

ADAIR COUNTY EXTENSION AG NEWS

Volume 2 Issue 4

April/May 2008

Special points of interest:

- SOFA Speak Out For Agriculture XIV is going to Ames, Nevada, Cedar Falls and Adel. Encourage any 7th - 12th grade students to go on this excellent career adventure trip. See the back cover for full details.
- Take time to be safe during Spring planting.

Upcoming Dates:

Lamb & Meat Goat Weigh-in May 10
Adair County Fair July 23-27
Iowa State Fair August 7-17

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Expensive Fertilizer Causing Challenges for Producers

Increased natural gas prices and higher demand for anhydrous ammonia have driven up the costs of fertilizer, forcing some producers to reconsider how they traditionally fertilize their pastures as they move into spring planting season. The price of nitrogen fertilizer is directly related to the price of natural gas, as it takes 33,500 cubic feet of natural gas to manufacture 1 ton of anhydrous ammonia fertilizer.

Brian Peterson, state grassland conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), said farmers must choose whether they are going to buy the high-priced commercial nitrogen and spread it, which must be done every year, or whether to incorporate more legumes into their pastures, such as red clover or alfalfa. Legumes produce nitrogen naturally, improve the quality of the forage and allow the grazing season to be extended longer into the summer.

"What it boils down to," Peterson said, "is there could be a

cost savings going with the legumes rather than going with the commercial nitrogen. And, it will also give them added benefits, including improved quality and a longer grazing season."

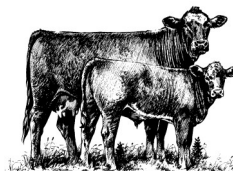
Another option, according to Joe Sellers, ISU Beef Specialist, is to use split applications of fertilizer rather than applying one large nitrogen application in the spring. Also, producers may want to partner with local livestock producers to access manure as a nutrient source.

Producers must consider how much grass will be added by using spring-applied nitrogen fertilizer and whether they have enough cattle to utilize all the increased production by summer; if they don't, then split applications or interseeding legumes might be the most economical decision. Those who do choose to apply nitrogen fertilizer on fescue pastures in the spring should take caution, as over applying it

can actually elevate the levels of alkaloid (a nitrogen-containing compound) and reduce cattle performance. Split applications of nitrogen will allow for some added spring growth and more stockpiled grass growth for fall and winter grazing.

When you are planting new forages do a soil test to determine whether the pH level is correct and if there is enough phosphorus and potassium. It is important to meet the crop's nutrient requirement. Producers working with permanent pastures that are sufficiently fertilized shouldn't have to add much phosphorus or potassium, once cattle are back on the ground, their manure will keep the ground fertile. Hay production removes nutrients, so phosphorus and potassium must be reapplied if soil tests require added fertilizer to maintain yields.

Producers who are unsure about what is the best economical fertilization strategy for their operation should contact ISU Extension – Adair County office 641-743-8412.



Start Clean in No-Till by Bob Hartzler, ISU Agronomy Professor

As more Iowa fields develop a history of no-till production, infestations of winter annual weeds are on the increase. The first step in managing winter annuals is proper identification of the species infesting the field. Many agronomists are relatively weak at identifying these weeds. A regional extension publication - *Early spring weeds on no-till crop production* (NCR 614) - can assist in this process.

After the weeds have been identified, appropriate treatments and application timing can be selected. Applications in early to mid-April often have advantages compared to treatments made at planting. First, winter annuals will be in a vegetative stage of growth and frequently are much easier to kill than when they reach the reproductive stage around planting time.

Secondly, research has shown that killing existing vegetation at least 10 days prior to planting minimizes the risk of negative effects on crop growth and yield. Finally, combining 2,4-D with glyphosate or other products improves the consistency of control on many common winter annuals and dandelion. Early spring applications avoid conflicts with the planting delays specified on the 2,4-D label for both corn and soybean, therefore minimizing risks of adverse crop responses.

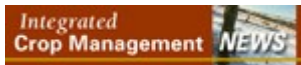
The particular herbicide treatment used for controlling winter annuals is dictated by the weeds present and objectives of the treatment. Due to high frequency of glyphosate resistant horseweed (marestail) across the Midwest, applications of glyphosate alone are not recommended for fields infested with this weed. Including 2,4-D LVE will

improve control of horseweed.

