

AG newsletter

August 2009

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IOWA DRAINAGE SCHOOL

The **Iowa Drainage School** is coming to SE Iowa!! It will be held on August 25 – 27 at the SE Research Farm near Crawfordsville

This is a three-day school with each day including a combination of hands-on training, field activities, classroom discussion, and problem solving using examples. By attending this school, participants will be able to plan and layout subsurface drainage systems and complete estimated project costs. This school is designed for drainage contractors, ag professionals, landowners, NRCS professionals, and anyone interested in subsurface ag drainage design and maintenance.

Registration and brochures will be handled through the ISU Agribusiness Education Program. The URL for the school is: <http://www.aep.iastate.edu/ids/homepage.html>.

Participation will be limited to 30 participants. Cost is \$275 for early registrations. Contact Greg Brenneman, Johnson County Extension for more information!



CROP MANAGEMENT & DIAGNOSTIC CLINICS AUGUST-SEPTEMBER – AMES

The Field Extension Education Laboratory is a 43-acre teaching and demonstration facility dedicated to providing a hands-on learning experience for crop production professionals. The demonstration plots are used to show a wide range of management problems, solutions, and diagnostic challenges. “We make the mistakes on these plots so you won't in the future!” The clinics and programs are taught by Iowa State University staff and faculty and invited specialists from other institutions and industry. Modern, air-conditioned classroom facilities complement the in-field sessions, all of which are within walking distance. Current

open programs for this summer include the following:

August 25-27, [Iowa Drainage School](http://www.aep.iastate.edu/ids/homepage.html) www.aep.iastate.edu/ids/homepage.html
September 2, [Alfalfa Production Clinic](http://www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/alfalfa.html) www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/alfalfa.html
September 3, [Corn Disease Diagnostics](http://www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/disease.html) www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/disease.html
September 15, [Soil Management Clinic](http://www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/soils.html) www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/soils.html

For other Agribusiness Education program information, check out the Homepage at: www.aep.iastate.edu/homepage.html



ALFALFA MANAGEMENT

Foliar diseases, including lepto leaf spot and common leaf spot, have been showing up in alfalfa due to the excess rainfall.



Fields with extensive leaf disease problems may benefit from harvesting early to try to prevent as much leaf drop as possible. Alfalfa has also been stunted in some fields due to water-logged soils.

Potato leafhoppers damage has been extensive in some fields. A sweepnet is still the best way to scout for potato leafhoppers. Once the stunting and “hopperburn” is seen, a lot of potential yield has already been lost. A general rule of thumb for conventional alfalfa is to treat when there is 0.1 leafhoppers per sweep per inch of alfalfa growth (1 leafhopper per sweep with 10” alfalfa). As alfalfa prices go up, the action threshold goes down.

ISU EXTENSION TO HOST FARMLAND LEASING WORKSHOP

Iowa State University Extension is hosting a series of Farmland Leasing Workshops. According to Jim Jensen, Farm Management Specialist with Iowa State University Extension, these interactive workshop will address questions arising from today’s rapidly changing agriculture lease environment. The schedule of programs is as follows:

Tuesday, July 28	Amana, Holiday Inn, I-80 1:30 pm and 6:30 pm sessions
Wednesday, July 29	Clinton County Extension Office, DeWitt 9:00 am & Linn County Extension Office, Marion 6:30 pm
Wednesday, August 5	Henry County Extension Office, Mt. Pleasant 1:30 pm
Thursday, August 6	Muscatine County Extension Office, Muscatine 1:30 pm & St. Mary’s Hall, Tipton 6:30 pm

The workshop is designed to inform landowners, tenants and agriculture professionals on current leasing trends, farmland rental rates, lease arrangements, and some of the highlights of the new Farm Bill.

Other topics to be covered include:

- What factors should be considered in developing a good lease?
- How do I determine what my cash rent should be?
- Results of the 2009 Cash Rent Survey.
- What factors are impacting rental rates?
- How do various rental methods compare for profit and risk?
- How have land values changed?
- What factors are impacting land values?
- Cost of Production



The cost for this interactive workshop is \$20.00 per person and includes the updated 2009 Farmland Leasing Workbook, related training materials, and refreshments. Pre-Registration for the workshops can be made by calling the Johnson Extension Office at 319-337-2145 by the Friday before the meeting. Registration cost can be paid at the door approximately 30 minutes before the workshop begins. For those that register after the Friday before the meeting or register at the meeting, a \$5 late registration fee will be added. Additional information on this interactive workshop can be obtained by contacting the Johnson County Extension Office at 319-337-2145 or Jim Jensen, ISU Extension Field Specialist at 319-385-8126.

