

Oklahoma Cotton Council, Oklahoma Assn. of Conservation Districts sponsor Stewardship Week.

Frederick, Ok.-Stewardship Week, April 25-May 2, 2010, is being sponsored by the Oklahoma Cotton Council and the Oklahoma Assn. of Conservation Districts.

Announced jointly by Harvey Schroeder, exec. Dir. of the OCC, and Clay Pope, exec. dir., OACD, Stewardship Week is a time when the continuing commitment by these organizations to help farmers, ranchers and landowners protect and conserve Oklahoma's natural resources is recognized.

"The Oklahoma Cotton Council is excited to be able to partner with the OACD in emphasizing Stewardship Week in Oklahoma," Schroeder said "The Native American proverb points us in the right direction when it states 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.' The responsibility for stewardship rests squarely on our shoulders."

"Stewardship Week is a time when we recognize the hard work agriculture producers and other landowners do to conserve our soil, water, wildlife habitat and other resources," said Trey Lam, OACD president. "It is important we inform the public about what is being done to protect the environment as part of our ranching and farming operations. It is also important to educate our fellow ag producers and other citizens about the importance of the stewardship ethic and the need to care for our environment. We are glad to have the Oklahoma Cotton Council working with us in this effort."

Stewardship Week is one of the world's largest conservation-related observances. Since 1955, the National Assn. of Conservation Districts (NACD) and OACD have sponsored the national program. During this week, local conservation districts will work with news media, communities, faith-based groups and local schools to promote stewardship. This concept involves personal and social responsibility, including a duty to learn about and improve natural resources as we use them wisely and leave a rich legacy for future generations.

"Working together, the OCC and the OACD form a great partnership," said Pope. "We can help ensure that all Oklahomans, rural and urban, know the importance of protecting and conserving our natural resources. Farmers and ranchers were the first environmentalists and are the primary stewards of our natural resources. We know we must stay vigilant and address the problems of today while avoiding past mistakes. Agricultural producers work hard to conserve our soil, water, air and wildlife habitats, but there is still more to do. We appreciate the help of the OCC in telling the story of agriculture and helping us to promote stewardship statewide."