



Ag News Information & Resources

February 2024

Fayette County ISU Extension & Outreach

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<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/fayette/>

Extension Links

Ag Decision Maker
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/>

Beef Center
<http://www.iowabeefcenter.org/>

Dairy Team
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam/>

ISU Nutrient Reduction Strategies
<http://www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu/>

Iowa State Research Farms
<http://farms.ag.iastate.edu/farms>

Iowa Water Quality Initiative
<http://www.cleanwateriowa.org/>

Manure Management
<http://www.agronext.iastate.edu/mmag/>

Pesticide Management
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/peep/>

Pork Center
<http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/>

Iowa Land Values Rose Higher in 2023, but at Slower Pace

Contact: Nathan Cook, Center for Ag & Rural Development, 515-294-3809, nmcook@iastate.edu and Rabail Chendio, Extension Economist, 515-294-6181, rchendio@iastate.edu

Iowa's farmland values rose again, albeit at a slower pace than the last two years. The annual [Iowa State University Land Value Survey \(https://go.iastate.edu/XZPAMT\)](https://go.iastate.edu/XZPAMT) found that farmland values increased 3.7% or \$424, to \$11,835 per acre. The modest increase this year follows a 17% increase in 2022 and a near-record 29% increase in 2021. The nominal value of an acre of farmland is again higher this year than at any point since Iowa State began surveying values in 1941. When adjusting for inflation, the 2023 average value surpasses 2022's inflation-adjusted values by 0.5%.

Rabail Chandio, an assistant professor and extension economist at Iowa State, said many of the factors behind the large surge in values last year supported the increase this year as well.

"Interest rates were lower through the first half of the year, commodity prices were still elevated, crop yields were a positive surprise despite the weather challenges throughout the growing season, cash and credit availability remained ample and allowed farmers to stay aggressive in the land market, and investor demand grew stronger nudged by inflation concerns and lack of alternative investment options," she said.

The Federal Reserve has used interest rate hikes to help curb inflation rates that ballooned from mid-2021 through 2022; however, Chandio said that the pace of those hikes has been tempered.

"The goal is to control inflation without triggering a recession, a strategy that has proven successful in 2023, and we hope to see maintained stability through 2024," said Chandio, who manages the survey. She also noted that since the economy has not reached the 2% inflation target, she anticipates future interest rate increases. Future rate increases will continue to slow the growth in farmland values, but not immediately.

"It takes a couple of years for interest rates to be reflected in farmland values," Chandio said. "The impact of the aggressive interest rate hikes of 2022 is expected to be felt more strongly in 2024 and beyond, resulting in much more modest growth or even decreases in land values in the coming years."

Commodity prices were a commonly cited positive influence on this year's farmland values. Chandio said they were elevated earlier in the year due to weather and geopolitical uncertainties, but they have decreased as of the end of the year. However, she said, "In terms of their influence on land values, they had a more positive impact on the land markets this year than a negative one." Chandio also noted farmers having ample cash reserves as an influence on land values this year. She attributed farmers' recent accumulation of cash reserves to high net farm incomes.

Read more at <https://go.iastate.edu/MJTRZV>

Commercial and Private Pesticide Training Courses

Contact: Josh Michel, Extension Agronomist, 319-523-2371, jjmichel@iastate.edu

In-Person Commercial Pesticide Applicator Continuing Instruction Courses:

Commercial Ag Weed, Insect, and Plant Disease Management (CCA CEU's Available), Categories 1A, 1B, and 1C
February 14, 9 am, Fayette County Extension Office, Fayette

Seed Treatment (CCA CEU's Available), Categories 4
February 21, 9 am, Fayette County Extension Office, Fayette

Certified Handlers, Category H
March 20, 9 am, Fayette County Extension Office, Fayette

Ornamental and Turfgrass Applicators, Categories 3O, 3T, and 3OT
March 28, 9 am, Fayette County Extension Office, Fayette—**NOTE: DATE CHANGE**

In-Person Private Pesticide Applicator Continuing Instruction Courses:

February 26 — 1:30 pm & 6:30 pm, Fayette County Extension Office

Call the Fayette County Extension Office at 563.425.3331 to register for both commercial and private trainings.

Live-streamed Private Pesticide Applicator Continuing Instruction Courses:

February 20, 1 pm - <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16910>

March 12, 1 pm - <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16912>

April 2, 6 pm - <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16916>

Please note that registration closes at 9 am the day prior to each program. Live-stream training is \$35. Contact PSEP at 515-294-1122 with any questions.

