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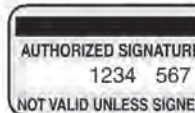
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SOLD

Diversity in the soil, and in business, is the mantra for no-tiller

By Rhonda McCurry,

No-till on the Plains Writer

He was once a home builder — then he became a soil builder.

Darin Williams, Waverly, is also a vested no-till grower and business entrepreneur. These skills came to him because of his love for farming, a dream he has built since the age of 16.

When he was a junior in high school, Darin's father purchased a 60-acre farm and planted wheat and soybeans. For two years, Darin worked ground and planted traditional crops alongside his father before college took him away from the farm.

During his college years, Darin heard friends and leaders talk about the difficulty of being able to make a solid income from farming. It discouraged him, so Williams took on his next passion — carpentry. For 20 years he built houses in Kansas City and South Carolina but kept his eye on returning to the farm.

"It's what I really wanted to do," Darin says. "I just wasn't sure how to make it profitable."

Opportunity suddenly arose, he says, as a chance to live on the farm his father owned. Darin and his new bride, Nancy, moved back and he slowly made the transition from building houses to agriculture production.

A Change in Thinking

Then another opportunity came up: The chance to hear Gabe Brown speak on no-till practices and cover crops.

"That was it," Darin says. "When I heard him speak it really changed my train of thought and I decided to make the change to doing things better than what I had been doing before."

Darin noticed his brother-in-law was utilizing no-till methods and producing high-yield crops without tilling the soil. During his years in the home-building business Darin was never afraid to ask questions and learn from others, so he picked up on the no-till trend and never looked back.



One venture for no-tiller Darin Williams and his wife, Nancy, is maintaining Green Pastures, which includes a herd of British white cattle (left) that are grass fed to sell as custom beef, as well as Katadin hair sheep (right). Darin says British white cattle are smaller-framed, more heat tolerant and easier to handle than typical cattle.

"I knew the old-fashioned way wasn't healthy for the land and that it would not help my bottom line," Darin says. "When I listened to Gabe that first time I knew he wasn't selling me a bill of goods. It made me think about quality of life and going all out."

New Ventures

Today, Darin and Nancy hang their hat under several shingles. They manage D&N Ag Farms near Waverly, grow barley and rye as cover crops and have also raised triticale, wheat, soybeans, milo and sunflowers.

Another venture Darin maintains is Green Pastures, which includes a herd of British white cattle that are grass-fed to sell as custom beef. Green Pastures, found at greenpasturesllc.net, is 100% non-GMO and Darin maintains even more diversity raising Katadin hair sheep, broilers and turkeys for customer's dinner tables.

The British white cattle are a smaller-framed breed that is heat tolerant but still maintains carcass quality while consuming forage. Darin likes that they are also docile and easy to handle. He raises his own British white bulls for his herd and to sell locally.

"There isn't anything I don't like about them," he says. "They can graze and be in the sun for longer periods of time, not sitting under a shade tree like other cattle."

Darin likes to be flexible, which means he's also diversified his cover crops and his business ventures.

In November, Darin and his father purchased a grain elevator in Moran as a place to market cover crop seed, naming the company Natural Ag Solutions. The company also places a huge emphasis on wildlife and habitat that can be accomplished with cover crops, so Darin also specializes in deer plot mixes.

The southeastern Kansas location is prime, he says, to educate customers and area farmers about the value of cover crops. Darin says much education is needed to give local farmers a chance to become soil health conscious and currently, profitable.

Natural Ag Solutions, featured on Facebook at naturalagsolutionsllc, will clean and sell its own seed varieties. Darin says it will serve as a non-GMO distribution center to teach people how to harvest clean crops without weed takeovers.

Darin and Nancy run all three business themselves, have one full-time employee and a second in training at Natural Ag Solutions. When the manpower is there Darin will expand his soil health education goals — and he says he needs more seed storage.

"What we want to do is sell cover crop seed and teach soil health principles on 15 acres that are with the elevator," he says. "We can show our cover crop plots, non-GMO corn and soybean plots and show people what to do and what not to do."

Sharing the Message

When faced with an opponent of no-tilling, Darin says growers shouldn't be frustrated, nor should they give a lecture to the opposition. He'd rather give a ten-second elevator speech to introduce no-till and then, if the person says it doesn't work, show them the root system and the worms.