SOYBEAN APHIDS

Brian Lang, Agronomy Specialist in NE Iowa, reported this week that he is finding an average of 3-4 aphids per plant with about 70% of the plants infested in NE Iowa on research plots. This is lower than what was found in 2007, but higher than the “off-aphid” years of 2002, 2004, and 2006. The recent cool weather is ideal for aphid reproduction. National aphid activity can be tracked by viewing the following USDA web site: http://sba.ipmpipe.org/cgi-bin/sbr/public.cgi?host=All%20Legumes/Kudzu&pest=soybean_aphid

MASTER CONSERVATIONIST PROGRAM OFFERED

The Master Conservationist program is a cooperative effort among the County Conservation staff in Johnson and Washington Counties, Iowa DNR, and Iowa State University Extension. We cover a number of topics over the course of about four weeks. The dates for the classes and field trips are shown below. The classes will be offered from 6:30-9:00 p.m. while the 2 field trips will be held on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

DATE & TIMES	LOCATION	TOPICS
LAB Saturday, August 29, 9 am-4 pm, 7 hrs	Kent Park & Fossil Gorge	Start with Prairies and Invasive Species at Kent Park, (lunch provided) and move to Gorge for afternoon with geology, hydrology, Corp of Engineers
Tues., Sept. 1, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Marr Park	Soils and computer lab
Thurs., Sept. 3, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Kent Park	Woodlands
Tues., Sept. 8 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Marr Park	Wildlife & Problem Management, Habitat
Thurs., Sept. 10, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Kent Park	Conservation Practices
Tues., Sept. 15, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Marr Park	Planning & Zoning, Archeology
Thurs., Sept. 17, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Kent Park	Alternate Energy, Waste Reduction
Tues., Sept. 22, 6:30-9 pm, 2.5 hrs	Marr Park	Wetlands, Rain Gardens, Work Sessions
LAB Saturday, Sept. 26, 9 am-4 pm, 7 hrs	Marr Park, SE Research Farm, Fern Farm	Sustainable Ag Practices/Programs, River, Ponds, Aquatics, Research Farm or Fern Farm (lunch provided)

If you are interested in learning more about the program or would like to register please contact me at the Johnson County Extension Office (319)337-2145 or mohling@iastate.edu. The program fee is \$60 per person. Please share this program information with others who may be interested. Registration space is limited.

PLANTING TREES TO SLOW EROSION & IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

Landowners install buffers along streams, reducing recent flood damages

Three Johnson County streamside buffer tree plantings will be visited during a field day to be held August 4th from 4:30–7:30pm with a light meal provided. The event will start at the Jim Sueppel Farm just minutes from Iowa City, 3085 Hwy 1 West, Iowa City. If you have a pond, lake, stream or other surface water on your property, it is important to keep that water clean. Reduce sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other contaminants from running off into and polluting water.

The space alongside streams, lakes and wetlands is called a riparian area. Riparian buffers help control pollution and improve water quality. They are the grasses, trees and shrubs that grow along the water’s edge that control erosion and help keep water clean. Benefits of Buffers: 1)Improve fish and wildlife habitat. 2)Reduce flooding and soil erosion by slowing water movement 3)Reduce water pollution. Healthy riparian areas filter out sediment, fertilizers, pesticides, and other potential pollutants from streams.

Topics / Speakers: Thinking about a tree planting? You will see two 10 year old plantings, and one 5 year old planting. Learn first hand from the experiences of the three landowners and see the results of different managements. Discuss tree and shrub selection and maintenance with Mark Vitosh, DNR Forester, and Bob Petrezelka local tree contractor. Dr. Tom Isenhardt, Iowa State University, will discuss the latest in stream ecosystem management concepts to treat specific situations and improve water quality. Does your land qualify for a government cost-share program? Soil and Water Conservation District staff will discuss several funding options. **RSVP to Matt McAndrew (319-337-2322 Ext.3) by Friday, July 31st.**

TWISTED WHORLS & PALE YELLOW LEAVES

Every year we see some fields where corn whorls become twisted up for a while, and then when the leaves pop out they are pale yellow or almost white. This year it appears to be especially widespread in the area. It is usually seen when we go through a big temperature change, such as from cool to warm, causing spurts of growth where the corn doesn't unfurl properly. This year it appears to be especially common in areas where corn was stunted due to wet soils. Once the leaves are exposed to the sun for a day or two they green up. Usually the phenomenon does not affect the yield. Some herbicides, such as 2,4-D and dicamba, can also cause whorls to wrap up, but usually that occurs in an earlier stage of growth than what we are seeing now. See Roger Elmore's recent article for more information and a picture at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0709elmoreabendroth.htm>.

WILL FUNGICIDE APPLICATIONS PAY?

Some common rust and gray leaf spot is starting to show up on the lower leaves in some corn fields. Extensive trials, both in small plots and large field scale trials, conducted by universities and also by the Soybean Association in the past few years have shown an average yield increase of about 3-4 bu/A from applying foliar fungicides on corn, which would not likely pay for a treatment. However, averages don't tell the whole story, since very large increases are sometimes found, especially on corn ground, where hybrids with low tolerance to diseases are grown. Pioneer has seen larger yield increases in the range of 7-8 bu/A.