February Feedlot Webinar Series

Contact: Denise Schwab, Extension Beef Specialist, 319-472-4739, dschwab@iastate.edu



Just in time for some mid-winter learning, the Iowa Beef Center is hosting a five-part, feedlot webinar series beginning Feb. 1. Iowa State University Extension Beef Specialist, Erika Lundy-Woolfolk is organizing the series that will be held every Thursday in February. The dates, topics and presenters are:

- **Feb. 1. Understanding the value of feedlot necropsies**, Terry J. Engelken, ISU VDPAM professor
- **Feb. 8. Pros and cons of facility types**, Dan Loy, former ISU extension feedlot specialist/former IBC director
- **Feb. 15. Beef cattle market outlook and managing price risk**, Lee Schulz, ISU extension livestock economist
- **Feb. 22. Managing foot health in the feedyard**, Dan Thomson, former ISU beef specialist
- **Feb. 29. ISU Research update: beef x dairy project**. Garland Dahlke, IBC research scientist

Sessions will be hosted through the Webex platform at no charge to attendees, and all begin at noon. The presentation portion will run approximately 30 min. with the additional time available for questions and discussion from the attendees. All sessions will be recorded and those recordings eventually posted to the [Iowa Beef Center YouTube channel](#). Please register (<https://go.iastate.edu/OXYHTM>) for the sessions you want to attend.

Farm Transitions Conference February 8-9 at the Gateway Hotel in Ames

Contact: Kitt Tovar Jensen, Center for Iowa Law & Taxation, 515-294-5608, kwtovar@iastate.edu



Whether you want to begin farming, you are looking to transition your farm to the next generation, or you are a producer somewhere in between, this conference is for you! Come learn about opportunities, pitfalls to avoid, and tools required for a successful farm transition. To register, visit <https://go.iastate.edu/AEULQW>

For more information, visit the [Beginning Farmer website](https://beginningfarmer.iastate.edu/) (<https://beginningfarmer.iastate.edu/>).

BQA Certification Session at Arlington Event Center February 12

Contact: Denise Schwab, Extension Beef Specialist, 319-472-4739, dschwab@iastate.edu



Be sure to check your BQA certificate for expiration and plan attend a recertification training to maintain your sales status. A BQA session will be held at the Arlington Event Center at 6:30 pm on February 12. To register, contact the Fayette County Extension Office at 563.425.3331 or email dkahler@iastate.edu. For the most current list of trainings scheduled see <https://www.iabeef.org/cattlemens-corner/iowa-bqa>

Dairy Goat Webinar

Contact: Jennifer Bentley, Extension Dairy Specialist, 563-382-2949, jbentley@iastate.edu



The Iowa State University Extension and Outreach dairy team will continue its dairy goat webinar series in 2024. All webinars will be from noon to 1:15 p.m.

Topics will include timely updates on nutrition, biosecurity, improving milk quality, plus disease and health concerns. The **February 16 topic will be** "Neonatal diarrhea in goat kids", speaker Paul Plummer, Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

There is no fee to attend the program; however, registration is required. Register in advance at <https://go.iastate.edu/2024DAIRYGOATWEBINARS> or contact Jennifer Bentley, dairy specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach, at jbentley@iastate.edu or 563-382-2949.

Certified Commercial Pesticide Applicator Prep Course to Be Offered in February

Contact: Josh Michel, Extension Agronomist, 319-523-2371, jjmichel@iastate.edu



ISU Extension and Outreach, in partnership with Iowa Central Community College is offering a 4, half-day course to help potential commercial applicators prepare to take the commercial pesticide applicator exam which includes the CORE, 1A Weeds, 1B Insects and 1C Diseases. This course will be held at the ICCC East Campus located at 2031 Quail Ave, Fort Dodge. Course registration is \$749. More information can be found at <https://go.iastate.edu/SIUSCZ>.

Regional Pork Conference to Be Held at Nashua

Contact: Mark Storlie, Extension Swine Specialist, 563-425-3331, mstorlie@iastate.edu



The Iowa Pork Producers Association, the Iowa Pork Industry Center and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach swine specialists will host the meetings at five Iowa locations Feb. 19-22. All sessions are from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Local location is **Borlaug Learning Center, Nashua on Wednesday, February 21**. Topics and speakers include:

- National Pork Board Updates by Dr. Brett Kaysen, senior vice president of producer and state engagement
- Pork Market Outlook by Dr. Lee Schulz, ISU, Extension Livestock Economist
- Hot Topics in Swine Health by Dr. Chris Rademacher, ISU Swine Extension Veterinarian

Free PQA Plus® producer certification training sessions will be held prior to each conference. Training will be hosted from 9:00 a.m. to noon at each location.

The regional conferences are free for those who pre-register. Pre-register for the conference and/or certification training at www.iowapork.org/regionalconferences

Advanced Calving Clinic at Heartland Acres Rescheduled for February 26

Contact: Denise Schwab, Extension Beef Specialist, 319-472-4739, dschwab@iastate.edu



An Advanced Calving Clinic which will offer hands-on classroom sessions to help cattlemen prepare for the upcoming calving season has been rescheduled for **February 26 from 4:30-9:30 pm** at Heartland Acres Event Center in Independence. Session topics cover essentials from conception to calving, including nutrition basics during gestation and early lactation, assisting at calving, working with your local veterinarian, and baby calf health and care.

