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FALL FIELD DAY TOUR AT ISU SE IOWA RESEARCH FARM ON SEPTEMBER 9
Farmers and those who advise farmers about crops will want to attend the annual fall field day for the Iowa State University Southeast Iowa Research Farm near Crawfordsville on September 9 beginning at 1:30 p.m. One of the features on the tour will be “Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for Crop Scouting” by Chris Murphy and Zach Vanderleeest, Agricultural and Biosystems Engineers with Iowa State University.

Also highlighted on the tour will be “Upgrading Your Windbreak” by Jesse Randall, ISU Extension Forester; “Cover Crop Selection and Management” by Mark Carlton, ISU Extension Field Agronomist; “Corn Stalk Utilization” by Ryan Drollette, Patrick Wall, and Virgil Schmitt, Extension Farm Management Specialist, Beef Specialist, and Field Agronomist, respectively; and “Crop Season Review” by Myron Rees, Farm Superintendent. Certified Crop Advisor continuing education credits will be available at no charge.

To reach the farm, follow U.S. Highway 218 one and three quarters miles south of Crawfordsville, then two miles east on county road G-62, then three quarters mile north. Signs will be posted to guide you to the event. For further information, contact Virgil Schmitt at (563) 263-5701 or vschmitt@iastate.edu.

PESTICIDE TESTING OFFERED IN JOHNSON AND WASHINGTON COUNTY
IDALS will offer pesticide testing on September 8 and October 6 at the Johnson County Extension Office and September 12 at the Washington County Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All tests are available at this site and will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tests are administered by the Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship. Because it may be necessary to cancel or re-schedule a test date or site, it is recommended you confirm the test time and site prior to travel. Study materials are available from your local Extension office or online from Iowa State University: https://www.extension.iastate.edu/store/ then select “Environment” on the left sidebar of the page. For more information contact Washington County Extension at 319-653-4811, Johnson County Extension at 319-337-2145 or IDALS Pesticide Bureau at 515-281-8591.

2014 FARM BILL INFORMATION
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/info/farmbill.html

BASE ACREAGE REALLOCATION/PAYMENT YIELD UPDATE
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a1-35.html

... and justice for all
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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension and Outreach
IOWA LEARNING FARMS & UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TO HOST BIO-RENEWABLES FIELD DAY

AMES, IOWA—Iowa Learning Farms (ILF), along with the University of Iowa (UI) Office of Sustainability and UI Utilities and Energy Management, are hosting a Bio-Renewables field day on Wednesday, Sept. 10, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Miscanthus Pilot Project test plot, Iowa City.

Join landowner Dan Black and Emily Heaton, Iowa State University assistant professor of agronomy, as they discuss the Miscanthus Pilot Project, which is part of the UI Biomass Fuel Project. The Miscanthus Pilot Project explores using miscanthus as a biofuel on the UI campus. Ben Anderson, UI Power Plant Manager, will explain how miscanthus is being used in their solid fuel boilers.

The field day will be held at the Iowa City plot, where 13 acres of miscanthus were planted this spring. The plot is located on Highway 1, approximately one mile south of the Highway 218/27 interchange, on the north side of the road. The field day is free, open to the public, and includes a complimentary meal prepared by the Johnson County Cattlemen. An RSVP is encouraged; contact Iowa Learning Farms, 515-294-8912 or via email: ilf@iastate.edu, to be included in the meal count.

Giant Miscanthus is a sterile perennial crop native to eastern Asia. Development of this grass for bioenergy and biofuel is in the early stages in the U.S, but it has been grown in Europe to produce energy for over 30 years. Miscanthus is a prime energy crop candidate because of its high yield and significant drying down before harvest.

The five-year UI Biomass Fuel Project is exploring the use of different biomass fuels for sustainable energy. The project team is developing a Sustainability Index to help the UI evaluate the sustainability of various biomass fuels. Additional potential fuels include other energy grasses such as switchgrass and prairie, wood chips, and paper sludge. The UI has been using oat hulls as a biofuel source since 2003. The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, a partner of Iowa Learning Farms, has funded this project through multiple competitive grants. For more information about the Biomass Fuel Project, visit the website: http://sustainability.uiowa.edu/topics/the-university-of-iowa-biomass-fuel-project/

For more information about Iowa Learning Farms, visit the website: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/.