The use of preemergence (PRE) herbicides in glyphosate resistant (GR) crops is likely to increase due to the increased cost of glyphosate. Most PRE products can be applied early with burndown herbicides, but early applications will reduce their length of residual control.

Reduced rates of PRE herbicides are popular with GR crops since the PRE herbicides are not expected to provide full season weed control. Too large of a reduction in the PRE rate combined with an application several weeks ahead of planting may result in failure to suppress weeds long enough to allow a single, in-season application of glyphosate to provide full season control and protect crop yields.

Crop Production News



There's a new online source in Iowa for crop production news. It is the

Integrated Crop Management (ICM) news Web site at www.extension.iastate.edu/cropnews.

Some of the new features of the site include:

- Weekly or daily e-mail notification of new articles
- Quick access to crop production sites at Iowa State University
- Easy-to-print single articles and weekly compilations
- Timely advice on how to deal with rapidly changing crop and weather conditions

Those who would like to register for daily or weekly e-mail updates can do so by going to: www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/Subscribe.htm. Questions and comments about the site may be e-mailed to cropnews@iastate.edu

Good Soil Mix for Raised Beds

Raised bed soils should be light and well-drained. An excellent soil mix can be prepared by mixing equal parts topsoil, organic matter (well-rotted manure, compost, or peat), and coarse sand.

Before filling raised beds, remove the grass sod (if present) and work up the existing soil with a rototiller or spade. Add a few inches of the soil mix, then incorporate it into the existing soil. Continue to add and incorporate additional soil mix until the raised bed is filled. Incorporating the soil mix into the existing soil prevents the formation of distinct layers in the raised beds. Distinct layers of soil impede water movement and discourage root growth.

Trees Forever & New Tree Publications

Trees Forever will have its annual shade tree planting project on Saturday, April 26 with Saturday May 3 as the rain date. Youth and adult volunteers should meet at the Adair County Fairgrounds at 9:00 a.m. A complimentary picnic for all volunteers will be served at noon. For more information call 641-743-8444.

Free Tree Publications:

- PM 1429D Low-Growing Trees for Urban/Rural Iowa
- PM 1429G Conifer Species for Iowa
- SUL 0002 Understanding Decline in Trees
- SUL 0005 Pruning Trees: Shade, Flowering & Conifer
- SUL 0006 Managing Storm Damaged Trees

Farm Accounting Books - \$6.00

are available at the Extension office
(yes the orange ones!)

Fruit & Veggie Check by Barb Fuller, ISU Extension Nutrition Specialist

Eating fruits and vegetables everyday as part of a healthy diet can help you fight disease. They are a good source of many vitamins and minerals and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases like type 2 Diabetes, stroke, certain types of cancer, heart disease and high blood pressure. A variety of fruits and vegetables will provide a variety of nutrients. Different colors give you a range of nutrients including Vitamin A, Vitamin C, folate, potassium, and fiber. Fruits and vegetables are lower calories, make great snacks and are less expensive than candy, pop, or chips.

Canned, frozen, dried, and 100% fruit and vegetable juice can all provide great nutrition. Most canned and frozen foods are processed within

hours of harvest, so the flavor and nutrient values are preserved.

Women

Age	Fruit	Vegetables
31-50	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
51+	1 ½ cups	2 cups

Men

Age	Fruit	Vegetables
19-50	2 cups	3 cups
51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups

Custom Rate Survey

Farmers who hire custom machine work or provide those services can expect to see rates increase this year based on the custom rate survey. The survey was conducted in late winter and assumed that diesel fuel used by farm machinery would cost \$2.75 per gallon. Since the survey was completed, fuel costs have increased another 30 percent, adding another 7 percent to the total cost of custom work.

New topics covered in this year's survey included rates for a complete harvest operation including combining, loading grain wagons, and hauling grain from the field, and rates for managing stored grain.

Copies of the Custom Rate Survey area available at the Extension office or online at www.extension.iastate.edu/store

SWIFFI Local Foods Grants Available

The Southwest Iowa Food & Farm Initiative is pleased to provide up to \$500 in grant funds to local producers interested in starting or expanding local food production, processing, marketing or distribution in the eight southwest Iowa counties of Adair, Adams, Audubon, Cass, Guthrie, Montgomery, Pottawattamie and Shelby.