"I keep a shovel with me and tell them nothing else will speak consistently about being profitable," Darin says. "I get a lot of



satisfaction out of using my grain bins for storage, which gives me the chance at premiums for my grain. It keeps from totally relying on the commodity system."

Since 2010 Darin has been able to turn his passion for organic material into a reality. He wants to avoid seeing mud in the ditches, and he despises erosion as much as he loves natural root systems, biology, and water infiltration. Darin also says dollars-per-acre profit is a driver for him, versus winning the yield contest each year.

"You do have to have yield — just not at the price people pay for it these days," he says.

Before 2010, Darin says he could have had as beautiful crop of soybeans as anyone but as soon as the rain stops that field would fade fast. Now, with no-till methods Darin says his crops are always in the ball game.

"We hold moisture, keep residue on the soil and the beans don't fade at the end," he says. "It's like putting armor on the soil to pro-

tect the crop. It's exciting to know when I plant a field now that it will be there in the end instead of burning up in July or August. We're not bullet-proof but we're close."

The diverse business ventures Darin has started and maintained have given him hope for the future of farming, albeit a different kind of farming than when his dad purchased the farm 25 years ago.

There is one more venture Darin and Nancy hope to begin, though it will be several more years in the making.

"We're going to go on vacation," he says.

AUCTION

SUNDAY, MAY 28 — 1:00 PM

8680 Quail Circle — MANHATTAN, KANSAS

Wood carved duck and geese collection, Calvary figurine statues, artwork, pictures, Steiff bear collection, upright freezer, walking stick and cane collection, dining chairs, steel wheels, Pillsbury figurines, cut glass, kerosene lamps, sofa and recliner, Depression glass, cake plates, lighted china cabinet, 5 drawer dressers, rocking chair and ottoman, figurines, headboard, lamps, Bentwood rocker, Handicap equipment; single axle enclosed trailer, crafting supplies, Christmas decorations, chain link fence with gates, wheelbarrow, paving brick, vintage metal patio chairs, shop tools, concrete lawn ornaments, lawn and garden tools, 1990 1500 Chevy pickup.

MUCH MORE. MANY BOXES AND TOTES STILL UNOPENED.

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: Linda has collected for many years. come enjoy the day with us.

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AUCTION

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2017
10:00 AM

Location: 8517 E 4th Street
HUTCHINSON, KANSAS 67501



TRACTORS, TRUCK & RHINO: 1952 JD-G. Gas w/1195 Hrs, 3 pt, Hyd and 13.6x38 Tires; MF 40 Industrial-Gas, w/7564 Hrs, Backhoe and Loader; MF 40 Attachments Include Lane Drag, Walkway Scaffolding, Extension Boom and Bale Forks; 2008 Yamaha - Rhino 450 4x4; 2000 Chevy Truck, 3500, Gas w/96k Miles, Utility Bed and Ladder Racks.

EQUIPMENT & MISC. ITEMS: Lincoln SA 200 Portable Welder (good); Alamo 7' Finish Mower (3 pt); 4'x8' Dump Trailer; 8'x9' Dump Trailer (12 volt); 7'x10' Dump Trailer; New Semi Truck Tires; Implement Wheels and Tires; King Kutter Bale Spear; 12 Volt Receiver Hitch Winch (3 ton); Fimco 30 Gal Spot Sprayer; 50 Gal Fuel Tank w/Pump; Cement Mixer; Speed Clean Power Washer; 300 Gal Sprayer (3pt); T-Posts; Fencing Supplies; Electric Fence Chargers; Lots of Metal and Alum. Roofing; 30' I Beam; Misc. I-Beams and Steel Pipes; Steel Roof Trusses; Telephone Poles; Chain Link Fencing; Steel Wheels; Lots of 4", plus other Steel Pipes and Tubing; Lots of Scrap Iron; Road Closed Sign; Tractor Seat; plus more.

SHOP TOOLS: Honda E1500 Generator; Craftsman Power Tools; Craftsman Cordless Tools; Tuff Bin Tool Boxes; Large Selection of Hand Tools and wrenches; Bench, Pipe and Floor Vices; Welding Table; Alum and Fiberglass Ladders; Come-Along; Log Chains and Boomers; Shop Lights; Cutting Torch; Lots of Screws and Bolts; Metal Shelving; Metal Rolling Rack; Car Ramps; Sawhorses; Rockwell 9" Table Saw; Handyman Jack; 2 Squirrel Cage Fans; Sanborn Air Compressor; Impact and 1/2 Drills; Adjustable Floor Jacks; Poulan "Wild Thing" Chain Saw; Craftsman Sander; Mr Fan; plus more items not listed.

