

# Incentive program announced

Eric B. Banks, State Conservationist with U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, announces three National Initiatives being offered in Kansas through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program: On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnels.

While Natural Resources Conservation Service accepts applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program on a continuing basis throughout the year, the sign-up period for the On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel Initiatives will end on Jan. 18, 2013. More sign-ups may be offered as funding becomes available.

"We encourage our producers to take advantage of the conservation opportunities being made available to them through these Environmental Quality Incentives Program Initiatives," Banks said.

### Initiatives Overview

**On-Farm Energy Initiative:** Producers work with a Natural Resources Conservation Service-approved Technical Service Provider to develop Agricultural

Energy Management Plans or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. Natural Resources Conservation Service may also provide assistance to implement various recommended measures identified in the energy audit through the use of conservation practice standards offered through this initiative.

**Organic Initiative:** Natural Resources Conservation Service will assist producers with installation of conservation practices on agricultural operations related to organic production. Producers currently certified as organic, transitioning to organic, or National Organic Program exempt will have access to a broad set of conservation practices to assist in treating their resource concerns while fulfilling many of the requirements in an Organic System Plan.

**Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative:** Natural Resources Conservation Service helps producers implement high tunnels that extend growing seasons for high value crops in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality and

fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment.

### Kansas Natural Resources Conservation Service Announces Major Conservation Initiatives for 2013 Eligibility

Environmental Quality Incentives Program offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants to install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. Conservation practices must be implemented to Natural Resources Conservation Service standards and specifications. In Kansas, socially disadvantaged, limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for eligible conservation practices applied. For more information about Natural Resources Conservation Service and its programs, stop by your local USDA Service Center or go to the Web site [www.ks.naturalresourcesconservation.usda.gov](http://www.ks.naturalresourcesconservation.usda.gov). Follow us on Twitter @NaturalResourcesConservationService\_Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# America's credit rating in jeopardy

One day after the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to raise taxes, increase spending, and delay the sequester cuts from the last debt deal, Moody's Investor Services fired a warning shot about the threat of downgrading the U.S.'s credit rating. After the 2011 debt deal - in which a debt limit increase was coupled with spending cuts (cuts that are now being postponed) - S&P downgraded the nation's credit rating.

In its warning shot, Moody's highlighted the fact that: "The rating agency expects that further fiscal measures are likely to be taken in coming months that would result in lower future budget deficits, which are necessary if the negative outlook on the government's bond rating is to be returned to stable. On the other hand, lack of further deficit

reduction measures could affect the rating negatively. Notably, yesterday's package does not address the federal government's statutory debt limit, which was reached on December 31. The need to raise the debt limit may affect the outcome of future budget negotiations."

Congressman Tim Huelkamp, who repeatedly warned his colleagues that they needed to focus on preventing a downgrade in 2011, issued the following statement about this latest warning:

"America cannot afford for Moody's alarm to fall on deaf ears. In 2011, Washington was given ample notice that America's stellar credit rating was on thin ice, but Washington passed on the opportunity to deliver a solution. Unfortunately for America, last night's so-called

'fiscal cliff' legislation was another last-minute deal instead of a real solution. There were consequences for inaction last time, and clearly there will be consequences this time around as well."

"Politicians who want another quick deal that only worsens America's fiscal problems will argue that we need to worry about default. But, like Vice President Biden, I knew that those were empty threats last time. Our focus should be about avoiding downgrade, and that means emphasizing measures to reduce deficits - and, ultimately, the nation's \$16 trillion in debt."

For more information, contact: Karen Steward, Communications Director: 202-225-2715 or [Karen.Steward@mail.house.gov](mailto:Karen.Steward@mail.house.gov).

# Crop producer conference next week

K-State Research and Extension is teaming up with the Northwest Kansas Crop Residue Alliance to host the 10th annual Cover Your Acres Winter Conference for crop producers and consultants on Jan. 15-16 at the Gateway conference center in Oberlin.

Cover Your Acres is a producer-driven meeting focused on new ideas and updates in crop production in northwest Kansas.

