



Eastern Iowa Agriculture & Natural Resources News

June 2011

Extension agriculture specialists, representing Iowa State University and serving the Eastern third of the state, build partnerships and provide research-based learning opportunities to improve the quality of life in Iowa.



Agriculture and Natural Resources Specialists serving Eastern Iowa

- [Kapil Arora](#) - Agricultural Engineer
- [Terry Basol](#) - Agronomist
- [Jennifer Bentley](#) - Dairy Program Specialist
- [Greg Brenneman](#) - Agricultural Engineer
- [Mark Carlton](#) - Agronomist
- [Craig Chase](#) - Farm Management
- [Jim Fawcett](#) - Agronomist
- [Jim Jensen](#) - Farm Management
- [Brian Lang](#) - Agronomist
- [Byron Leu](#) - Beef Program Specialist
- [Tom Miller](#) - Swine Program Specialist
- [Patrick O'Malley](#) - Commercial Horticulture
- [Virgil Schmitt](#) - Agronomist
- [Denise Schwab](#) - Beef Program Specialist
- [Terry Steinhart](#) - Swine Program Specialist
- [Mark Storie](#) - Swine Program Specialist
- [Scott Timm](#) - Sustainability Specialist
- [Larry Tranel](#) - Dairy Program Specialist
- [Bob Wells](#) - Farm Management

Crop Advantage Celebrates 10 Years and Millions in Benefits

It is important for crop producers and ag businesses to keep up with rapid changes in agriculture to stay competitive in the global economy. ISU Extension's Crop Advantage Series (CAS) was launched in January of 2002 to provide a coordinated, statewide educational program for producers. CAS has grown from 11 conferences and an average attendance of 85 in its first year to one of the most recognized programs for Iowa crop producers and ag businesses in Iowa. Fourteen Crop Advantage meetings were held in January of 2011, with total attendance of 2,149. The conference is especially popular with the younger crop producers who have the most at stake in the future of Iowa agriculture.

Meeting evaluations showed that the attendance at the 2011 CAS represented 8.2 million acres (31 percent) of Iowa's 26.3 million acres. Fifty-nine percent of the attendees reported that they improved their profitability from \$5 to \$20 per acre (average of \$8/acre) as a result of attending a CAS meeting. This equates to a profitability of over \$66 million on the acres represented at the 2011 CAS meetings. Boosting Iowa's agricultural economy creates a healthier state economy which benefits all Iowans. One crop producer wrote after the 2010 Cedar Rapids session, "...The information from Alison (Robertson) and Palle (Pedersen) in particular will save me thousands of dollars this coming year. It's remarkable how much we learn at this conference that a farmer would never hear from a seed dealer or agronomy salesman."

Educating the Public about the Value of Agriculture in Iowa

ISU Extension, in partnership with the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation, Northeast Iowa Community College, and Midwest Dairy Association, hosted the second annual Breakfast on the Farm during June Dairy Month. A large percentage of the U.S. population now lives in an urban and suburban environment, and is slightly disconnected from agriculture and food production. At the same time, there is increasing interest and concern in the general population about food safety, quality, and sustainability. Dairy producers are aware of the importance of sharing information about their industry and their modern animal husbandry practices.

Breakfast on the Farm is an event that provides education and fun for both kids and adults. Families were encouraged to attend and learn about modern dairy practices from local dairy producers and dairy professionals. ISU Extension worked with local businesses and commodity groups to provide a consistent message to consumers about where their food comes from. Local/regional food groups displayed their business and products to those unfamiliar to their work. Over 600 people from northeast Iowa communities took part. With Iowa having nearly 1,900 dairy farms and 209,000 cows in production, Breakfast on the Farm will continue to be an annual educational event for many years to come!



More than 90 county conservation staff, area park officials, golf course personnel, and everyday citizens attended Emerald Ash Borer informational meetings in Waterloo, Waverly, and Parkersburg this spring.

