



**CHARLIE BAIER, Iowa State University Howard County Extension Education Director**

**FOR THE WEEK OF December 19, 2005**

**Garden Calendars make great gifts!**

The 2006 Garden Calendar from Iowa State University Extension offers monthly how-to tips and plant stories in a full-color, 9x12-inch format. The calendar also includes a list of ISU Extension horticulture publications plus county office addresses. "It's more than a calendar. The ISU Extension Garden Calendar also is a garden journal, year-round gardening reference, catalog of garden publications and directory of garden-related help-lines," said Cindy Haynes, ISU Extension horticulturist. Calendars are available for \$8 at the Howard County Extension offices and they make great gifts for all the gardeners on your shopping list.

**Commercial Manure Applicator Training Scheduled for Howard County**

To help commercial manure applicators receive the three hours of annual continuing instruction required to maintain their manure applicator certification, Iowa State University Extension and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) will conduct a Commercial Manure Applicator Satellite Downlink on Friday, Jan. 6, 2006, from 9 a.m. -12:30 p.m. There is no registration fee for the workshop but please register in advance by contacting the Howard County Extension Office. Commercial manure applicators wishing to recertify and those wanting to certify for the first time should attend. The workshop will provide the required three hours of annual training and will cover applicator rules, recordkeeping requirements, and economics of hauling manure, worker safety and land application issues. All currently certified commercial manure applicator licenses will expire on March 1, 2006. Those wanting to renew must complete training requirements and submit forms and fees prior to March 1, 2006 to renew and avoid paying the late fee for certification. If an applicator attended training for the first time in the fall of 2005, they should make plans to attend the training again in January 2006 to meet the annual requirements. Commercial applicators are encouraged to attend the satellite downlink program due to the uncertainty of when videotapes will be available for training in late January and February. Commercial manure applicators also may contact their local IDNR field office to schedule an appointment to take the certification exam to meet certification requirements. If you have questions about the commercial applicator satellite downlink contact the Howard County Extension Office at 563-547-3001 or go to <http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/immag/mac.html>

**Farm Land Values**

The average value of an acre of farmland in Iowa increased \$285 to an all-time high of \$2,914 in 2005, according to an annual survey conducted by Iowa State University. This is the third year in a row with a new record high, according to Mike Duffy, ISU Extension farm economist who conducts the survey. The 2005 average value topped a previous record of \$2,629 reported last year, and it represented a 10.8 percent increase statewide over the 2004 average. Duffy said values increased in all 99 counties in Iowa, and only 21 counties reported an average increase of less than 10 percent. Values increased in all 99 Iowa counties and topped \$1,000 an acre in every county for the second time since ISU began conducting the survey in 1941. The highest average values in the state were reported in the Central Iowa crop reporting district at \$3,415 per acre. The South Central district had the lowest average values at \$1,793, but that district also had the highest percentage of increase at 15.9 percent on average.

**Average Land Values By Crop Reporting District:**

District	2005	2004	2004-2005 Change	
	\$/acre	\$/acre	\$	%
Northwest	3,393	3,118	274	8.8%
North Central	3,222	2,913	309	10.6%
Northeast	2,963	2,665	298	11.2%
West Central	3,048	2,728	320	11.7%
Central	3,415	3,101	314	10.1%
East Central	3,396	3,054	342	11.2%
Southwest	2,350	2,088	262	12.5%
South Central	1,793	1,547	246	15.9%
Southeast	2,483	2,286	198	8.6%
State Average	2,914	2,629	285	10.8%
<b>By County:</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	
<b>County</b>	<b>\$/acre</b>	<b>\$/acre</b>	<b>\$ Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>

Allamakee	1,978	1,789	189	10.5%
Chickasaw	2,746	2,523	223	8.8%
Fayette	3,032	2,671	360	13.5%
Floyd	3,058	2,781	276	9.9%
Howard	2,422	2,190	232	10.6%
Mitchell	2,995	2,724	270	9.9%
Winneshiek	2,522	2,269	254	11.2%