The conference, which typically draws more than 500 attendees from Kansas and other states, highlights the latest technology, methods, and conservation practices to

improve crop production on the High Plains. This year it will feature university specialists and industry representatives discussing issues such as kochia control, cropping intensity and fallow efficiency, pre-season irrigation, wheat fertility: simple and effective, and use of corn residue by cattle. The same programs will be offered both days of the conference.

Registration will begin at 7:45 a.m., with educational sessions ending at 5 p.m. followed by a "bull session" on Tuesday evening, where attendees can visit with industry and university specialists.

Early registration is due

by Jan. 9. The fee is \$35 for Jan. 15 or \$30 for Jan. 16. After Jan. 9, the cost is \$50 per day. The conference fee includes lunch and educational materials. Continuing education unit credits are available for commercial applicators and certified crop advisors.

Mail registration, with a check payable to KSU, to the Northwest Area Office, ATTN: Jeanne Falk, P.O. Box 786, Colby, Kan. 67701. To view the conference flier and for online registration, see: [www.northwest.ksu.edu/CoverYourAcres](http://www.northwest.ksu.edu/CoverYourAcres). For questions, call 785-462-6281.

# Branson group to perform in Oberlin

The Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission will present Branson on the Road at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Gateway Civic Center in Oberlin.

The group has over 20 years of experience of performing at the top theaters in Branson and is the first national touring show from, and named for, the famous city. The show delivers the Branson traditions of good, clean, family fun wherever they go and they go all over the United States and beyond! Those seeing the show cannot only expect great music but plenty of hilarious comedy every step of the way.

Debbie Horton holds the distinction of being the only

woman to have played lead guitar for the great Johnny Cash. She hosted her own show at the old Boxcar Willie Theater in Branson and has performed on the famous Louisiana Hayride and Ernest Tubb Midnight Jamboree in Nashville.

Donnie Wright is an expert, sought after, respected musician, arranger and is versatile on many instruments including fiddle, mandolin, guitar, banjo and bass and has been part of the Branson music scene for 40 years. He provides a good deal of the comic relief on the show with his mischievous antics.

Brian Capps plays upright bass and sings songs reminiscent of Marty Robbins and Hank

Williams. His latest recording reached the Top 10 on the Americana Charts and is part of the music rotation on XM Radio.

This is a season ticket event or \$12 for adults and \$7 for children grades 1-12 at the door. Call Ella at (785) 475-3557 or Mary at (785) 470-0218 for details.

# Tis the season no more...



City employee Dan Sisk has the job of removing the city Christmas decorations. A sign that the holidays are truly over and we are well on our way into the New Year. - Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

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# ENROLLMENT

**COLBY COMMUNITY COLLEGE** Outreach Classes in Norton

Enrollment is the **FIRST** night of class For further information please contact Angela Melvin 785-871-0848

NO.	COURSE	CR.	INSTRUCTOR	LOCATION	START	END	DAYS TAUGHT	START/END TIME
EN 177	English Comp I	3	B. Gay	NJHS	January 23	May 13	Wednesday	6:00p - 9:00p
SP 176	Public Speaking	3	J. Jansonius	NJHS	January 21	May 15	Monday	6:00p - 9:00p
BU 289	Money Dynamics	1	P. Isernhagen	Edward Jones	February 4	March 11	Monday	7:00p - 9:00p
AL 110	Certified Nursing Class	5	L. Killman	Andbe Home	January 7	March 25	Monday/Wednesday	5:00p - 8:00p
BI 276	A and P	5	L. Killman	Norton Campus	January 10	May 9	Thursday	5:00p - 9:00p
EN 110	Medical Terminology	1	L. Killman	Norton Campus	April 8	May 1	Monday/Wednesday	6:00p - 8:00p
PS 276	Developmental Psy.	3	K. Carter	Norton Campus/Hy	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
PI 276	Ethics	3	M. McVay	Norton/Campus/ITV	January 15	May 7	Tuesday	6:00p - 9:00p