LAWN & GARDEN: Craftsman Push Mower; DR Pro String Mower; B&D Edger; Wheelbarrow; Shovels; Rakes; Misc. Garden Tools; Lifetime Picnic Table; Garden Hoses; BBQ Grill; Lawn Chairs; Misc. Tables and Chairs; 3 pt Lawn Roller; 3 pt Limb Shredder; 2 Sun Dolphin Pedal Boats.

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Farmers and nutrition professionals unite for restaurant crawl

The Kansas Pork Association and Kansas Soybean Commission sponsored a restaurant crawl that preceded the Kansas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (KSAND) annual conference last month.

The event took place in downtown Overland Park, with attendees visiting The Tasteful Olive, Penzeys Spices and Aubrey Vineyards. Educational informa-



Farmers and dietitians from around the state gathered for a restaurant crawl before the KSAND annual conference.

tion was given at each stop, including nutritional and culinary value and pairings of various oils, vinegars, herbs, spices, and wines that can enhance the flavor and health of home-cooked dishes. Additionally, participants were able to speak with local farmers regarding how they produce safe food.

"The attendees at this event were such an import-

ant group of people for us to reach," said Jodi Oleen, director of consumer outreach. "These are professionals who are educating people about food and it's so important that they understand how food is grown and raised."

Special thanks to Kaden and Emily Roush of R Family Farms and Double R Genetics for joining the tour to share about their pig farms.

Beef Cattle Institute hosts continuing education meeting for rural practitioners

The Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University is set to host the first of several continuing education events focused on improving the long-term viability of rural veterinary practices.

The inaugural meeting, Rural Veterinary Practitioner Conference: Preparing for Disease Challenges, will be June 3-4 in Manhattan. The conference will provide nine hours of continuing education for veterinarians.

Held in conjunction with the 79th annual Conference for Veterinarians, the organizing committee has created a program that will focus on preparation for disease challenges with presentations from a diverse group of experts and speakers. Kicking off the program on Saturday, June 3, is a hands-on Wet Lab at the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine hosted by faculty members Bob Larson, professor and Edgar E. and M. Elizabeth Coleman, chair in food animal production medicine; Brad White, professor of production medicine and director of the Beef Cattle Institute; and Mike Sanderson, professor of diagnostic medicine and pathobiology. Spreadsheets and mobile app decision tools in addition to biosecurity plans will be addressed. Participants in the Wet Lab will need to bring their own laptop.

On Sunday, June 4, a wide range of topics, from securing the beef supply to diagnostic disease trends, will be covered.

"Kansas State University is fortunate to have faculty with diverse expertise and perspectives interested in livestock production and health," Larson said. "The Rural Veterinary Practitioner Conference: Preparing for Disease Challenges will provide an opportunity for veterinarians to gain additional tools and skills to address disease and production challenges facing rural practitioners."

If veterinarians wish to obtain additional continuing education, they are encouraged to register for both the Rural Veterinary Practitioner Conference and the 79th annual Conference for Veterinarians. Registration deadline is Friday, May 26.

For a full schedule and registration information, please visit beefcattleinstitute.org/rural-veterinary-practitioner-conference/about/.

The Beef Cattle Institute utilizes collaborative multidisciplinary expertise to promote successful beef production through the discovery and delivery of actionable information and innovative decision support tools.

Nighswonger appointed to serve on Kansas Water Authority

Gov. Sam Brownback recently appointed Ted Nighswonger of Lenora to serve on the Kansas Water Authority (KWA).

Nighswonger is a lifelong farmer/rancher from Graham County and has been involved in water and conservation issues for many years. For more than 25 years he has served at the local and state level for the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) and received awards for his conservation efforts. He also represents Area I on the State Conservation Commission.

"I am concerned about all natural resources but being a farmer from western Kansas, water is a very important part of our economics and livelihood," said Nighswonger. "I look forward to representing all conservation districts of the state as I have northwest Kansas on the State Conservation Commission."

The KWA is responsible for advising the governor, legislature and director of the Kansas Water Office on water policy issues. They also ensure that water policies and programs address the needs of all Kansans as well as serve as advisors of the Kansas Water Vision and Kansas Water Plan. The KWA was established in 1981 and consists of 13 voting members who are appointed by the governor or legislative leadership. State agency directors serve as ex-officio members.

