SUMMARY
Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension
Future Talk Priorities

Rural Counties
(67 of 77 reporting)

Beginning Farmers and the Next Generation of Agriculturists (49)

Alternatives for young farmers to make entry into farming and transitioning. (Decatur)
Increasing number of investment owners (Emmet)
Economic incentives for retiring farmers to help young/new farmers. (Grundy)
Lot of concern about the "disappearing middle" and opportunities for young farmers to get started. (Hardin)
Not many of us left! (Howard)
How to get people started, so costly. (Humboldt)
Not all big alternative ag niche markets can live in Iowa. New ways to making a living on small farms start young. (Ida)
Limit government payments to very large operations, and give to beginning young farmers.
Loans available and what the process is. (Keokuk)
Design business arrangements to help young farmers, cost-share, lease, custom grazing. (Lucas/Wayne)
Including women; land transfer. (Mahaska)
How can a beginning farmer afford to farm. (Washington)

New Agricultural Enterprises, Opportunities, and Linkages (45)

Improving diversity, away from government supported commodities, makes us stronger long term. (Buchanan)
49th in small business startup (Emmet)
Industrial hemp as an alternative crop/industry (Grundy)
Programs to help them get started. (Howard)
Niche farming, livestock or vegetables and fruit. Non-GMO beans. (Keokuk)
**Economic Development: Agriculture (42)**


Diversification and value-added are essential, farmers heavily invested in equipment designed for 2 crops only. (Crawford)
Value added ways to utilize and add value to local crop and livestock products and development of alternative enterprises. (Decatur)
Input costs/cash flow challenges. (Emmet)
Working with ag industry and the commodity organizations such as the John Deere project and Iowa Corn and Iowa Soybean Association. (Hardin)
Diversified farms, need forage/livestock systems, added value. (Lucas/Wayne)

**Natural Resources and Environmental Stewardship (38)**

Adair, Appanoose, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cedar, Clay, Clayton, Crawford, Davis, Decatur, Dickinson, Emmet, Fremont, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hancock, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Ida, Jackson, Jones, Keokuk, Lucas/Wayne, Lyon, Mitchell, Monroe, O'Brien, Osceola, Plymouth, Sac, Shelby, Taylor, Winnebago, Wright

Clean water and habitat for wildlife can be promoted as diversified "crops" or "value added" ag products. (Buchanan)
With a large land base coming out of CRP in 2007, concerns about highly erodible and fragile lands going back into crop production, especially with high cash rents seen. Encourage BMP's for erosion control and grass based agriculture. (Decatur)
Clean air and water; realistic restrictions on confinement feedings. (Grundy)
Air quality, water quality, manure nutrient utilization. Need to prepare farmers to gain benefits of CSP when it is fully funded. (Hardin)
Proactive alternative technology. (Ida)
CRP future. (Keokuk)
CRP contracts expiring; feedlot regs; grazing restrictions; loss of grazing acres. (Lucas/Wayne)
CRP could be the downfall of cattle producers. (Washington)

**Growing Iowa's BioEconomy (32)**


Supporting the bio-fuels industry (Hardin)
Fuels, energy sources, publicity, marketing (Humboldt)
Switchgrass for biomass, feeding co-products. (Lucas/Wayne)
**Rural/Urban Communication and Relationships (22)**
*Adair, Allamakee, Audubon, Benton, Buena Vista, Cedar, Cherokee, Davis, Grundy, Hamilton, Hancock, Howard, Humboldt, Floyd, Lyon, Mahaska, Shelby, Tama, Van Buren, Washington, Winneshiek*

To keep the links open. (Howard)
Water and air quality, community meetings. (Humboldt)
Legislative influence – urban/rural split. (Mahaska)

**Food Safety and Security (15)**
*Boone, Buchanan, Calhoun, Clayton, Davis, Guthrie, Ida, Jackson, Jones, Mahaska, Mitchell, O'Brien, Page, Plymouth, Pocahontas*

Are we safe? (Buchanan)