When corn is near or at tasseling is the best time to scout for corn diseases. If disease lesions are found on or near the ear leaf on a majority of plants, a fungicide application may pay. Yield decreases do sometimes occur with fungicide applications, especially if made before tasseling. With all of the uneven corn out there due to the wet soils, it is important to wait until all of the corn has tasseled before making an application.

See Alison Robertson's recent article at www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0706robertsonmueller.htm. Pictures of some corn disease symptoms can be found at www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/2007/7-2/cornfungicides.html. The new corn field guide is an excellent reference for corn disease symptoms and can be ordered at www.extension.iastate.edu/store/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=13118&SeriesCode=&CategoryID=&Keyword=CSI%20001.

CROP TECHNOLOGY TOUR—JULY 28 6:00 P.M.

Jeff Bermel Farm – Keota (corner of W15 & G32)

Erin Hodgson, ISU Extension Entomologist, will discuss soybean aphid management at the field day. The new soybean aphid resistant variety can be viewed. Other soybean pest topics, as well nitrogen and manure management topics will be discussed. Free meal sponsored by DOW.

ADVANCES IN PRECISION AG EXPO

ISU SE Iowa Research & Demonstration Farm – Crawfordsville

September 17 10:30 am - 4:30 pm

Come see the latest in precision ag technology, including RTK guidance systems, auto-steer, automatic shut-off planters and sprayers. The expo will feature field demonstrations and industry exhibits on the latest technology. More details will be follow soon!

FORAGE/BEDDING PRICES

Recent auctions in east central/southeast Iowa have resulted in the following forage/bedding prices:

Keosauqua (SE IA) Sat 11:30A Alfalfa: SmSq \$2.50-4.00/bale; (LgRd \$30/bale May);

Grass: SmSq \$1.75-2.75/bale; (LgRd \$30/bale May); Straw: SmSq \$1.75-2.50/bale

Kalona (SE IA) 1st Thurs, Yr-round 11:30AM (& 3rd Thurs Oct-winter) Alfalfa: (SmSq \$4.00-4.20/b; LgSq \$28-46/b May); LgRd \$110/T; Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq \$2.70-4.10/bale; LgRd \$ \$55-60/b; Grass: SmSq \$2.20-2.70/bale; (LgRd \$33-39/bale May; Straw: SmSq \$4.00/bale



CONSERVATION INITIATIVE GROUP OFFERS AUGUST GRAZING CONFERENCE

AMES, Iowa --The end of the summer will bring a grazing conference to south central Iowa, sponsored by the Iowa Beef Center. The conference, "Optimizing Grazing and Enhancing the Environment," held by the Iowa Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, will be Aug. 25 and 26 at the Honey Creek Resort on Rathbun Lake, located near Moravia.

Fred Provenza of the Utah State University Department of Wildland Resources will be the kick-off speaker for the conference. Provenza will also close the conference on the second day. Other speakers include Rob Kallenbach from the University of Missouri and two speakers from the Noble Foundation in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

In addition to Provenza speaking on understanding behavior as a means to better manage landscapes, other topics addressed will be year-round grazing management, grazing management to benefit livestock and wildlife, optimizing fertilizer dollars, and incorporating annual forage crops into a grazing system.

Paired with presentations on these topics will be an evening pasture walk on Aug. 25, featuring Iowa State University research on grazing riparian areas. A weed and brush control demonstration will also be a part of the evening events. Attendees can earn continuing education credits by attending this conference. Certified crop advisors earn 7.5 hours of credits and veterinarians earn seven hours.

A pre-registration fee of \$50 is due by Aug. 10 to the Iowa Forage and Grasslands Council, 900 Des Moines Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. For more information, contact co-chairman Joe Sellers, ISU Extension livestock specialist, at (641) 203-1270, or sellers@iastate.edu; or Brian Peterson, retired NRCS state grassland conservationist, at (641) 344-1026, or bckapeterson@gmail.com. The agenda and conference location details can be found at www.iowabeefcenter.org.

Sponsors for the event include the NRCS Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, Iowa Forage and Grassland Council, Iowa Beef Center, Iowa State University Extension, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Southern Iowa Forage and Livestock Committee, Rathbun Land and Water Alliance, Dow AgroSciences LLC, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, South Central Iowa Area Partnership, and the Iowa Farm Bureau.

DEGREE DAYS - A BIT WET AND A BIT WILD

By Rich Pope, Department of Plant Pathology

Iowa weather continued to track cool and wet as degree days fell just a bit further behind long-term averages. With the cooler weather and precipitation since June 1 registering 168 percent of normal, many fields have remained damp.

The wettest part of the state was crop reporting district 1, northwest, where an average of almost 4 inches of rain have fallen since July 1. Storms with hail and high winds have caused damage in scattered areas, and a few fields are suffering from ponding. These problem areas will hopefully recover as the season progresses. Many cornfields are tasseling, and the bulk of pollen shed and pollination should happen in the next week or so. Soybean aphids are being seen occasionally in the northern half and in central Iowa, but remain in general at moderate to low populations. Fields should continue to be monitored for the next few weeks.

