Wright Joins ISU Extension and Outreach as Farm Management Specialist in Northwest Iowa

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Gary Wright, an Iowa State alumnus with extensive experience in agricultural finance and production, has joined the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach team as a farm management specialist in northwest Iowa.

Wright will serve as the area’s farm management specialist, working with farmers and producers in Lyon, Osceola, Sioux, O’Brien, Plymouth, Cherokee, Woodbury, Dickinson, Emmet, Clay, Palo Alto, Buena Vista and Pocahontas counties. Wright’s office will be located in the ISU Extension and Outreach – Woodbury County office.

Wright’s roots in northwest Iowa are deep, with over 20 years of experience working in this area of the state. The co-owner and operator/manager of family row crop LLC operations in the area, Wright has also worked as a credit officer, vice president of finance and director of human resources in the agricultural finance industry. He also has educational experience, spending three years as an adjunct instructor at Western Iowa Technical and Community College. Most recently, Wright has served as a consultant for the Northwest Iowa Farm Business Association in Spencer, IA, and as the agricultural marketing director for Heartland Farm Partners in Lincoln, NE.

Wright has earned multiple leadership certifications (Covey Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Blanchard/Hersey Situational Leadership, Achieve-Global Leadership (Master Facilitator), Kaufman FastTrack Entrepreneurial Trainer).

“Gary already is familiar with northwest Iowa and has a deep background in farm financial management,” said Chad Hart, farm management team leader at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. “We are adding someone with experience advising diversified farms, who has worked on the lending side and has a passion for educating people on agriculture. He is an educator with an outgoing personality who brings a wealth of experience to the team.”

Wright holds a degree in Agricultural Business and Finance from Iowa State University and has a Master’s of Business Administration from the University of South Dakota.
Determining Beef Production Costs

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Recently returning from Oklahoma, it was apparent to me that cattle numbers are building. This spring’s Flint Hills contained not only more cows with calves at side, but also an increase in the number of stocker steers and heifers.

The other thing that crossed my mind was that you don’t know where you are going if you don’t have a map. While true for traveling, it is also true for farming and cattle feeding. The first piece of the map is to know your cost of production.

ISU Extension and Outreach has a series of budgets for both crops and livestock. I’d encourage you to download a budget from www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/livestock/html/b1-21.html and complete it using your own production costs. But, if you are unable to do this, the ISU Ag Economics department keeps a running tally of estimated returns at http://www2.econ.iastate.edu/estimated-returns/ for finishing steer calves or finishing yearling steers (see Figures 1 and 2). Both charts show cattle returns improving, but not yet profitable.

![Figure 1](image1)

![Figure 2](image2)

New Publications that I would recommend:

Available from www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/

→ 2016 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey – A3-10, March 2016
→ Monthly Cattle Feeding Returns – B1-36, March 2016
→ Ten Ways to Reduce Feed Costs in Cow-Calf Operations – B1-77, April 2016
→ How Often Can Cattle Feeders Hedge a Profit with Futures – B2-54, April 2016

Available from store.extension.iastate.edu/

→ Control of Calf Diarrhea [Scours] in Midwest Beef Cattle Farms – PMR1019 February 2016
Checking Crops in June

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Check cornfields. Check corn populations for each hybrid in every field. Measure the following distance and count the plants. This will give you plant population in thousand plants per acre.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row Spacing</th>
<th>Distance to Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36 inch</td>
<td>14 ft. 6 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 inch</td>
<td>17 ft. 5 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 inch</td>
<td>26 ft. 1 in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following items are some things to observe. A successful harvest of high yielding corn is based on establishing 32,000 to 34,000 plants per acre. The following items may be limiting your yield potential if they are present in your fields.

- Planting date effect on final stand.
- Plant spacing.
- Doubles, skips.
- Variation in plant size/development in the same row.
- Check of cutworms, white grubs and wireworms, which can damage stands.

We are expecting to see some corn replanted this spring. Replanted corn can sometimes be attractive to black cutworm, so check those areas for cutworm activity.

Complete this activity in June so that you are more likely to remember any planting problems. Items like seed size, seed weight and seed treatment may affect planter performance. Notes that you make this time of year can be helpful when you make seed selections for next season.