Select 2011 Eastern Iowa Educational Opportunities

NE Iowa Pasture Walks

Various Dates – now-October
Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/news/pasture.htm>

Workshops for Feedlots and Dairies that are Medium-Sized Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

June 27 — Northeast Iowa Dairy

Foundation Center in Calmar

June 28 — Country Junction Restaurant in Dyersville

June 29 — Buzzy's Restaurant in Welton

June 30 — Moose Lodge in Charles City

NE Iowa Research Farm Field Day

June 29

Nashua

Farmland Leasing Meetings

Various Dates – July-August

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/info/meetings.html>

For a complete schedule of all upcoming agriculture and natural resources programs visit

www.extension.iastate.edu/calendar



The All-Iowa Horticulture Exposition III in Ottumwa on March 25-26, brought gardeners, novice to professional, to the Bridge View Center.

www.extension.iastate.edu

Iowa Pork Regional Conferences Address Pig Health and Growth Numbers

Nearly 150 pork producers and industry representatives attended educational conferences throughout the state March 8-11, presented by the Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Pork Industry Center and ISU Extension. Ron Ketchem, of Swine Management Services, shared database information for benchmarking pork production and associated production costs. He also offered real data to help producers determine how they compare to others and develop some potential strategies to improve efficiencies on their farms. Dr. James McKean, ISU Extension swine veterinarian, discussed porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) control as producers implement biosecurity measures in their operations and consider ways to control the disease. McKean also talked about antibiotic use and addressed current discussions in the media and Legislature related to Draft Compliance Policy Guide 209 and the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA) to limit antibiotic use in livestock production. PAMTA is a legislative initiative that would phase out non-therapeutic use of medically important drugs in farm animals in the U.S. ISU Extension swine specialists concluded the conference with a discussion on basic ventilation management and its impact on pig comfort and production efficiency. They also shared information on other extension pork programs, including a new ventilation trailer. Participant evaluations spoke to the value of the program, with 50 percent rating the program excellent and the other 50 percent rating it good to very good.

ISU Extension Sponsors Emerald Ash Borer Meetings

Public informational meetings were hosted by ISU Extension regions to alert citizens on how to prepare and manage their ash trees for the future spread of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). This small insect pest from China has decimated ash trees in several eastern states, and was captured in a test trap in Allamakee County in northeast Iowa in 2010. County conservation, area park officials, golf course personnel, and everyday citizens were among the 90 people attending meetings in Waterloo, Waverly, and Parkersburg.

Presenters included Mark Shour, ISU Extension entomologist, and Robin Pruesner, entomologist, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). They explained that EAB adults eat the leaves and the larvae kill the tree by growing inside the bark and preventing food and moisture reaching the limbs above. There is no known cure once a tree has been infected. One can only use preventative products containing imidacloprid or dinofuran as a drench to the soil or into the base of the tree. The EAB insect infects only ash trees and is about the size of Lincoln's head on a penny, and is a bright emerald green in color. The speakers recommended that damaged and diseased ash trees be removed, while the future of healthy ash trees is a judgment call to be made by the landowner. The state is running a large EAB trapping program to check on any potential movement.

Eastern Iowa Bloomed ISU Extension Garden Programs

February and March were busy times for eastern Iowans with an interest in home gardening. Various ISU Master Gardener groups and ISU Extension staff helped coordinate ten garden programs in this part of the state. Counties hosting programs included: Jackson, Muscatine, Wapello, Linn, Winneshiek, Buchanan, Henry, Clinton, Delaware, and Dubuque. The culmination of these programs was the All-Iowa Horticulture Exposition III March 25-26 in Ottumwa. This event was put on by the umbrella organization that represents 27 horticulture related affiliates, the Iowa State Horticultural Society (the board of which has three current and two former ISU Extension staff members), and ISU Extension. Each program was unique and had varied subject matter. Presentations topics included: home garden design, raising fruit, vegetable garden production, tree selection, and disease and insect problems. What they all did have in common was research-based, timely information. These varied venues all helped to promote the value of ISU Extension to citizens that often are not aware of, or use other parts of ISU Extension. The ten programs in total had well over 2,000 participants.

June 2011

... and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.