COVER CROPS FIELD DAY AT STUTSMAN, INC., SEPT. 15, 5:30 PM

The English River Watershed is joining with the Johnson County Soil & Water Conservation District’s Rapid Creek Watershed Project and Practical Farmers of Iowa to host a field day on cover crop management. The event will be at Stutsman, Inc. 350 Oak Crest Hill Road, Hills, Iowa on Monday, September 15th, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. The field day will introduce a variety of cover crop topics, including how using covers can improve soil health, reduce erosion, and improve water quality. Cost share options, crop certification guidelines in relation to cover crops and ongoing research on implementing ‘third’ crops will be shared as well. Field plot tours of cover crops will be available, weather permitting.

Speakers include:

- Steve Berger, Washington County farmer
- Greg Brenneman, Iowa State University Extension
- Steve Carson, Farm Service Agency
- Stefan Gailans, Practical Farmers of Iowa
- Wendell Jones, Natural Resources Conservation Service/Johnson Co. Soil and Water Conservation District
- Jason Steele, Natural Resources Conservation Service

This event is free and open to the public. A complimentary dinner will be provided, but an RSVP is requested. To register for this event, go to www.jcswwd.org, call Wren Almitra at the Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation office, (319) 337-2322, ext. 300, or call Jody Bailey at 319-241-0966. Individuals needing accommodations to attend, including transportation, should contact Jody at the number above.
MANURE APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Manure applicators that haul or handle manure from a confinement site facility with more than 500 animal units and all commercial manure applicators are required by Iowa law to be certified to apply manure in Iowa. “My best estimate based on historical numbers of certified applicators is somewhere between 300-800 applicators still need to attend training this year to maintain or renew their licenses to apply manure before the fall application season,” says Angie Rieck-Hinz, Extension agronomist.

Confinement site applicators must attend two hours of annual training to maintain their three-year license. Applicators must pay certification and education fees. After March 1 of the current year, applicators that are renewing their certificates must also pay a late fee. Commercial manure applicators must attend three hours of training or take and pass an exam annually. Commercial applicators that need to renew their licenses after March 1 will need to pay a late fee in addition to the certification fee and education fee. Commercial manure applicators are reminded they must be associated with a commercial manure service. Commercial and confinement site applicators may meet certification requirements by scheduling an appointment with their local ISU Extension county office to watch a videotape or by contacting their local DNR field office to schedule an appointment to take the certification exam. Confinement site sessions are as follows:

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<th><strong>Location</strong></th>
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Commercial Manure Applicator Certification is scheduled for Tuesday Jan. 6, 2015, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Johnson, Iowa, Keokuk and Washington County Extension Office. For information about manure applicator certification requirements contact Greg Brenneman, Ag Engineer, at gregb@iastate.edu or 319/337-2145; Tom Miller, Program Specialist, tmiller@iastate.edu 319-653-4811.

YARD CARE TIPS

When is the best time to sow grass seed? Mid-August to mid-September is the best time to seed new lawns and overseed existing lawns in Iowa. Late-summer seeding has several advantages over spring seeding. The seeds of cool-season grasses germinate quickly in the warm soil of late summer. The warm days and cool nights of early fall promote rapid turfgrass growth. The growing grass also has less competition from weeds as few weed seeds germinate in fall.

Is late summer/early fall a good time to plant a tree? Mid-August through September is an excellent time to plant pine, spruce and other evergreens. (Evergreens planted in late October or November may not have adequate time to become established before the onset of winter and could be subject to desiccation, injury and death.) Deciduous trees and shrubs can be planted from August through early November.

Water newly planted trees every day for three or four days and then gradually reduce the frequency of watering. When watering, slowly apply water to the root ball and the surrounding soil. A thorough watering every seven to 10 days (in dry weather) should be sufficient three to four weeks after planting. Continue watering until the ground freezes.
WHEN WILL CROPS REACH MATURITY?

**Corn:** Most corn has ears with some kernels starting to dent, so it is in a late dough stage (late R4) nearing R5 (dent stage). If nearly all kernels are dented, it has reached R5 stage and you can see the milk line. Initial R5 stage equals ¼ milk line, with corn silage harvest to begin soon (often harvested between ¼ and ½ milk line). An old rule of thumb is that the milk line drops ¼ of the way down the kernel each week getting to black layer in about 3 weeks. In reality it takes a bit longer to drop from ¼ to ½ then from ¾ to black layer, but overall it takes about 3 weeks to get from ¼ milk line to black layer. Black layer is frost-safe with total dry matter accumulated. So late dough stage corn should be frost-safe within 4 weeks. Early Dent stage corn should be frost-safe in 3 weeks. Stressed corn will shut down sooner, and we certainly have our share of those acres with N deficiency and some drought stress prior to this rainy spell, which is why some silage harvest will start this week. FYI, corn grain fill stages are defined and illustrated at: [http://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/corn/news/timeless/GrainFill.html](http://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/corn/news/timeless/GrainFill.html)