Please pre-register to Kara at 319-334-7161 or karav@iastate.edu

Resources of Interest

The following is a list of resources you may find helpful.

Better Farm Accounting, better known as the "orange books" are very popular this time of year. Fayette County Extension has a similar book at not cost. "Better Farm Accounting" is available through Amazon at <https://go.iastate.edu/SYUXBZ>

Estimated Cost of Crop Production in Iowa - 2024 (<https://go.iastate.edu/NVRLUE>)

Iowa Farmland Rental Rates (<https://go.iastate.edu/ZGTIFP>)

Cash Rental Rates for Iowa 2023 Survey (<https://go.iastate.edu/VP8200>)

Farm Financial Planning Program Offers Personalized Insight for Producers

Contacts: Ann Johanns, Department of Economics, 515-337-2766, aholste@iastate.edu

As farmers review their farm financial situation this winter, a handy resource is available from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

The Farm Financial Planning Program (<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis/>) offers in-person experts who can offer one-on-one financial counseling, a computerized analysis of the farm business and referral to other extension programs or outside services.

Farm Financial Planning is for anyone who wants to understand a complete picture of their farm financial situation. It helps take the guesswork out of whether a change would increase profitability and improve cash flow. Using **FINPACK software**, the analysis may provide a more in-depth evaluation of the farm business, which many lenders are requiring before they will extend further credit.

Eight associates make up the Farm Financial Program team with ISU Extension and Outreach.

Leslie Miller became an associate in 2021, after retiring from a career in the ag lending industry that dates back to the 1980s. She relies on her experience in the industry to help farmers analyze their situation and pursue their goals.

“What I enjoy most is helping people reach goals that they want to reach so they can have a successful farming operation,” she said. “I like helping them to accomplish their goals and work through their problems.”

The service is free for the client, and the financial associate can become as involved as the client wishes.

The associate offers a big picture look at the farm, and it's up to the farmer to make specific changes and to contact the specialists who can help. While working with financial associates is important, it's equally important to follow up with the specialists the associate

recommends.

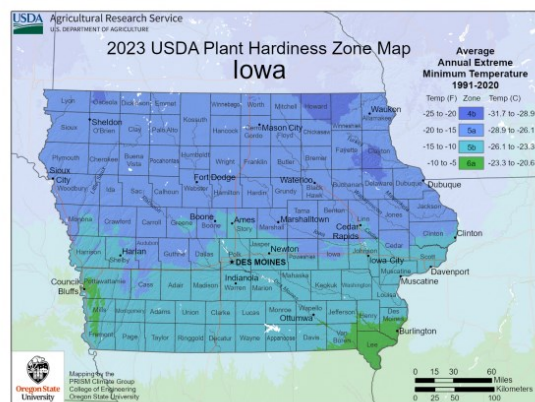
Miller said farm profitability is an ongoing concern, as crop prices continue to drop and land prices continue to increase. She is also helping farmers with the tough times in the swine industry.

She helps producers look closely at their cash flow projections and scrutinize the different options for going forward. Sometimes it's transitioning to another owner or operator, or identifying an opportunity to expand.

“We run multiple alternatives and compare them side-by-side,” she said. “A borrower can look at those numbers and see what the impact of different decisions might be. Our goal is to consider the ‘what ifs’ for each decision.”

Farmers can locate a Farm Financial Planning Program associate in their area by contacting the Fayette County Extension Office 563.425.3331 or by visiting the Farm Financial Planning Program associate site. (<https://go.iastate.edu/NYFOYW>)

Updated Version of Plant Zone Hardiness Map



A newly updated version of the **Plant Zone Hardiness Map** (<https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>), a key resource that informs the planting decisions of gardeners and growers across the country, was recently released by the United States Department of Agriculture. The new map provides a more precise picture of the average annual minimum temperature conditions across the state thanks to GIS technology.

According to Aaron Steil, consumer horticulture specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, it shows an average temperature shift of about one-quarter zone (about 2.5 F), placing more of the state in zone 5.

In this article (<https://go.iastate.edu/BOFX0Y>), experts with ISU Extension and Outreach discuss the change and provide insight into what it means.

Upcoming Events

Feb 1 — Confinement Site Manure Applicator Training, 1:30 pm, Extension Office

Feb 7 & 21 — Cattle in the Green, 5:30 pm, Postville

Feb 12 — BQA, 6:30 pm, Arlington Event Center

Feb 13, 20 & 27 — Boots in the Barn, 1 pm & 6:30 pm, Edgewood

Feb 14 — Commercial Ag CIC, 9 am, Extension Office

Feb 15, 22 & 29 — Boots in the Barn, 1 pm & 6:30 pm, Decorah

Feb 20 — Extension Council Meeting, 7:30 pm, Extension Office

Feb 26 — Private Pesticide Training, 1:30 pm & 6:30 pm, Extension Office

Feb 28 — IDALS Testing, 9 am—3 pm, Pre-registration required