

## Cover crop program sees good turnout

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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Over 130 producers and ag enthusiasts packed themselves into the Biesemeier room at Phillips County Event Center Thursday, Feb. 16 for a day of cover crop talk.

Those attending came from Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas.

The No-till and Cover Crop meeting brought many together to learn the ropes and pick up some helpful information.

Mark Watson of Nebraska focused on no-till cover crops and grazing livestock. Watson is the Nebraska no-till educator and a long time dryland and irrigated no-till farmer in the Alliance, Neb. area.

The workshop was sponsored by Yuma County Conservation District, Haxtun Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Bridgeport area irrigated farmer and feeder Kirk Laux has been 100 percent no-till since 2003. He carries a surplus of irrigation water from year to year, even with the lowest allocation in the state. Laux shared how cover crops and no-till have enabled him to do this. He also talked about the challenges he has seen to reach this point.

Paul Jasa has been working with no-till since 1978. "If there is a mistake to be made with no-till, I've either made it myself or have seen it done," said Jasa. Jasa shared some of his experiences and explore planting equipment and tillage systems.

He also talked about why irrigators should consider using no-till instead of strip-till systems.

Keith Berns and his brother Brian farm 2000-plus acres south of Hastings, Neb. at Bladen, Neb. They have been 100 percent continuous no-till for over 12 years. The Bernses have participated

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in numerous research projects on cover crops. They have looked closely at cover crop water use and effect on the following crop. Keith shared what they and several of their cooperators in western Kansas and eastern Colorado have learned.

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