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#### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Tour Sponsored by the Middle Kansas WRAPS Highlights Best Management Practices on Area Farms 10/11/08**

*Jackson County, Kans.*—Best Management Practices, also known as BMPs, are a simple and inexpensive way to protect water quality on a farm or ranch. Roberta Spencer with the Jackson County Conservation District and the Kansas Rural Center's Mary Howell, Clean Water Farms Field Organizer, partnered with the Middle Kansas WRAPS (Watershed and Restoration Strategy) working group to organize a tour that highlights BMPs in the area. The tour begins at 9:30 am on October 23 at Red Rock Guest Ranch, near Soldier in Jackson County.

Tour stops illustrate how BMPs affect water quality. The first stop features filter strips on LeRoy Rieschick's farm and their environmental and economical benefits, with additional information regarding incidental grazing of filter strips provided by Jackson County Buffer Coordinator Carl Jarboe.

Another farm highlighted is that of Dan Pollack, which illustrates BMPs including: spring development, riparian fencing and livestock exclusion cage.

The Joe and Amy Schmitz dairy farm, located south of Axtell in Marshall County, demonstrates a variety of BMPs. The Schmitz family installed a new waste management system for their 70 cow milking operation, as well as diverting runoff from their buildings and installing a new household-waste system. A creek near the Schmitz farmstead also underwent a cedar tree revetment to stabilize the streambank.

A highlight of the tour includes a virtual tour of the Mike and Pat Wulf farm. The presentation includes photos and discussion on the Wulf's conversion of cropland to grass; development of an alternative water supply; and rotational grazing using both warm and cool season grasses.

Additional tour topics include: Bill and Debra Brown discuss pasture renovation using Natural Resource and Conservation Services' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Les Olsen speaks on the installation of bale ring feeding pads.

The field day includes a free lunch at Red Rock Guest Ranch, compliments of the Jackson County Conservation District. Red Rock Guest Ranch is located 1 ½ miles east of Soldier, Kansas on 262<sup>nd</sup> Road.

Sponsors of the field day are Jackson County Conservation District; Pottawatomie County Conservation District; NRCS; the Middle Kansas WRAPS working group and Kansas Rural Center's Clean Water Farms Project.

To learn more about the Wulf farm and Schmitz dairy, visit the Kansas Rural Center's website at: <http://www.kansasruralcenter.org/CWProfiles.htm>

For more information on the tour or to RSVP (by October 20), please contact Roberta Spencer at (785) 364-4638, ext 136 or Janice Plummer at (785) 457-3398.

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