

Fire & Nice

Heartland Co-op Members Take Action to Help Other Farmers in Need



Following the vicious wildfire that affected the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Kansas, there has been more than just new life emerging throughout the more than 1 million devastated acres. Amidst the loss of crops and precious livestock, people from all over the country have been coming together to help those afflicted in any way they can. Donating fencing supplies, animal feed, or offering good, old-fashioned hard work, these people's efforts have brought light to a horrible situation. Two of those individuals, Noah Taylor and Alan Mohr, have significant ties to Heartland Co-op and Heartland Co-op's Young Leaders program and have recently been involved in the wildfire relief efforts.

Noah Taylor is the son of Dan and Ila Jean Taylor. Dan is currently serving as a Heartland Co-op Board Member. Recently, Noah traveled to Ashland, Kansas with two college friends. Unable to donate supplies or monetary contributions, these young men gave what they could: their time. Arriving in Kansas on March 17, while some college students were on sunny spring break destinations, Noah and his friends spent many long days building fences. Although they had a tractor to dig posts, many had to be hand dug due to the sandy terrain and lack of vegetation which caused the tractor to get stuck. Completing over eight miles of ranchland fence, the experience left an impact on Noah. He noted, "I'm truly blessed that I was able to help such kind and humble people."

Alan Mohr, a Heartland Co-op Young Leader, and his wife, Sara, are also doing their part to help those stricken by the wildfires. Alan, a farmer from Ladora, spent the end of March organizing and planning a trip to Ashland, Kansas to supply items that were lost in the blaze. After speaking to several people from Ashland, he discovered that the biggest need was fencing supplies. Taking his efforts to Facebook, his project "spread like wildfire". Everyone wanted to be involved in some way or another. People were gathering up fencing supplies, donating money to a local bank, and giving bales of hay to fill flatbeds. Alan also started an arrangement with Marengo Farm and Home and D & R Feed in Victor, where people could donate to the cause. After completing a weekend trip to Kansas at the end of March, Alan reflected on his experience, "I feel at a loss of words, much like the folks in Ashland, when the support rolled in from all over the Midwest. Thank you isn't near enough for all that has been given. It has been truly inspiring to see everyone pull together and do what they can to help out people who desperately need it right now." This truly was a community effort, and Alan is so grateful and amazed by the plans that far exceeded any of his expectations.

When it comes to work ethic and compassion, Iowa farmers are among the greatest examples of both. Pulling together to help those in need, whether it be a next-door neighbor or a community 700 miles away from home, Noah and Alan are a great representation of "Iowa nice".

More coverage of these stories can be found by visiting:

<http://cbs2iowa.com/news/local/ladora-farmer-working-to-help-kansas-wildfire-victims>

http://www.hpi.com/ag_news/young-iowa-farmers-help-kansas-fire-victims/article_36da0f5a-2ce6-5f0d-894d-512c07922fad.html