**Entrepreneurship Development (15)**
*Audubon, Boone, Cedar, Chickasaw, Delaware, Fremont, Hamilton, Hardin, Ida, O'Brien, Sac, Tama, Taylor, Union, Van Buren*

Work with producers to utilize technology for production and management. (Hardin)

**The New Rural Iowa (11)**
*Allamakee, Cass, Decatur, Fayette, Fremont, Henry, Jackson, Lucas/Wayne, Montgomery, Wright*

Concerns about growing and recreational non-ag use of land bidding prices above productive value and related issues such as misuse or overuse of timber reserve to avoid tax payment on some of this acreage. (Decatur)
Fence laws, investors, recreational uses, loss of pasture land. (Lucas/Wayne)

**Leadership Development (10)**
*Audubon, Benton, Buena Vista, Calhoun, Floyd, Fremont, Keokuk, Tama, Union, Winneshiek*

Set up group to help new and established farmers come together. (Chickasaw)
Women in Agriculture. (Keokuk)
The same people are providing local leadership as were helping the last 10-20 years. Local groups like Lions clubs are closing since no new young leaders are stepping up to help. (Tama)

**Serving Iowans and New Audiences (2)**
*Allamakee, Clayton*
Other Needs (please identify) (2)
Crawford, Humboldt

Marketing – crop/livestock marketing, marketing how to's, production profitability. (Crawford)
Value-added ag; east and west coast consumer linkages; new soybeans – uses, export; specialty
products and consumer marketing. (Humboldt)

Comments

Adams – Increasing jobs in rural Iowa; transitioning land to the next generation of Iowans-1031
land exchanges are bad for farm economy; getting landlords to understand that high cash rent
is detrimental to them as well as farmers.
Buchanan – Some of these do drive each other; hard choices!
Butler – Assisting the younger generation to enter production agriculture was the most important
topic. Just as important was helping the older farming generation exit from agriculture.
Calhoun/Sac – 1) What will the future of the new farmer becoming larger or more defined in
helping others in the remake of the Iowa cattle feeder? 2) Help out the middle-sized cattle
(feedlot) producers. 1,000-3,000 head farms. 3) We need to set control of the DNR and get
young farms and cattle feeders a beginning. 4) Keep family farms – family-being able to pass
farm to next generation easier. 5) Ag/Beef industry is getting old – need a plan to bring in the
next generation. It will involve moving capital. 6) Come up with someone with common
sense that doesn't keep changing what they want. 7) How to make it profitable to bring young
people into ag to make it comparable to the urban sector – money, life styles, satisfaction. 8)
Continue this type of farm meeting. 9) More clarity in guidelines for compliance. Legislative
assistance for urban-rural relationships. 10) Help in developing NITCH Markets and startups.
11) The general public needs to know more about livestock ag. Bankers need to be more
educated in livestock in my area. 10,000 acre farms are not the answer. 12) New technology
of equipment to help farmers and keep DNR people away. Change laws to make more easy
to understand. 13) Help feedlots with nutrient tests of manure as far as P&K values to be able
to arrive at a value to sell to grain farmers in place of commercial fertilizer.

Cass – Concern was expressed about the loss of rural influence (both political and social) in state
decision making and policy development. Along with leadership development, concern was
expressed about acceptance of leadership from younger leaders. Entrenched leadership is
sometimes looking for new blood, but unwilling to release control. Personal community
involvement and responsibility (beyond self) was raised as another community development
concern. When the culture has shifted away from "meetings" and "belonging to groups," how
do we nurture responsibility for community needs?

