

Charles W. (Chuck) Bliss

Chuck Bliss spent 30 years serving Boulder County residents through the Colorado State University Extension Office. He was a lifelong Colorado resident, born in the Greeley area and a graduate of Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University). He was hired by Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Service in 1954 as the Assistant Agriculture Agent in Boulder County. He assisted local farmers with improving their farming techniques, weed and pest management and livestock herd improvement and animal health. He also worked with the 4-H Youth program and the County Fair. He became the Agriculture Agent prior to managing the office as the County Director.

During his time in the Extension Office, he assisted Boulder County residents in managing their properties from urban backyards to large farms and ranches. He even managed to answer the question of how to de-quack a duck. The county experienced several floods, droughts and livestock disease outbreaks during his 30 years. The county's population also doubled in population during that time resulting in a direct increase in questions directed to his office.

In appreciation of all his work for the Boulder citizens, we are honored to dedicate the Trial Garden in his memory.



Harvey Sprock Memorial Mix

Harvey Sprock was a Natural Resources Conservation Service employee. He was born on a ranch near Calhan, CO and spent his career providing holistic, sustainable grazing information to rangeland owners and professionals. He wrote the majority of the Colorado range site descriptions which are used for decisions on native rangelands. When he passed away, Pawnee Buttes Seed Company put this mix together in his honor.



Charles W. (Chuck) Bliss Trial Garden



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Trial Plots



The Trial Garden was designed to provide the public a visual display of what different types of grasses, cover and field crops and pollinator plants look like and how they will grow in our climate and soils. The garden is open to the public 365 days a year at an easily accessible area east of the Natural Resources Building on the Boulder County Fairgrounds.

The garden was planted in mid November 2014. Many of the plant varieties are native species and thrive in Colorado conditions with little to no irrigation.

Each fall and spring different field, cover crops and pollinator mixes are planted. The plots receive limited irrigation to mimic our normal climate conditions. We periodically do soil tests to document how the use of cover crops changes the soil structure and organic matter.

For a current list of the plant species and sources in the Trial Garden, please pick up a plant list from the Extension or Conservation District Offices in the Natural Resources Building.

Grass Trials

The grass trials are intended to allow visitors to see what the native grasses and common pasture grasses look like and how they grow. This allows them to see the grasses prior to planting them in their pastures.



Cover Crop and Field Crop Trials

Cover crops improve soil health by increasing organic matter, providing cover, conserving soil moisture, reducing soil erosion and providing forage and habitat for soil organisms, pollinators and other wildlife.

Each year, we plant corn, sugar beets, barley and wheat so that visitors to the garden can learn to recognize common field crops grown in the county.



Pollinator Trials

Landowners want to do something to help save both native pollinators and honeybees. One of the best things they can do is to provide additional forage for them. We trial locally available pollinator mixes. The mixes are changed periodically to reflect changes in mixes that are available.

