



FARM AND HOME NEWS



CHARLIE BAIER, Iowa State University Howard County Extension Education Director

FOR THE WEEK OF December 26, 2005

Master Gardener Training Classes

Beginning on Tuesday, January 10, 2006 ISU Extension – Howard & Winneshiek counties will be jointly offer Master Gardener Training classes on various Tuesday and Thursday evenings through March 2, 2006 at the Winneshiek County Extension Office located at 911 S. Mill Street. One class session will be held on a Saturday at the ISU campus in Ames. Master Gardeners are members of the local community who take an active interest in growing flowers, vegetables, fruits, shrubs, trees and lawns. What really sets them apart from other home gardeners is their commitment to learning and sharing what they learn with others. Master Gardener trainees attend 40 hours of classes taught by Iowa State University Extension staff and specialists in topics ranging from lawn care, flower and vegetable gardening, ornamental trees and shrubs, fruit crops, and houseplants to insect, disease, and weed control, soil and plant nutrition, and pesticide safety. In exchange for training, participants are asked to volunteer 40 hours of service to their local extension program. The service opportunities are wide-ranging. To learn more or to sign up for the next Master Gardener class, contact us before January 1, 2006 at the ISU Extension – Howard County office at 563-547-3001.

Alternative feed system for beef cows

On Tuesday January 17 from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at Fred Abels farm 20902 J Avenue NW of Grundy Center ISU Extension will hold a winter field day. The field day will cover grazing standing corn as an alternative feed system for beef cows. 50 fall calving cows have been strip grazing unharvested corn since early December. Each day the cows are given access to slightly less than one tenth acre of standing corn by moving an electric fence. Grazing has provided almost all the feed for these cows so far this winter. Costs of providing winter feed for beef cows through this alternative system plus other management factors and practical tips to consider will be discussed We will meet at the farm place inside a shop but dress warm because we will go to the field if conditions allow. For more information on the field days contact Dale Thoreson at 319-267-2707 email dthores@iastate.edu or Russ Euken 641-923-2856 email reuken@iastate.edu or contact me Charlie Baier at our office 563-547-3001.

Crop Advantage Conference

Go to the www.aep.iastate.edu website or to your county extension office for specific information about and registration materials for the Crop Advantage Conferences at Mason City and Waterloo listed below. Pre-registration is requested and an additional \$10 charge will be applied to late registrations (< 1 week prior to the conference) and walk-ins. CCA credits and Private Pesticide re-certification training will also be available for a nominal fee. Registration is from 8:30 – 9 AM with the Crop Advantage Program from 9 AM to 3 PM with the optional Private Pesticide Applicator training from 3:10 to 4 PM at both locations.

Wednesday, January 11 - Crop Advantage Conference, NIACC Campus, Mason City. Elwynn Taylor, ISU Extension Climatologist; Roger Elmore, ISU Extension Corn Specialist; and Bob Wisner, ISU Grain Marketing Specialist will give keynote presentations during the morning session in Beem Forum. Following lunch, during the afternoon, participants can choose 3 from 9 break-out session topics which will include : N Management, the Conservation Security Program, Corn Rootworms, Controlling higher energy costs, Farm Policy Issues, Conservation Tillage, Soybean Insect Management, Soybean Disease Update, and Managing Stored Grain.

IOWA STATE HORTICULTURE COURSES ARE AS CLOSE AS YOUR COMPUTER

Learn about houseplants, vegetables and annual flowers in online courses from Iowa State's horticulture department. Each course is five weeks long and may be taken for one undergraduate or graduate credit, or for non credit. The houseplant course begins Jan. 9, the vegetables course begins Feb. 13 and the annual flowers course begins March 27. Learn more at:

<http://www.lifelearner.iastate.edu/learners/hortOnline.htm> or contact the instructor Yvonne Nilles at ynilles@iastate.edu