Davis – More forage activities; Canadian farmers; Amish.
Decatur – A couple of comments about developing bio-economy-bio-diesel in particular.
Franklin – Not in favor of eliminating subsidies for farmers; urban sprawl; Farm Bill/Farm
Policy; Reduce farmer dependence on subsidies.
Fremont – One council member felt strongly that DNR was suppressing economic activity in
Fremont County. He cited livestock restrictions, E-85 pump restrictions, and river concerns.
Others felt a lack of leadership in the county.
Harrison – 1) Important issues or opportunities affecting ANR: aging population of farmers and
land owners; cash rent on row crop are increasing to the point that only the large can
compete; young people cannot afford to enter into row crop farming; start-up farmers having
to compete with investors when trying to acquire land; CRP land coming into the mix. 2)
Which needs should ISU ANR focus on or develop: CRP payments to support cow/calf
expansion in county (Congressman King's idea); opportunity to use Extension livestock resources to help cow/calf producers expand, or better yet provide information to new producers; bio fuels and bi-product development; markets for diversified agriculture products (grapes, organics, etc.); teach general business skills for value added producers; crop marketing strategies; farm management strategies as fuel prices and input prices continue to rise; data base of farmers who desire to share equipment purchases in order to compete with more efficient operations; CRP going directly into organic production, with fragile soils left in grazing and possible organic beef operations; use of manure as economic viable alternative to commercially available forms.

Henry – Women own 47% of Iowa's farmland. Principle operators of 6,000 farms.
Howard – Business management vs. producer management. How to get the next generation of farming. We need to attract families back to Iowa.
Mahaska – Keeping Iowa land, Iowa land. (Mahaska)
Monona – Question came up about raising meat goats; estate planning/transfer through gifting.
Monroe – CRP reenrollment, converting to crop; recreational landowners; leasing land for hunters.

O'Brien – Look at Barn Quilts in O'Brien County. Look at rural/urban mixes or tours to agriculture production sites.
Page – Need to take local raw materials and produce an end product.
Plymouth – A specific concern is how the Avian virus protection plan would affect an industry like Wells Dairy.
Shelby – More emphasis on increasing percent of organic acres, farmers, etc.
Taylor – When setting program priorities, please don't forget production Agriculture. We know budget constraints are tough, but loss of specialists to support production Ag programming hurts.
Van Buren – CRP reenrollment, converting to crop, wildlife; recreational landowners; leasing land for hunters; organic farming; connecting out-of-state landowners with local farmers; increasing fertilizer and energy costs; less pesticide use (ICM).
Washington – Developmental pressure on fragile low ground. All of these topics are important.
Wright – There are fewer producers and big capital in farming. Clean water and air are important. Transferring of land agriculture assets.
Growing Iowa's BioEconomy (13)
Clinton, Dallas, Des Moines, Linn, Marion, Muscatine, Polk, Scott, Story, Wapello, Warren, West Pottawattamie, Sioux

Discussion on major increase in ethanol production and DDG livestock feeds. (Marion)

Economic Development: Agriculture (10)
Clinton, Dallas, Dubuque, Linn, Marion, Muscatine, Polk, Sioux, Story, Wapello

Concern about expiring CRP contracts in 2007-2010; concern about farmer knowledge of business management and marketing skills. (Marion)
Diversification and value-added. (Muscatine)

Beginning Farmers and the Next Generation of Agriculturists (9)
Clinton, Dubuque, Lee, Marion, Sioux, Story, Wapello, Warren, Woodbury

Aging farmers, demographics of farm ownership and management; affordable lifestyles for farm income. (Marion)
We are losing the older generation. How can the younger generation afford to farm? (Sioux)

New Agricultural Enterprises, Opportunities, and Linkages (9)
Dallas, Des Moines, Dubuque, Lee, Linn, Marion, Polk, Warren, West Pottawattamie

Rural/Urban Communication and Relationships (8)
Clinton, Des Moines, Dubuque, Lee, Polk, Story, Warren, Woodbury

Entrepreneurship Development (7)
Dallas, Des Moines, Linn, Polk, Scott, Warren, Woodbury

The New Rural Iowa (4)
Dallas, Lee, Muscatine, West Pottawattamie

Farmers with off-farm jobs; Hispanic women. (Muscatine)

Natural Resources and Environmental Stewardship (4)
Lee, Linn, Muscatine, Sioux

Air and water quality. (Muscatine)
Food Safety and Security (4)
*Clinton, Des Moines, Muscatine, Sioux*

Bio-security and certification. (Muscatine)

