

Producers urged to apply for grants

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development State Director Patty Clark urges farmers and business owners to apply for the Value-Added Producer Grants Program, to help them add value to the commodities they produce. She suggests that producers file applications promptly to take advantage of this important program.

Planning grants of up to \$100,000 and working capital grants of up to \$300,000 can go to successful applicants. Non-traditional uses of existing ag products, or projects that merge agricultural products creatively with technology are encouraged in applications. Priority will be given to small to medium-sized farms operating as a family farm – those with average annual gross sales of less than \$700,000.

Applicants must provide matching funds for the amount requested. Ten percent of the funding is reserved for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. An additional 10 percent is reserved for projects with local and regional supply networks that

link independent producers and businesses, and for cooperatives that market value-added products.

The national application period closes on Monday, Nov. 30. For information on applying, producers should visit www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm or see page 45165 of the Sept. 1 Federal Register.

Paper applications must be submitted to the area USDA Rural Development office for western Kansas, attention Brandon Prough, 2715 Canterbury Dr., Hays, Kan., 67601. The office's phone number is (785) 628-3081.

Electronic applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov/.

USDA Rural Development's mission is increased economic opportunity and improved quality of life for rural residents. It fosters growth in homeownership, finances business development and the creation of community and infrastructure. For information, log onto the website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks or call the state office at (785) 271-2700.

Scholarship honors late Colby graduate

Shirley Hankins, a retired Washington state representative and a graduate of Colby High School, along with her children, Shelley, Mac and Sherrey, have chosen Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Wash., for a scholarship named the M2 in honor of Hankins' late husband, Myron McFadden Hankins, also a Colby High graduate.

Hankins earned an education degree from Emporia State Teacher's College before moving to Richland, Wash., in the late 1950s. He worked on the Hanford Reactor Site, where he was known as "The Landlord."

“Education was always important to Myron, and I want to keep that commitment alive by building a legacy at ABC,” his wife said. During her years in the legislature, she said, she was a strong supporter of the college, even though the campus was not in her district. She is a former student.

Anyone interested in contributing to the scholarship may contact the foundation office at www.columbiabasin.edu/home/ or (509) 542-5519, or write the college at 2600 N. 20th Ave., Pasco, Wash., 99301.

Mrs. Hankins is the sister of Marj Brown and a cousin to Jerry Messamore, both of Colby.

Tax workshops next week in Colby

The Taxpayer Education Unit of the Kansas Department of Revenue will present a small business tax workshop from 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range, and a contractor's tax workshop from 6 to 8:30 p.m. They are sponsored by Fort Hays State University's Kansas Small Business Development Center, the Kansas Small Business Development Center and the department of revenue.

The small business presentation will cover sales tax, compensating use tax, consumers' compensating use tax, record keeping and purchases with exemption certificates. It will also cover Kansas income

tax withholding requirements, tax responsibilities, filing requirements and form preparation.

The contractor workshops will help clarify important topics for those in the construction, installation and similar businesses.

Registration for each workshop is \$25, which will be collected at the event.

Due to limited available space, advanced registration is required. Register online at ksbdc.ecenterdi-

rect.com. Under "New Users," select "Training Events" and choose the location and date of the event. For questions, contact the small business center at (785) 628-5615 or e-mail KSBDC@fhsu.edu.

Tempting crabapples are usually fine for kids to munch

MANHATTAN – Should parents panic if children decide to eat the tempting fruit dangling from an ornamental crabapple tree?

“Probably not. Unless, perhaps, the crabapple has been treated at some time since spring with a pesticide that isn’t labeled for use on food-producing crops,” said Ward Upham, horticulturist with Kansas State University

Research and Extension.

As with apples from an orchard, children can eat so many crabapples that they make themselves sick.

“That kind of stomachache isn’t likely to happen, though, because crabapples aren’t sweet-tasting fruit. They’ve never been bred to eat raw. Since Johnny Appleseed’s day, cra-

bapples' normal uses have been to make jelly, applesauce and cider," Upham said.

In fact, the only real difference between crabapples and today's tart-to-sour "cooking" apples is size.

“By definition, crabapple fruits are 2 inches or less in diameter. Apples are simply more than 2 inches across,” Upham said.

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