**Soybeans:** Most soybeans are at or near initial R6 stage (one pod within the upper 4 nodes on the main stem fully filled). R6 stage takes about 18 days to get to R7 (one pod on the main same a mature color). R7 is basically frost-safe, with very little additional dry matter accumulation as it advances in about 9 days to R8 (all pods a mature color). So most of the crop should be frost-safe at R7 in 3 weeks. FYI, soybean stages are defined and illustrated at: [http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/soybean/production_growthstages.html](http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/soybean/production_growthstages.html)

CALCULATING A VALUE FOR CORN SILAGE IN THE FIELD

Questions often arise this time of year about how to arrive at a fair price for standing crops such as corn silage, oats, hay, and cornstalks. Although there are no widely quoted market prices for these crops, they can be valued according to their relative feed value and compared to some crop that does have a known market price, such as corn grain or baled hay. Corn silage can be valued most easily according to the price of corn grain. Taking into account the value of the grain, the extra fertilizer cost, and the harvesting costs saved, a ton of corn silage in the field is worth about 6 times as much as a bushel of corn. Use the local harvest price as a guide. If the current market price is below the county USDA loan rate, use the loan rate instead. For example, if expected corn price is $4.50 per bushel, the value of standing silage is $4.50 x 6=$27 per ton. Assuming a corn silage yield of 18 tons per acre, the value of standing corn is $27 per ton x 18 tons =$486 per acre. This price assumes silage is harvested at 60 percent moisture. To adjust for other moisture levels, subtract the actual moisture level from 100, divide by 40, then multiply by the estimated value for 60 percent moisture silage. For example, the silage moisture level is 70%. Silage dry matter level is 100% - 70% = 30%. If the silage value at 60% is $27 per ton, then the silage value at 70% is $27 x 30/40 = $20.25 per ton.

Similar types of calculations are used to price hay and corn stalks and can be found in ISU Extension Farm Management fact sheets:


For another option on pricing corn silage, the University of Wisconsin just updated there guidelines. This is available at: [http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/AA/pdfs/A104.pdf](http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/AA/pdfs/A104.pdf)

OPEN HOUSE: NEW HOG FACILITY

**Friday, Sept. 12, 11AM-2PM lunch provided. Program at 12PM. Tom Wall Farm, 2445 Oasis Rd NE Iowa City**

The Iowa Soybean Association invites you to tour a new hog facility. Hear from local farmers/industry experts on how:

- Iowa soybean farmers feed livestock
- Livestock facilities are sited to promote neighbor relations and protect the environment
- Livestock facilities are regulated
- Farmers utilize livestock to include the next generation in the family farm
- Construction techniques keep animals comfortable and safe

Please RSVP to Haylee Henke at hhenke@iasoybeans.com or 815-751-5868 by September 8th.
TRI-STATE AG LENDER’S SEMINAR

The 28th Annual Tri-State Agriculture Lender’s Seminar will be held on Wednesday, October 29th at the Midway Best Western Hotel in Dubuque, Iowa from 9:45 am – 3:00 pm. This year’s focus is on market outlooks for livestock, grains and dairy in addition along with the issues of crop budgeting, crop insurance and the farm bill.

“This price risk management is getting to be the major variable for profitability in many commodity enterprises. Understanding the markets is a necessary part of farm management assistance for agricultural lenders as well”, says Larry Tranel, ISU Extension Dairy Field Specialist. “This seminar has proven itself in assisting lenders and farm financial advisors in helping farmers manage that risk.” The cost of the program is $90 per person by October 17th. To register, contact Larry Tranel at ISU Extension in Dubuque County at 563-583-6496 or e-mail tranel@iastate.edu for registration information.

DIRECTOR OF ISU AG LAW CENTER TO SPEAK IN MT PLEASANT

Roger A. McEowen, Leonard Dolezal Professor in Agricultural Law and Director of the ISU Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation, will speak to area farmers and landowners on the evening of Monday, September 15th in Mount Pleasant.

The meeting will be held at the Henry County Extension office, 127 North Main, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Professor McEowen will cover hot topics in agricultural law and taxation including the use of drones, the Rock Island Clean Line Agreement, Farm Bill implications, and Iowa Capital Gains. He will also be available to answer questions.

“Recently there have been numerous legal questions coming into the Extension office regarding new developments in ag law such as the use of drones and issues related to the pipeline,” said Darbee Wellman, ISU Extension and Outreach Agriculturalist and coordinator of the program. “We are lucky to have Professor McEowen come and speak in our area to clear up some of these issues for our landowners.”