Other Needs (1)
*West Pottawattamie*

Water quality. (West Pottawattamie)

Serving Iowans and New Audiences (1)
*Dubuque*

Leadership Development (0)

Comments:

Dubuque – Great concern about how government crops programs hinder ag development; Leadership of Master Gardeners from state level needs much improvement.
Scott – E-85 gas stations; farmer's market; acreages.
Wapello – Beef I.O. will we have to address this before long?
West Pottawattamie – Need to get more information to public on use of biofuels. Water quality education for landowners so they understand why conservation practices are required. Need a strong ag education component for schools. More education for schools on natural resources.
Woodbury – Entrepreneurship key for Woodbury County.
Other Groups*

**Beginning Farmers and the Next Generation of Agriculturists (14)**
Youth programming, more alternatives to young farmers, business arrangements. (Clarke)
We are interested in keeping the farm in the family; interested in young people having a choice or opportunity to farm. Encourage ISU to do more to make Beginning Farmer programs and resources better?? accessible. Specific ideas and suggestions: low interest loans; assist beginners to know laws on building; manure permits, develop a support system; look for ways to link retirees with beginners. (O'Brien/Osceola Dairy Women Peer Group)
This is apparent with assisting families in passing the farm from one generation to the next. With the capital required, how can we assist new young farmers that are not inheriting a farm in start-up? (Sioux Ag Chamber)
There are a couple of issues – land availability and land acquisition. More tax incentives are needed to encourage retiring farmers to transfer land to beginning farmers. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)
Definitely need to get another generation started – and a way to "fund" their starting up! (NW Iowa Sheep Producers Assn.)

**Economic Development: Agriculture (14)**
Maximize forage utilization, network to more producer. (Clarke)
Improving and maintaining cattle and pasture management. (Decatur)
This issue extends beyond just agriculture. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)
Planned development in terms of number of processing plants and facilities. (Sioux County Pro-Ag Lenders)

**Growing Iowa’s BioEconomy (13)**
Feeding co-products, new technologies. (Clarke)
Value-added to raw commodities. Bio-diesel development. (Decatur)
There is a lot of interest concerning renewable fuels. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)
This should be the #1 way Iowa will be creating new jobs and products for what we grow. (NW Iowa Sheep Producers Assn.)

**New Agricultural Enterprises, Opportunities, and Linkages (10)**
There is a new culture in Sioux County with linkages. Examples are swine (power washing businesses, pig haulers, vaccination crews) and ethanol plants (hauling mash, construction). (Sioux Ag Chamber)
This may give beginning farmers a chance to get started. Focus on this issue will help grow more than one sector of the community. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)
Natural Resources and Environmental Stewardship (10)
CRP, loss of pastureland, environmental laws, grazing restrictions, predators of livestock.
(Clarke)
Keeping fragile, erodible land in conserving uses such as grazing and hay, especially with CRP release. Encourage conservation practices and watershed approaches. (Decatur)
How Sioux County is viewed is important. Ag people need to be pro-active. With less than 2% of the population in production ag, we need to focus on how we can live with the regulations. Odor is a critical issue, but can be managed. (Sioux County Ag Chamber)
With DNR, it is hard to keep up on the regulations. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)

Rural/Urban Communication and Relationships (3)
We need a good relationship with urban people as their population is larger than the farm population. Public perception of agriculture has changed, and there is a need for education.
The public needs to know the importance of agriculture and how it affects the area and local community. (Sioux County Farm Bureau)
City people on acreages need to realize they are still in the country there will be odors, etc. (NW Iowa Sheep Producers Assn.)
Educate real estate agents about the issues. Want ISU to know that we, as farm owners, are already involved in communicating with non-farm neighbors. We are sensitive to odor issues during Fall manure spreading. Examples - paying attention to holidays, neighbors' laundry days. (Osceola & O'Brien County Dairy Women Peer Group)

