that will receive \$27,899.47.

"This fund assists firefighters and their families when an accident or death occurs in the line of duty," Commissioner Praeger said. "We in the Kansas Insurance Department are honored to assist in its distribution."

The local association funds are used for purchasing accident and health, disability, and life insurance premiums to assist firefighters and their families.

The money is generated by

a two percent tax paid by insurance companies on fire and lightning insurance premiums written in Kansas for the previous calendar year. It is collected by the department, on behalf of the Kansas Firefighter Relief Act, and passed on to the Firefighters Relief Associations, as set in Kansas law.

Also, the Kansas State Firefighters Association is receiving \$479,095 this year for education and research purposes and to help fund the state association's death benefit fund. These funds also come from the insurance company premium assessment.

Of the state association total, \$379,095 is earmarked for educational purposes and research into fire prevention and firefighting, and \$100,000 is used to replenish the death benefit fund.

Nearly \$1.26 million in benefits was paid in 2013 to firefighters as a result of firefighting-related injuries or disability, and nearly \$237,000 went to dependents of firefighters.

# Cheylin summer programs coming to an end!



Cheylin Swim Team (l to r): Swim Team Coach, Mary Anne Orten; Brooke Porubsky; Briana Vandike; John Serrano; Isabelle Gabaldon; Emily Serrano.



Cheylin C-Team Baseball (Front row - l to r) - Mitchell Howard, Ty Sabatka, Keigan Taylor, Logan McCarty, John Serrano, Dylan Ketzner; middle row - Andrew Schields, Luis Reynoso, Miguel Gonzalez, Jake DeLaRosa, Grace Sabatka, Colton McCarty; back row - Head coach Kale Schields, assistant coaches: Kasey Sabatka, Harvey DeLaRosa, Mike McCarty.

Photos courtesy of Darci Schields

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SHARON SCHURICHT entertained everyone by playing the piano during the July senior birthday celebration.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

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