The grant funds may be used for start-up or expansion costs related to producing crops or

livestock products that will be sold for local consumption, such as fruits, vegetables, and meat. Examples of eligible projects include the development of hoop structures or greenhouses to expand the growing season, development of structures to improve post-harvest handling and storage such as coolers or freezers, or projects related to the marketing or transportation of local foods.

An application form and additional information is available at www.swiffi.org, or by contacting Keith Booth at 712-769-2650 or Holly Born at 712-769-2604. Applications are due by June 2, 2008 to: Wallace Foundation for Rural Research & Development, 53020 Hitchcock Ave., Lewis, IA 51544; or email swiffi@swiffi.org.

Snakes in Your Yard by Jim Pease, ISU Extension Wildlife Specialist

There are no magical solutions. Somewhere in your yard, is a winter hibernaculum. Snakes are "ectothermic", meaning they take their body temperature from their surroundings, they have to overwinter in places that are above freezing (or they would freeze to death.) That includes caves, woodchuck dens, old cisterns, sometimes septic tanks, beneath old stumps, rock walls, under

patios or pools, even hollow basement walls.

Snakes are emerging (temporarily) from their winter hibernaculum. On days above 50 degrees or so they'll come out and back inside at night until the daily temperatures are reliably warm. They will then emerge and disperse, sometimes several miles away and find their way back in the fall.

If you don't want snakes around, after they've dispersed (probably in May), locate and close-up the hibernaculum. There are no chemicals that work, neither do the so-called "ultra-sound emitters", nor the whirly "vibrators" you stick in the ground. Eliminating habitat and closing off hibernacula are the only solutions.

April 2008

EO* - Extension Office

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Great Beginning 5:15-6:45 pm at Family Rewards Office FCCERS Training 6:30 - 8:30 pm, EO*	2	3 Feedlot Monitoring Workshops 1:00 & 6:00 pm - Lewis Registration is limited \$10	4 Kelly Laughery Community Service Scholarship applications due.	5 Block & Bridle Pig Sale, Ames Adair County Pork Producers Banquet 6 pm 4-H& FFA Center
6 4-H Youth Council, 4:00 pm	7	8 FCCERS Training 6:30 - 8:30 pm, EO*	9	10	11	12 <u>Swine Tagging</u> 8:30-10:30 am AC School; 1-3 pm Adair County Fairgrounds Clover Kids 10-11:30 am Greenfield YMCA's Healthy Kids Day
13 Swine Tagging OM School 1-3 pm	14 SOFA registration begins, applications available online	15 Great Beginning 5:15-6:45 pm at Family Rewards Office FCCERS Training 6:30 -8:30 pm, EO* PPAT 7-9 pm EO*	16	17 Nutrition Education Webcast 9:15 - 3:45 E.O.*	18	19 Swine Tagging for State Fair, 8 - 9:30 am Madison Co. Fairgrounds
20	21 Grape Pruning Workshop - Neely-Kinyon Farm 8:30 am	22	23	24	25	26 Trees Forever 9 - 12 Fairgrounds Youth Council Bake Sale 9-11 am, Pamida Walk around the Lake 9-11 am, Greenfield
27 National Volunteer Week April 27 -May 3	28 Extension Council 7pm - Family Rewards FSQA Training 7 pm EO*	29	30			April 26 Continued Rabbit Seminar 1:30-3 pm Old 4-H building

