IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach




Ag News Information & Resources September 2023

Fayette County
ISU Extension & Outreach

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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/immag/

Pesticide Management
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/psep/

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

Fall Forestry Field Days at Yellow River Forest & Jesup

Contact: *Billy Beck, Extension Forestry, 515-294-8837, wjbeck@iastate.edu*

Field days will feature educational and networking opportunities

Iowans can learn more about the state's forestry resources by attending a field day this fall. Forestry Field Days will be held from now through October, featuring private and public forests, with presentations from state specialists and landowners.

"All events will offer incredible learning and networking opportunities," said Billy Beck, forestry specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. "Attendees will meet and interact with other landowners and forest stewards, while also getting timely updates from state forestry associations."

The events are geared toward high school age and up, and Beck said attendees can easily make a weekend trip out of the field day by securing local camping or lodging. Most of the field days require registration to help with the meal count and to ensure sufficient materials, so be sure and register in advance.

The Yellow River State Forest field day will focus on forest change and how foresters guide this change to achieve a range of management objectives that are of interest to private woodland owners and stewards. Participants will see a "chrono-sequence" of forest management results, by visiting forest stands that are 5, 10 and 50 years post-management.

The agenda and registration information are available online at https://go.iastate.edu/3M2PRB. Preregister by September 11.

The Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year field day will be held at a tree farm near Jesup.

This is the annual event where the Iowa Tree Farm Program recognizes the Iowa Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. The event is hosted in partnership with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Buchanan County office of ISU Extension and Outreach.

The site offers exceptional examples of forest management to achieve wood, water quality, recreation and wildlife habitat goals.

Details and registration are available online at https://go.iastate.edu/GMLD5T. Preregister by October 10 to reserve a meal.

Preserve the Taste of Summer—Fermentation Workshop

Contact: *Jill Weber, Human Sciences Specialist, Food and Health, 319-234-6811, jrweber@iastate.edu*

Learn all the basics of small batch fermentation and making sauerkraut at a food preservation workshop on September 13 from 5:30 pm -7:30 pm. The workshop with be held at the Fayette County Fairgrounds in the Dance Pavilion and is part of ISU Extension and Outreach's Preserve the Taste of Summer program.

Participants can register for the workshop at: https://go.iastate.edu/7ZLJ18 Cost is $20.00 for the two-hour workshop. Need based scholarships are available.

Dairy Goat Webinar Topics Announced

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

Dairy goat producers and those involved with the industry can learn more about important industry topics during a series of four upcoming webinars. All sessions run from noon to 1:15 p.m. Central time, and are part of the year-long webinar series organized by Jenn Bentley, dairy specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

"The upcoming sessions will focus on best management practices from producers and veterinarians," said Bentley. "Getting producer perspectives will be valuable to active dairy goat producers who are looking to improve their management or housing."

Dates and topics:

- Sept. 21 – "Producer Perspectives," panel participants to be determined.
- Oct. 26 – "What Do We Know about Dry Treating Dairy Goats?," Michelle Buckley, post-doctoral associate at Iowa State University.
- Nov. 16 – "Dairy Goat Cost of Production, Marlene Paibomesai," dairy specialist, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
- Dec. 21 – "Milk Quality Investigations," Cathy Bauman, assistant professor, Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph, Ontario.

There is no fee to attend a session; however, registration is required. Register in advance for this meeting at https://go.iastate.edu/2023DAIRYGOATWEBINARS. Registrants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Information will also be provided about future webinars as dates and topics are announced.

Talkin' Crap Podcast Features Latest in Manure Science and Technology

Contact: *Daniel Andersen, Extension Ag & Bio Systems Engineering Specialist, 515-294-4210, dsa@iastate.edu*

Livestock farmers and those with an interest in the manure industry can expand their knowledge of current issues by listening to the Talkin' Crap podcast available at (https://www.extension.iastate.edu/immag/podcast).

Hosted by manure experts with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, this creative and yet practical program addresses the science, technology and best practices in manure management.

Three episodes are available so far, covering "Manure Systems and Carbon Footprints," "Manure and Spill Response in Iowa," and "Circularity and Systems Thinking in Manure Management."

"Technology is changing, and with it, the way we farm," said Andersen. "Each episode is a chance to recognize what is happening in the world of manure and help direct the conversation to understand some of the nuances and opportunities that are more important as we demand circular and sustainable food systems." Topics discussed during the podcast will help farmers and manure science experts continue to improve their usage of manure.