The next meeting will be held in Garden City, May 17-18. KWA meetings are held throughout the year. For additional information and other upcoming meetings, visit www.kwo.org.

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7 blk	421@163.00	15 blk 541@176.00
6 mix	421@154.00	5 blk 594@175.00
3 mix	507@145.00	5 blk 503@174.00
4 blk	558@145.00	6 mix 543@173.00
3 blk	578@145.00	5 bkbwf 597@165.00
3 blk	587@135.00	8 blk 611@156.00
18 mix	740@135.50	14 mix 774@144.00
5 blk	769@133.00	3 red 758@131.00
45 mix	794@133.00	60 red 881@139.75
25 blk	804@135.25	4 blk 879@139.00
6 blk	843@133.00	32 mix 849@138.00
47 mix	824@132.00	57 mix 859@138.00
10 blk	848@129.50	4 mix 858@136.00
4 blk	839@122.00	6 blk 934@133.50
STEERS	29 mix	957@129.00
4 wf	345@183.00	4 mix 1024@125.00
7 blk	364@174.00	

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JC LIVESTOCK SALES INC.
Wednesday Sale, Hogs NOON • Cattle 12:30 PM

Report from May 10, 2017:

STEERS	5	563	144.00
8	411	186.00	24 659 141.00
5	415	185.00	69 734 140.00
4	464	182.00	3 892 129.00
6	533	178.50	
3	602	168.00	TOP BUTCHER COW
28	613	168.00	\$77.25 @ 1,475 lbs.
5	714	165.50	TOP BUTCHER BULL
44	820	147.25	Char \$90.50 @ 1,980 lbs.
27	798	147.00	BRED COWS
27	839	146.75	\$935 to \$1,400
58	869	140.00	PAIRS: \$1,125 to \$1,460
			SOWS: \$31.00 to \$45.00
HEIFERS			FAT HOG TOP WAS
2	348	168.00	\$43.00 @ 299
5	439	164.00	PIGS: \$39 to \$60/hd
6	513	153.00	

*** UPCOMING SALE SCHEDULE ***

- May 31: Last Regular Sale
- June 7: NO SALE • June 14: SALE
- June 21: NO SALE • June 28: SALE
- July 5: NO SALE this week due to Holiday
- July 12: Back to Regular Sale Schedule

If you need assistance in marketing your cattle please call & we will be happy to discuss it with you.

Visit our new website at jccclivestock.com

CLAY CENTER LIVESTOCK SALES INC.
Cattle sales Tuesday, 11:00 AM.

Report from May 9, 2017:

STEERS	4	483	163.00
3	345	198.00	7 535 154.00
2	430	188.00	12 560 150.00
11	508	178.00	5 619 145.50
11	579	169.75	2 640 143.00
2	633	164.50	4 631 138.50
8	592	163.00	TOP BUTCHER COW:
2	688	156.00	\$76.50 @ 1,385 lbs.
13	743	155.00	TOP BUTCHER BULL:
54	793	151.75	\$101.50 @ 1,845 lbs.
114	858	146.25	BRED COWS:
			\$850-\$1,275
HEIFERS			PAIRS: \$1,325-\$1,625
2	318	170.00	

*** UPCOMING SALE SCHEDULE ***

- May 30: NO SALE due to Holiday
- June 3: Sheep & Goat Sale
- June 6: Sale • June 13: NO SALE
- June 20: Sale • June 27: NO SALE
- July 1: NO Sheep & Goat Sale
- July 4: NO SALE due to Holiday
- July 11: Back to Regular Sale Schedule

JUNCTION CITY, KANSAS • Barn Phone 785-238-1471
Seth Lauer 785-949-2285, Abilene

Clay Center, Ks • Barn Phone 785-632-5566
Clay Center Field Representatives:
Tom Koch, 785-243-5124 Lance Lagasse, 785-262-1185

KARL LANGVARDT	MITCH LANGVARDT	LYNN LANGVARDT
785-499-5434	785-238-1858	785-762-2702
Cell: 785-499-2945	Cell: 785-761-5814	Cell: 785-761-5813

Radio Market Reports KFRM 550 Tues. & Wed. 8:00 am

Radio Market Reports KCLY-Fm 100.9 Tues. 6:45 am