This program is free and open to the public, however reservations are requested. RSVPs can be made by calling the Henry County Extension office at 319-385-8126 or by emailing dwellman@iastate.edu.

ISU Extension and Outreach is part of an educational network supported by Iowa State University, local county governments, and the United States Department of Agriculture. ISU Extension and Outreach works to provide learning opportunities for citizens of Iowa by providing unbiased, research-based information that will improve quality of life.

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES WORKSHOP SET- SPRING 2015

AMES, Iowa -- Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will conduct Level 1 and Level 2 workshops covering Good Agricultural Practices for fruit and vegetable producers beginning in October. The one-day workshops are important for growers who want to better understand how GAPs can be used to meet buyers’ food safety requirements. The one-day workshops are offered as Level 1: KNOW and Level 2: SHOW. Level 1 is training for growers who provide food to consumers through community-supported agriculture or farmers’ markets, or are considering retail foodservice sales. Training covers good agriculture best practices and market considerations.

Level 2 workshops guide farmers in the development of a written farm food safety plan. Farmers considering sales to wholesale foodservices such as grocers, restaurants, hospitals and other institutions, and those interested in adding value to fresh produce and selling products in a convenience form will have the tools to demonstrate GAPs are in place after attending the workshop. Farmers then can offer food safety assurances to buyers. ISU Extension and Outreach faculty and specialists instructing the workshops include Angela Shaw, food safety; Catherine Strohbehn, food safety and local foods systems; and Linda Naeve, value added agriculture. The workshops are funded through a grant from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Services Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. GAP workshop schedule Linn County Extension Office, 383 Collins Road NE, Suite 201, Cedar Rapids  Level 1: March 10  Level 2: March 24

The fee is $25 per workshop with discounts for farms and multiple level participation. Attendees will receive a certificate of completion following the program. Registration can be made directly online at http://bit.ly/12sLsxE. For more information, please contact Angela Shaw at 515-294-0868 or email at angelml@iastate.edu.
**CREEP FEEDING ECONOMICS IN 2014**

By Patrick Wall, ISU Extension and Outreach beef program specialist

The cow-calf game has certainly changed in the last 12 months, and it’s no doubt been a fun ride. Our memories of a bitterly cold winter and record-high commodity prices in prior years quickly fade every time we check the markets on our smart phones. Needless to say, a number of creep feeders got pretty rusty during the $7 corn era, and it may be time to shine them up again as we enter early fall 2014.

My app today (late July) says that feeder cattle are worth $2.20 a pound and corn is $3.65 a bushel. More importantly, the futures feeder price for September, October, and November says the exact same thing: $2.20 a pound. The December corn contract is at $3.75…and goes up from there steadily into 2015. By the time this article hits your inbox or news feed, the numbers could be significantly different.

Placing the markets aside, the challenges brought forth in 2014 for many cow-calf producers may be reason enough to fill the feeders once again. Throughout much of Iowa, flooding or frequent rain events made 1st and 2nd cutting hay harvest a struggle. As a result, this winter our cows may be consuming lower quality mature hay that got “rinsed off” a time or two.

Research suggests cows can come in 20-30 pounds heavier and in better body condition if her calf has access to creep feed. A little extra flesh may help that cow endure a period of low quality hay or reduce the amount of purchased supplement it takes to get her back in a body condition score (BCS) of 6 prior to calving next spring.

On the calf side, the math can be pretty simple: >$2 a pound X >50lbs. of added gain = >$100 per calf additional revenue. If we dig in a little further and use a feed tag example: a 400lbs. calf will consume about 1% of their body weight in creep feed per day. Cost of the diet is $0.14 per pound. Total cost is $0.56 per head. If the efficiency of the creep feed is 6:1, then every day we should see a benefit of 2/3 of a pound per calf. If you offer creep feed for the last 90 days on the cow, expect to spend roughly $50 per calf for 60 additional pounds of weaning weight. All said, those added pounds are worth $130 per calf, pocketing about $80 more NET PROFIT per head this fall, adjusting a little for market slide based on added weight. A number of creep feed diets are on the market; some try to limit consumption, others assume ad libitum. Consider options like a low-starch, fiber-based creep diet versus a grain mix. Since the calf’s rumen already is processing some forage, they can more efficiently utilize a low starch supplement. If August turns hot and dry, your heavier milking and younger cows will thank you for the gesture, particularly those consuming mature and/or lower quality forage. With the sheer value of cattle versus commodity prices, anything we can do as producers to protect our investments into 2015 is a wise decision.