"Iowa has done a good job recycling manures," said Andersen. "We want to recognize that, but also push current practice adoption to ensure we continue to be a world leader in the efficiency with which we produce agricultural products."

Subscribe to the Talkin' Crap podcast and stay tuned for new episodes. Follow on Twitter @DrManure or visit website at www.extension.iastate.edu/immag

Conservation Practices: EQIP and CSP Cost-Share and Stacking Carbon Payments

Contact: *Alejandro Plastina, Extension Economist, 515-294-6160, plastina@iastate.edu*

While carbon farming is a relatively new topic, most farmers are well aware that there are multiple carbon initiatives trying to enroll aces in conservation practices like cover crops and no-till to sequester carbon or reduce the carbon intensity of agricultural commodities.

As a group, these private, voluntary carbon initiatives offer farmers a large menu of options to contract with them and get paid based on the implemented practices, the carbon sequestered through those practices, or the carbon intensity of the commodities produced.

For example, some initiatives compensate farmers at a rate of $5 per acre to implement cover crops, while others pay $15 per metric ton of carbon dioxide sequestered in the field through cover crops. Since farms in the Corn Belt sequester, on average, about 0.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide per acre with cover crops, a payment of $15 per metric ton of carbon dioxide would be equivalent to $4.50 per acre. Another modality to incentivize carbon farming is to compensate participating farmers with price premiums for "low-carbon" commodities. For example, participating farmers might receive 2.5 cents per bushel as a price premium for "low-carbon" corn, if the corn crop was grown with cover crops or in a no-till system. A farm with an average yield of 200 bushels of corn per acre would receive a "low-carbon" premium equivalent to $5 per acre.

The goal of carbon payments is to induce farmers and ranchers to implement conservation practices that reduce and sequester greenhouse gas emissions in a way that can be verified and certified, so those efforts can be later monetized by selling carbon credits or low-carbon intensity commodities.

Farmers have multiple motivations to adopt conservation practices beyond the economic calculation, but knowing their implementation costs is a great starting point to make informed decisions.

While the USDA incentivizes the adoption of conservation practices through many programs, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program or EQIP, and the Conservation Stewardship Program or CSP are the largest programs for working lands. These programs provide technical and financial support to qualifying farms, and are intended to help farmers address local resource concerns like the degradation of the soil, water, air, plant, animal, or energy resources. Learn more about these programs in AgDM File A1-39 **Financial Support for Conservation Practices: EQIP and CSP** (https://go.iastate.edu/1IVIF7).

Unfortunately, there is no fast and easy rule to identify profitable carbon farming opportunities. Net returns depend on multiple variables. Ag Decision Maker File A1-78 **Net Returns to Carbon Farming** (https://go.iastate.edu/ABYNND) can help agricultural producers organize the information and think through the agronomic and economic variables affecting the net returns to carbon farming. For further information go to https://go.iastate.edu/DINNVE

Manage the Health of Early Weaned Beef Calves with These Tips

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

As forage resources dwindle in times of drought, producers may need to consider early weaning options for the cow herd. Early weaning is designed to save body condition on the females by ending lactation and decreasing nutritional requirements. Getting each cow to a body condition score of 5.5-6 by calving is a key step in establishing reproductive success for the following year.

Weaning needs to be well thought out to ease the transition. Stress associated with less-than-optimal pen conditions will be amplified in early-weaned calves. Pens that are too wet or too dry can lead to poor performance and increased sickness. Areas containing tall weeds or seed heads can drive pink-eye outbreaks in weaned calves. Producers should watch the weather to avoid weaning in times of extreme heat stress. There are multiple extension publications on using fence-line weaning to reduce stress and improve postweaning weight gain in calves.

Early-weaned calves have different nutritional requirements and more variation in feed intake compared to their traditionally-weaned contemporaries. Introducing creep feed prior to weaning may ease this transition. Enlisting the help of an experienced nutritionist will help avoid feeding upsets while maintaining needed performance. Although early weaning can extend pasture use by the cow herd, the calves are growing and require high quality feed.

Managing the health of these calves involves working with your veterinarian to select the correct vaccines and timing of delivery. One of the main concerns when building a vaccination program for young calves is the level of maternal antibody that remains from when they received colostrum as a newborn. There are indications that these antibodies may interfere with vaccine response and explains why your veterinarian may recommend intranasal vaccines for these younger calves. After calves reach 2 months of age, there is less concern with this interference and injectable products should work well.