May 2008

June 2 **New* Great Beginnings*
9-10:30 am at Family Rewards

EO* - Extension Office

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Clover Kids 10-11:30 am EO* Countywide Middle School Dance - tentative
4 Youth Council 4 pm EO*	5	6 <i>*New* Great Beginnings</i> 9-10:30 am at Family Rewards Great Beginnings 5:15 - 6:45 pm at Family Rewards	7 Family Storyteller Facilitator Training 9:30-3:00 EO*	8	9	10 Lamb & Meat Goat Weigh-in, 8-11 am Fairgrounds Dog Project Workshop 1-3:30, Old 4-H building, Fairgrounds
11	12 Master Gardener meeting 7pm E.O.*	13 <i>*New* Great Beginnings</i> 9-10:30 am at Family Rewards	14	15 ID Sheets due to Extension Office; SOFA Registration deadline Extension Office open 7:30 am - 7 pm	16	17 Poultry Workshop 9-10:30 am, Old 4-H building, Fairgrounds
18 Congratulations Graduates!	19	20 <i>*New* Great Beginnings</i> 9-10:30 am at Family Rewards Great Beginnings 5:15 - 6:45 pm at Family Rewards	21 Youth Action Committee 7 pm EO*	22	23	24
25	26 Extension Council 7 pm EO*	27 <i>*New* Great Beginnings</i> 9-10:30 am at Family Rewards	28 SOFA Planning Committee meeting 7pm Atlantic	29	30	31

ISU EXTENSION - ADAIR COUNTY

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Fax: 641-743-0023
E-mail: krohrig@iastate.edu

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

Check out our website—

www.extension.iastate.edu/adair/

Websites:

Check out soil temperatures, weather forecasts, growing degree days or other weather information at

www.extension.iastate.edu/weather.htm

Mitigating Air Emissions from Animal Feeding Operations

May 19-21, 2008 Hotel Fort Des Moines - Des Moines, Iowa

This conference, hosted by Iowa State University, is designed to provide practical information related to mitigation of air emissions for technical service providers, extension personnel, industry consultants, and facility owners and operators. In addition to the opening general session, that includes discussion of regulatory trends and the state of the science in both the US and Europe, 60 technical papers are scheduled to be presented relating to prevention, capture, treatment, masking, and dispersal of air emissions.

Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss specific equipment and technology applications with industry suppliers and service providers during conference breaks and receptions. Registration for conference attendees is \$125, and registration for exhibitors \$500.

April 28, 2008 – Room reservation cutoff date for conference hotel block

May 4, 2008 -Early conference registration ends, \$50 additional registration fee after May 4

For registration and hotel details, see the conference website below.

Additional information and registration details are available on the conference website at:

<http://www.abe.iastate.edu/wastemgmt/mitigation.html>

SOFA XIV Heads North and East

**SOFA Orientation Meeting is June 10 7:00 pm
at the Adair County Extension Office.**

SOFA, Speak Out For Agriculture, is ready to travel North and East to Ames, Cedar Falls and Adel. Teen planning committee members have put together an exciting trip for June 19 – 20.

Now in its fourteenth year, SOFA seeks to expose junior high and high school students to careers in agriculture and help them develop communication skills to be life-long spokespeople for the agriculture industry.

Trip highlights include Iowa State University's new dairy farm and College of Agriculture hands-on workshops; ALMACO manufacturer of precision plot equipment; National Ag-Based Lubricants; Center for Energy and Environmental Education; DMACC farm and Hawkeye Breeders.

Wade Boehm, Greenfield native, SOFA alumni, will host the group at the DMACC farm near Adel he is the farm manager.

Fifty-two youth 7th – 12th grade students from Adair, Cass and East Pottawattamie counties will be able to participate in the trip, the cost is \$30. Need based scholarships are available through a grant from the Creston Decat Cluster. This trip always fills up fast so don't wait to apply.

Registration forms are now available after April 14 at the Adair Extension office, online at www.extension.iastate.edu/adair or from planning committee members Kelsie Cass, Velista Martin or Joceline Holliday.

The cost to participants is kept low thanks to generosity of our sponsors. Adair County sponsors are:

Gold Level (\$100 & up) Adair Co. Cattlemen, Adair Co. Corn & Soybean Assc., Adair Co. Farm Bureau, Adair Co. Mutual, First National Bank, Horizon Equipment, Paul & Gini Herr, Southwest Iowa Egg, West Central Agronomy, Silver Level (\$50 - \$99) Adair Co. Pork Producers, Agri Drain, Bridgewater Oil, Ron & Becky Dreher, Eric Gross - Pioneer Seed, Rohrig Show Pigs, Stuart Vet Clinic, Sunds Custom/Fagan Fencing, Titan Machinery, Union State Bank, Wedemyer Auction & Realty:
Bronze Level (\$25 - \$49) Adair Co. Vet Clinic, Farmer's Lumber Co., Fontanelle Drug, Farmers Electric Coop, Deb & Rich Hall.