



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Jo and Duane Cheney and grandson Keden Frahm in front of huge pine trees at the Cheney farm southwest of Colby. Cheney said it is time to plant more trees between the rows of the windbreak, now more than 30 years old, to make sure it is always there to stop the wind for the benefit of future generations.

Farmers

By Vera Sloan

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The decision to build a home on a corner of a center-pivot irrigated field is not as easy as you might think when it comes to just the right placement of the house and a windbreak to protect it from the Western Kansas weather.

Jo Cheney, who lives with her husband Duane four miles west and four miles south of Colby, said there was lots of dirt to choose from in 1979 when laying out plans for both house and trees.

Cheney was chosen to receive the 2011 Kansas Bankers Soil Conservation Windbreak Award for the mature windbreak that surrounds the farmstead.

She said the plantings started with red cedar and Rocky Mountain juniper trees as an outside row, and pine trees for the next row. On the inside row they planted maple, crabapple, cottonwood, plum, ash, cherry and other deciduous trees. She noted that they got quite good with a hoe when it came to building dikes around each tree to hold water.

The only problem afterwards was the huge expanse of dirt that seemed to be calling to them every spare minute they had when they had a hoe in their hands.

"After all, weeds grow with or without water," Cheney said, "and it takes lots of hoeing

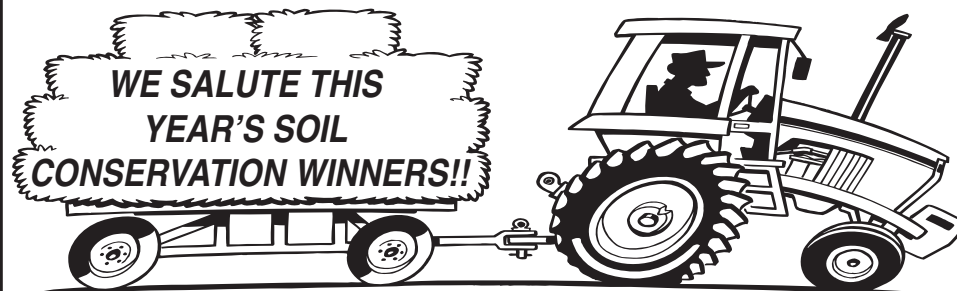
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