Food Safety and Security (3)
Quality assurance, national I.D., source verification. (Clarke)
Bio-security and bio-terrorism are important. Need to get on with premise identification and the national animal identification system. Source and age verification are issues. Who will hold the data from these programs? Is there a role for ISU? There is a need for uniformity in these management systems and reporting. Is this a potential opportunity for an entrepreneurial business? (Sioux County Ag Chamber)

The New Rural Iowa (2)
Loss of pasture and farmland to recreational uses, poor communication between acreage owners and farmers. (Clarke)

Entrepreneurship Development (1)
Group surprised to learn Iowa was 49th. This may be more of a problem in other parts of the state versus Sioux County. For instance, Sioux County has linkage businesses such as power washing, grid sampling, welding and repair. However, it might be a problem with retail in Sioux County. (Sioux Ag Chamber)
I have tried to start a direct meat. I couldn't find a processor that was state inspected, let alone federal inspected that would process lamb. (NW Iowa Sheep Producers Assn.)
Leadership Development (1)

Other Needs (please identify) (1)
Risk management and survival with poor crop prices, high land rent, and declining government payments. (Decatur)

Serving Iowans and New Audiences (0)

Comments:
Black Hawk – All of these choices are economics – entrepreneurship, new ventures, off-farm ventures. Growing Iowa's livestock industry to utilize the by-products of ethanol and soy diesel plants. Additional or repeated efforts to help farmers with marketing. All of these look good – some overlap.
Clarke – Facilities, new varieties of forages, closing of local FSA offices.
Decatur County Cattlemen's Organization – Weed and insect infestation problems; EQIP funding needs to be increased and maintained; concern of increased purchase of land for recreational purposes and outside investors competition for land.
Iowa Lakes Controlled Grazing Board – Production agriculture must be allowed to produce to feed the world! Legislature must control Iowa DNR and stop taking our pastures away from their wildlife enjoyment and removing land from the local tax base.
Northwest Iowa Sheep Producers Association – 1) New agricultural enterprises, opportunities and linkages; and Beginning Farms and the next generation of agriculturalists are most important education of the young. 2) Try to encourage next generation farmers to stay on the farm. 3) Need to remember the importance of livestock in Iowa. 4) 4-H program to develop leaders and keep youth focused on good activities. 5) Rural/urban is important, but the relationships should not always be in favor of expanding urban population. Production agriculture must still be allowed to produce. 6) While attention to new rural residents must be paid, the extension service has been the exclusive sound of information in improving my sheep operation. There is a strong benefit to my operation from this programming. Keep benefiting Iowa's current producers. 7) Continue to provide education and training for those individuals associated with sheep production. 8) I have observed a woman that states she has personally inspected every farm that meat comes from to a Farmers Market. She has never raised an animal, couldn't do it on a bet.
O'Brien & Osceola County Dairy Women Peer Group – Lenders need to better understand the dairy industry.
Sioux County Ag Chamber – Sioux County has a growing Hispanic population. This group needs to know how important their jobs are to the economy. Women are playing a bigger role in ag, because they are running the finances. We need more research on ethanol by-product storage.
Sioux County Farm Bureau – Farms need to get bigger to survive, but what does this do for the small or beginning farmer. One way farms could get bigger would be if farmers got together as a group. Then, they would have more influence on politics, marketing, and buying inputs at a lower cost. This might be one way to save the family farm. Japan is bar-coding meat that traces it back to the producer's farm.
*Other Groups:

*Black Hawk County Agribusiness Leaders
*Calhoun/Sac County Beef Producers
*Carroll County SWCD
*Clarke County Cattlemen's Board
*Clay County Growers Committee
*Decatur County Cattlemen's Organization
*Dickinson County Pro-Ag Lenders
*Iowa Lakes Controlled Grazing Board
*Northwest Iowa Sheep Producers Association 6-County Area from Dennis DeWitt
*O'Brien/Osceola County Dairy Women's Peer Group
*Palo Alto County Pro-Ag Lenders
*RC&D 4-County Area from Todd Vagts
*Sioux County Ag Chamber
*Sioux County Farm Bureau Board of Directors
*Sioux County Pro-Ag Lenders
*Woodbury County Pro-Ag Lenders