**BEEF FACILITIES TOUR**

Beginning & Young Livestock Producer Network (BYLPN)
The BYLPN Network is designed to draw young stockmen and women together to share ideas, view innovative production methods and learn from each other. This tour will allow young cattle enthusiasts to compare hoop buildings vs. mono-slopes vs. pitted structures and ask questions of the producers using them every day. Join us for the stops that most interest you, or stay with us all afternoon. The event is FREE!

**Thursday, September 25th, 2014**

3:00-3:45pm – Bob Henderson’s – 1825 720th Avenue, Albia, IA (*NEW* pitted covered feeding structure)

4:30-5:15pm – Keith VanWaardhuizen’s – 2506 Carbon Trail, Oskaloosa, IA (*NEW hoop & mono-slope side-by-side*)

5:45-6:30pm – Henry Langstraat’s – 1351 Dubuque Drive, Otley, IA (*NEW calving & handling facilities*)

7:00pm  Dinner at Marion Co. Extension office

210 N Iowa Street, Knoxville, IA (grilling by Marion Co. Cattlemen)

*For more information or to register to attend, contact Patrick Wall, Beef Field Specialist at 515-450-7665 or patwall@iastate.edu on or before September 22nd.*
WORKSHEET HELPS PRODUCERS IDENTIFY SELECTIONS FOR 2014 FARM BILL

AMES, Iowa -- The Agricultural Act of 2014 is important legislation. It provides farmland owners and operators the opportunity to make a one-time election of a commodity program for 2014 through 2018. The legislation also allows the operator to enroll annually in a chosen program. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach provides several resources to assist in this decision-making process.

“We have developed several tools, including the Base Acreage Reallocation and Payment Yield Update, to assist owners and operators as they determine what is best for their business and family,” Johanns said. Alejandro Plastina, economist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, developed the Base Acreage Reallocation and Payment Yield Update. www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a1-35.html

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“Opportunities to update base acres and payment yields for commodity programs are few and far between,” Plastina said. “So farmers should seriously consider this opportunity provided by the 2014 Farm Bill.”

“The worksheet is a simple tool to evaluate the convenience of having the payment formulas for some commodity programs updated to better reflect current production patterns on a farm-by-farm basis,” Plastina added. He noted that the decision tool includes multiple worksheets to allow information for up to five farms. The Base Acreage Reallocation and Payment Yield Update worksheet was designed to help Iowa farmland owners with base acreage reallocation decisions for the Agricultural Risk Coverage-County (ARC-CO) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program, and with payment yield update decisions for the PLC program. To access this and other online tools, go to www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm.

To further support producers, a series of workshops will be held across Iowa to provide information about the Farm Bill and the impact it has on producers. The meetings will be held once final regulations are set. A complete schedule will be posted on the AgDM Farm Bill Web page at www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/info/farmbill.html.

MOB GRAZING/PASTURE WALK

Wednesday, Sept. 24th 10AM. Doug Darrow's Rapid Creek Family Farm, 3727 Calkins Ave. SW Oxford, IA

Featuring Doug Darrow's mob grazing system, on land recently converted from cropland to pasture. Doug will explain his design considerations for fencing and watering systems, and the challenges he's encountered. Mob grazing consists of high density stocking rates in divided pastures where cattle are moved daily. Each grazing event is followed by an extended rest period that allows for optimum soil, plant, and animal performance.

For more information on speakers, agenda, directions and to register please RSVP at 319-337-2322 x. 3 A luncheon will be served.
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR FARM FAMILIES

AMES, Iowa -- Considering the high cost of health insurance, farm families should become familiar with changes brought about by the Affordable Care Act. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach human sciences specialists in family finance discuss the implications for farm families in the August issue of Ag Decision Maker.

“For the farm community and the public at large, a great deal of confusion has surrounded the rollout of the Affordable Care Act. Uncertainties remain in terms of the costs and benefits associated with its implementation,” said Suzanne Bartholomae. “However, many of the new provisions of the ACA may address some of the issues faced by farm families when it comes to health coverage.”

The health insurance consumption patterns of Iowa farmers differ from the population at large, USDA research shows. Iowa farm operators tend to have greater rates of insurance coverage than the general population, partially because of the dangerous nature of farming. To get health insurance coverage, family members often take off-farm jobs.

“Farmers use health insurance to protect their farms from risk, and many farm operations support multiple farm families,” added Susan Taylor.

Bartholomae and Taylor examine the Health Insurance Marketplace, essential benefits, tax credits and cost-sharing options. See the complete story in the Ag Decision Maker newsletter.  
www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/articles/others/BarAug14.html