Evaluate the performance of insecticide seed treatments. Products like Gaucho, Poncho and Cruiser are effective on white grubs and wireworms. High populations of white grubs and wireworms may not be effectively controlled by insecticide seed treatments. The transgenic traits can be evaluated also. Agrisure Viptera, Herculex 1, and Genuity SmartStax have activity on black cutworm. These traits will control moderate to low populations of black cutworm. Higher populations of black cutworm may not be controlled by these traits.

Corn rootworm damage may begin to be evident by late June. Dig a few plants to evaluate the performance of corn rootworm transgenic traits and/or insecticide treatments. Issues with corn rootworm management have become more common in recent years and it is good advice to check your fields before it becomes a large problem.

Check herbicide performance in both crops. Current herbicide resistant weeds have mostly been limited to Group 2 ALS herbicides (Pursuit, Classic, others) and group 9 herbicides (glyphosate). However, there is waterhem that is resistant to the Group 27 HPPD herbicides (Callisto, Laudis, Impact) and the Group 14 PPO herbicides (Cobra, Flexstar). Check fields for herbicide performance on waterhem. Look for signs of poor control such as unaffected plants, stunted plants and plants that have partially recovered.

Most of the focus on herbicide resistant issues has been on post emergence applications of the group 14 and 27 herbicides. However, there are also soil applied products in these groups. Check the Balance Flexx, Corvus and Prequel applications for potential signs of herbicide resistance. Similarly, there is concern that the Group 27 products that are soil applied may develop resistance issues. Those products would be the Authority products (contain sulfentrazone), Valor products (contain flumioxazin), Sharpen and Prefix.

Check soybean plant populations. Recent research has shown that a final plant population of 100,000 seeds per acre is effective for maximum soybean yields. Check soybean plant populations using the following info. Measure out three foot of row, count the plants and figure the stand count. Compare planted seeds per acre to the final plant population.

Check soybeans for:
- Soybean Cyst Nematode — be sure to dig a few plants.
- Soybean Disease — like damping off, rhizoctonia and fusarium root rots.
- Effectiveness of the iron deficiency chlorosis resistance of your soybean variety.

Check field drainage. Make notes on field drainage needs. Identify areas that are poorly drained. Crop growth is very sensitive to poor drainage this time of year. Maps that show areas that need additional drainage can be very useful in determining field drainage needs next fall.

Update your field records. Update your field maps with hybrid/variety information, planting dates, tillage operations, seeding rates, and herbicide applications. Record the locations of different hybrids/varieties.

Update Restricted Use Product Records. Update your RUP records. Record product name, EPA registration number, rate, application date, area treated and total amount used for each RUP used in each field. Some of the RUP products that need to be recorded include atrazine, products that contain atrazine, Balance Flexx, Corvus, Prequel, and the granular rootworm products applied at planting time (except Lorsban 15G).
June 1—Beef Feedlot Assessment Field Day • Harold Peyton Feedlot, Lytton
June 2—Beef Feedlot Assessment Field Day • Kent Pruisman Feedlot, Rock Valley
June 6—IDALS Pesticide Applicator Testing • Primghar
June 7—SafeFood for 4-Hers • Sibley
June 7—Common Swine Industry Audit Preparation Workshop • LeMars
June 9—Manure Applicator Certification Reshow Day • Rock Rapids
June 11—Vegetable Gardening for Small Spaces Workshop • Rock Rapids
June 14—Manure Applicator Certification Reshow Day • Sibley
June 14—Dairy Iowa Meeting • Waverly
June 14—Regional Ventilation Workshop • Newell
June 15—Livestock Entry Deadline in FairEntry • Sioux County
June 15—Local Food Tasting hosted by Rising Star Interns • Sioux Center Farmers Market
June 15-16—Four-State Dairy Nutrition and Management Conference • Dubuque
June 16—Manure Applicator Certification Reshow Day • Orange City
June 21—ISU Demonstration and Research Farm Field Day • Newell
June 22—June Dairy Month Open House • Maassen Dairy, Orange City
June 22—BeefMeet • Clay County Regional Events Center, Spencer

www.extension.iastate.edu/content/county-offices

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