

## SFA GRAZEFEST DEMONSTRATES CATTLE WATERING, FENCING AND MORE AT WELLSPRING FARMS

Thirty-six people gathered Aug. 10 at Wellspring Farms near Aitkin, Minn., to discuss high-density grazing, soil health, and fence and cattle watering systems at an SFA GrazeFest Pasture Walk event. Wellspring Farms, owned and operated by Joe and Barbara Gans and Brad and Sarah Kucera, produces eggs, chicken, maple syrup and vegetables in high tunnels and recently added cattle to the operation.

The farmers are building a herd of Irish Dexter cattle and custom graze 25 Angus cow/calf pairs. At the GrazeFest event, they discussed their use of “The Mule” fiberglass energized fence system. Also, Kent Solberg, SFA Livestock and Grazing Specialist, demonstrated installation of the corner brace. Wellspring also recently installed a **Frost-Free Nose Pump** developed in Alberta, Canada. The nose pump will facilitate cattle outwintering to help build soil fertility and serve as an emergency water source in the event of an extended power outage – like one Wellspring Farm recently experienced.

Tom Gervais and Scott Kittelson of the NRCS discussed soil health in relation to land management practices such as high-density grazing. Their rainfall simulator provided a graphic example of how various soil management practices can influence the ability of the soil to handle a heavy rain event. Maintaining good soil structure has a dramatic impact on the ability of soil to absorb and retain rainfall.

Participants also were able to see Wellspring Farms pasture poultry pens and the positive impact they have on soil fertility, their poultry processing facility, and the portable chicken coop.



Grazefest participants inspect the “Frost-Free Nose Pump,” developed in Alberta, Canada. The nose pump will facilitate cattle outwintering to help build soil fertility and serve as an emergency water source.