

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## University Extension

### **Extension Connections with Northwest Iowa Economic Development**

**Improve processes, save money.** Tecton Industries of Spencer Iowa specializes in high-precision machining and grinding for major manufacturers. As part of its ISO 9001 Quality Management System, Tecton uses data collection and analysis to demonstrate the stability and accuracy of its processes. The company turned to ISU Extension's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) to help develop its in-house training program. The training enables Tecton to continually increase employees' skills and demonstrate improvement of process capabilities to customers. Tecton's first project undertaken after the training has yielded an annualized cost savings of \$52,635 and a 71 percent reduction in defects per million. Additional continuous improvement projects are expected to produce further savings of \$17,750.

**Dairy continues growth in northwest Iowa.** ISU Extension provides farm management, ag engineering, community development, and dairy science information and education to support dairy industry and economic development efforts in northwest Iowa. In 2007-2008, the region will see five new family owned and operated large dairies established in O'Brien, Osceola, Pocahontas and Cherokee counties. These new farms will bring 10,000 additional cows to the region. This growth is spurring economic activity—a local milk plant expansion as well as job opportunities for new dairy nutritionists, veterinarians, and dairy supply services. In addition, the growth trends coupled with good milk prices are causing existing dairy producers to contemplate growth or specialization as strategies to stay competitive in the expanding industry.

**Hispanic families get help with child care needs.** With the second largest percentage of Hispanic residents in the state, Woodbury County has a serious need for well-trained child care professionals. Finding high-quality child care and overcoming language barriers are challenges that face many working Hispanic families. ISU Extension has been partnering with the Regional Child Care Resource and Referral office to offer ChildNet, a child care training program delivered in Spanish. Participants learn how to prepare safe, healthy, and interesting environments for children, as well as successful child care business practices. Four new Hispanic-owned child care businesses have received training and are providing much needed child care.

**4-H teaches food safety and quality assurance (FSQA).** Each year Iowa 4-H'ers produce more than 13 million pounds of meat for the American food chain. 4-H youth are held to the same standards as adult livestock producers to help ensure safe, quality foods for consumers. ISU Extension annually provides FSQA training and certification for all youth enrolled in beef, sheep, swine, dairy, goat, poultry, and rabbit projects. Youth learn about good production practices, such as proper feed mixing, through a variety of age-appropriate, hands-on experiential learning opportunities. Iowa 4-H'ers are taking an active role as current and future livestock producers to help provide safe, quality foods for consumers. In Clay and Dickinson counties approximately 150 4-H'ers have been trained and certified in Iowa 4-H FSQA.

**Extension delivers timely information on ethanol investment and corn coproducts.** More than 235 producers and agri-business staff received education about corn coproduct feeds at lamb, horse, and beef feedlot meetings. Sixty-six percent of the participants cited a better understanding of the differences between the various coproducts. Forty-five percent planned to feed more corn coproduct feeds in the future. More than 40 percent of the producers at the beef meeting indicated the meeting helped them evaluate investment in a corn-based ethanol plant.

**For more information, contact your county extension education director or visit the Iowa State University Extension website, [www.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.extension.iastate.edu).**