

# NRCS Twelfth Annual All Employee Appreciation Time & Award Ceremony

The Area 1 Twelfth Annual All Employee Appreciation Time and Award Ceremony was held on December 17, 2009. J.R. Flores our new state conservationist, presented awards to several Livingston County NRCS Team Members for their devotion and enthusiasm in applying their special talents.

Length of service awards were received by Penny Findley for 25 years with the NRCS, and Dennis Speichinger for 10 years with the RC&D. Dave Johnson re-

ceived an Outstanding Performance award, and Penny Findley was recognized for an Individual Performance Bonus award for the fiscal year of 2009.

Livingston County had several employees recognized for extra effort for the groups they represent. The Green Hills RC&D 5 year long range plan of operation team of David Johnson, Scott McClure, and Tiffany Palmer.

The EEO/CR Advisory Council represented by Livingston County employees Tonja Tiemeyer; District Technician, and Susan Figg; Resource Conservationist.

The Carroll-Livingston FOSA team, representing Livingston County are David Johnson; District Conservationist, Susan Figg; Resource Conservationist, Jesse Linscott; Soil Conservationist, Brain Strum; Soil Conservation Technician, Tonja Tiemeyer; District Technician, and Debbie Gudgell; District Manager.

**Congratulations to everyone!!**



**Dennis Speichinger receives a length of service award for 10 years with RC&D.**

## Back to the Basics for Bobwhites

When something isn't working correctly for us we are often told to, "Get Back to the Basics." Too many times we anticipate the solution to be complex, when in reality we have overlooked some of the simplest aspects that will achieve the desired result. The same holds true for bobwhite quail management.

The northern bobwhite quail population has been in a downward spiral for the past 30 years. Experts say it comes down to habitat and changing land use patterns. Knowing their habitat basics can help turn quail numbers around.

**Food preferences.** For the first six weeks of their life, quail chicks almost exclusively rely on insects. As they grow they gradually switch to grass and weed seeds and green plant leaves. Wildlife researchers have documented 650 seed foods in the bobwhite quail diet, including ragweed, a favorite. This is why disturbance of vegetation at the proper

time of the year by disking, spraying or burning is an important component in habitat development. "Early successional" plants are key to their habitat.

**Nesting and brood cover.** Nests are built on the ground, typically within 20 yards of a field opening such as a disked strip or road. Quail will move their brood from moderately dense nesting cover to more open "bugging" areas, where bare ground is interspersed with a mix of upright plants. Overhead cover protects quail from avian predators above and open pathways underneath allow a running escape. Undisturbed CRP fields and old fields are generally too thick to be suitable for quail.

**Winter cover.** Quail like small fields surrounded by brushy draws, dense brushy cover or wood lots. In Missouri, researchers have found that quail rarely venture greater than 70 feet away from shrubby cover during the winter. You can create good shrubby cover by

planting native shrub thickets, making open, loose brush piles or by cutting the trees along the edge of an open field, known as edge feathering. The tangled branches provide good brushy cover for quail. These areas should be 30 feet by 50 feet spatially. Periodically spraying the area with glyphosate will ensure bare ground.

Properly managed, your farm can once again be suitable quail cover. At a minimum you should be providing at least one-tenth of an acre of shrubby cover, a one quarter acre grain food plot and burning, disking or spaying per 40 acres on a one-third field rotation — **the BASICS**. The more you increase these habitat types and broaden the arrangement the more covets you can potentially have.

The Missouri Department of Conservation has several publications dealing specifically with quail management or you can contact the local Private Land Conservationist for an evaluation of your farm. Information may be obtained from any MDC office or <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/>.





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