Early weaning can be a profitable way to stretch pasture and boost cow performance, but it does require adequate planning with your veterinarian and nutritionist to minimize weaning stress and optimize calf performance. Read more of the article at https://go.iastate.edu/JI5SZ6

Seedling Protection Using Tree Cages and Shelters

Contact: *Billy Beck, Extension Forestry, 515-294-8837, wjbeck@iastate.edu*

If you're considering establishing a new tree planting in spring 2024, late summer 2023 is the ideal time to start planning. Also – congratulations, you've obviously realized the potential for windbreaks and other forestry practices (e.g., riparian forest buffers) to add value to your property and/or overall agricultural enterprise! Ordering seedlings is easy – protecting them once in the ground is a different story. A well thought out plan for seedling protection is one thing I see forgotten far too often in young tree plantings. With the amount of labor and cost that go into planting tree seedlings, protecting them from deer and rabbit damage, herbicide drift, and other factors is absolutely critical.

Tree shelters (also known as tree tubes) and cages are two common means of seedling protection. Both can be highly effective if implemented correctly, with careful consideration of seedling species, site, and the specific damage you are looking to discourage. Both have pros and cons, and selection will depend on your specific situation and budget. **Your professional forester can assist in making this decision** (https://go.iastate.edu/AQOQYJ). An initial question I often ask is "what critters am I protecting these seedlings from?". A quick assessment of existing damage and/or browse evidence on your property will help inform your strategy and material selection. Deer-browsed twigs have a torn/shredded appearance, while rabbit-browsed twigs have a clean-cut, angular appearance – as if pruners have been used.

Tree shelters: description and tips

Shelters, again – often referred to as "tree tubes", are lightweight, small-diameter, translucent, plastic sleeves that may range in height from 4-6' (Photo 1). A unique action of shelters, in addition to physical protection, is the creation of a "greenhouse" condition within the tube (i.e., warmer, more humid) that encourages rapid initial height growth. Shelters are held upright using (preferably) metal rods or T-posts. Shelters should be ventilated (perforated) to encourage seedlings to "harden off" in fall and prepare for the coming winter. It's advantageous to have a "rolled lip" top, which will protect young stems from damage (e.g., bark abrasion) during high winds. Shelters are designed to break down over time, as plastic is exposed to sunlight and temperature fluctuations. Conveniently, the breakdown often occurs at the proper time, when trees are tall enough, and bark thick enough, to withstand browse and/or other damage. Unfortunately, the abundant shards of old plastic can be quite unsightly.

Tree cages: description and tips

Cages take many forms and thus cost may vary widely. Cages offer opportunities for unique designs and material selection – often driven by budget. Cages are commonly constructed of metal mesh, and secured using (preferably) heavy-gauge rods or T-posts. Mesh size and gauge are one of the more important characteristics to consider. Heavy gauge with larger mesh size would be appropriate in areas with significant deer pressure.

Conversely, smaller mesh size and lighter-weight material would suffice in areas with heavy rabbit pressure. Often, we are protecting against both, so wrapping the base of large cages with small-mesh material offers added insurance. A detailed overview of deer protection methods may be viewed at this link (https://go.iastate.edu/B0TQP8)

Pros and cons of shelters and cages is available at (https://go.iastate.edu/CP29EZ)

Photo 1: Plastic tree shelter protecting native northern pecan seedling. Note the impressive height growth on this 3-year-old seedling, a result of the "greenhouse condition" created within the shelter. Ideally, metal support rod should extend at least 4/5 of tube height - budget and time prevented that in the above photo, and will need to be addressed in future growing seasons. Also note presence of mulch at base – critical for weed control, root insulation, and moisture retention.

Photo 2: Metal tree cage protecting native northern pecan seedling. Note, this seedling is the same age as the seedling in Photo 1! What this seedling lacks in initial height growth, it makes up for in superior wind firmness. This cage is too short and structurally weak for long-term protection against deer, and will need to be enhanced in a few years.

Upcoming Events

Sept 4 — Holiday — office closed

Sept 5 — Master Gardener Tour, Decorah

Sept 9 — Seed Saving Workshop, 10:30, Clermont

Sept 13 — Fermentation Workshop, 5:30 pm, Fairgrounds

Sept 16 — Seed Saving Workshop, 11 am, West Union

Sept 19 — Ext. Council, 7:30 pm,

Sept 20 — Agronomy in the Field, 5:30 pm, Castalia

Sept 26 — Stay Independent, 1 pm, Clermont