

Use of cover crops in farming systems to improve soil fertility will be the major topic of the Aug. 7 farm tour at the Dennis Demmel farm north of Grant in Perkins County.

The event will start at 1:30 p.m. with registration beginning at 1 p.m. The tour is sponsored by NRCS and the Organic Crop Improvement Association, High Plains Chapter.

The use of cover crops in farming systems has gained considerable interest recently. The event will be valuable to no tillers, conventional farmers, organic producers and livestock managers.

Area Extension Educator, Doug Anderson, will lead discussion on cover crops and grazing potential. Anderson has experience in grazing of cover crops by cattle.

Cover crops will be observed on the Demmel farm where peas and oats are utilized and grazed in dry land programs. Sweet clover and rye grass are used in irrigated crops.

Organic farming techniques and requirements will also be discussed. In addition, Steve Melvin, Extension irrigation specialist, will describe irrigation scheduling technology and soil water monitoring sensors installed at the Demmel farm.

Demmel's farm is a fully certified organic production operation supplying a variety of grains and seeds for the growing organic industry. Numerous tillage practices are used including ridge till, mulch till and no till.

The Demmel farm is located nine miles north of Grant and one-half mile west of Hwy. 61 on Road 769.

An evening meal will be available. For further information or registration, call Claudia Stevenson at 308-352-4776, ext. 3. To RSVP for the meal, call by Aug. 6.