New Beginning Farmers Guide Has In-Depth Training Resources

Informational resource manual available from Iowa State
By Alice Topaloff, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 515-294-8530, topaloff@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa – “A Resource Guide for Beginning Farmers” (LF 0006) compiles dozens of existing training resources on everything from soil and composting to small farm equipment and whole farm planning, including information on food safety and seed saving. The guide is available from the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Online Store or the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture website.

The 48-page guide is divided into three parts: production practices, post-harvest handling, and business planning and basic farm finances. Each of the three segments contains modules covering different agriculture topics and is organized by learning objectives and includes a narrative, hands-on activities and links to worksheets and additional resources.

The publication also includes appendices listing useful organizations and programs that support beginning farmers and helpful contacts. Read more at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/new-beginning-farmers-guide-has-depth-training-resources.

Iowa Beef Center Director Column—Growing Iowa’s Beef Industry

By Dan Loy, IBC Director

Beef production is important to Iowa, adding over 6 billion dollars in economic activity on an annual basis. Iowa is a top-four cattle-feeding state marketing nearly 1.8 million head in 2014. And even though Iowa’s landscape seems to be dominated by row-crop agriculture there are still more than 900,000 beef cows making it one of the top 10 beef cow states as well. However, based on past history and a considerable resource base it is clear that the state has plenty of room for growth.

The cow-calf industry is beginning a national expansion and Iowa’s feedlot industry has quietly been gaining market share in recent years. In an effort to determine strategies for sustainable growth of Iowa’s beef sector, the Iowa Beef Center conducted two industry surveys in 2014. The surveys were designed to identify challenges and opportunities for sustainable growth of the Iowa beef sector, and summaries of these survey results, targeted to cattle feeders and cow-calf producers are available at no cost.

Read all of this column on the IBC website, http://www.iowabeefcenter.org/director.html.
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*By Angie Rieck-Hinz, ISU Extension Field Agronomist, 515-532-3453, Cell: 515-231-2830, amrieck@iastate.edu, Twitter: @nciacrops*

**Corn**—Corn Rootworm - Last Friday night returning home from Kamrar, and again on Tuesday night as I was returning home from Kanawha to my home near Story City. I was amazed by the number of northern corn rootworm beetles I was hitting. So much so, that it was a noticeable difference from just north of Blairsburg on Hwy 69, all the way to Story City. This area appears to be hit hard by extended diapause as evidenced when digging roots in corn following soybeans. Growers should start to consider management decisions for next year. You can read more about rootworm management in this article by Dr. Erin Hodgson, Corn Rootworm Management Update at [http://crops.extension.iastate.edu/cropnews/2015/08/corn-rootworm-management-update](http://crops.extension.iastate.edu/cropnews/2015/08/corn-rootworm-management-update).

Corn Aphids—I also had the opportunity to scout several fields with corn aphids. We currently don't have good thresholds for treatment once corn is past pollination, but Erin shares points to consider when thinking about treatment in Corn Aphids Are Spotted in Iowa at [http://crops.extension.iastate.edu/blog/erin-w-hodgson/corn-aphids-are-spotted-iowa](http://crops.extension.iastate.edu/blog/erin-w-hodgson/corn-aphids-are-spotted-iowa).

**Soybean**—Soybean Aphids - Most of our soybeans are at R5- Beginning seed. On average, once we reach the beginning stage of R5 it takes about 10 days until we reach R5.5. At this stage, research data suggests not to treat. If you have beans that have not yet reached this stage and you are experiencing soybean aphids, continue to scout by using the Speed Scouting, [http://www.ent.iastate.edu/dept/faculty/hodgson/files/ul/2009%20Speed%20Scouting%20blank%20form.pdf](http://www.ent.iastate.edu/dept/faculty/hodgson/files/ul/2009%20Speed%20Scouting%20blank%20form.pdf). The predicted hot temperatures through this weekend should also help knock down aphid populations.

I am starting to see more Sudden Death Syndrome show up in fields as well as I have received several multiple reports of White Mold. At this stage there are no management options for these diseases other than to continue to scout and evaluate fields and look at planting resistant varieties the next time you plant beans in those fields.

**Events**

*September 2*, 5-7:30 p.m. Conservation at Work Field Day at the Smeltzer Learning Farm near Otho. This field day will look at bioreactors, cover crops, wetlands and discuss the use of drones in ag. Tours of the farm will start at 4, dinner will be served by the Webster County Cattlemen at 5, the program will follow shortly, tours will continue after the program.

*September 3*, Northern Iowa Research Farm Association fall field day will start with registration at 9 a.m., the program will start at 9:30 a.m. Matt Schnabel, new farm superintendent will kick-off the field day with recent staff changes and a season review of the farm. Dr. Antonio Mallarino will discuss fall fertilizer options. Dr. Daren Mueller will highlight results of the soybean Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) research plots at the Kanawha farm, Paul Kassel will discuss crop development issues, management of northern corn rootworm extended diapause, and late season crop diseases, and Angie Rieck-Hinz will highlight benefits of cover crops on water quality. Lunch will be provided at the end of the plot tours. CCA credits will be offered. Activities will take place at the "south" farm, 1 mile south of Kanawha on county road R35.

*September 10*, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The Boone River Watershed is hosting a water quality field day at the Arliss Nielsen farm, 3150 Hancock, Ave, Woodstock, IA. This field day will focus on cover crops and drainage water management and impacts to water quality. The Iowa Soybean Association will provide a meal. The field day is open to all interested persons.

**Prairie Installations on a Working Farm: Fall Field Day**

*Contact: Ashley Kittle, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Ashley.kittle@uni.edu, (319) 273-3828*

The Fall Field Day will be held on Thursday, September 17, 2015, 9:00 am -12:30 pm, ISU Northeast Research Farm, Borlaug Learning Center, 3327 290th Street, Nashua, Iowa.

This demonstration workshop is hosted by the Tallgrass Prairie Center at the University of Northern Iowa as part of its Prairie on Farms project that is funded by a grant from the Leopold Center. It is a follow-up to an event held at the farm in June and will focus on practical uses of prairie for water quality improvement efforts and pollinator habitat, stand evaluation (comparison of an economy mix, diversity mix, and pollinator mix plantings, seedling ID, and how to determine if a planting was successful) and first year maintenance (weed control, and spot spraying techniques).

Who should attend: Technical service providers, producers, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, seed companies, decision makers, anyone interested in learning more about the benefits of prairie on a working farm.

Coffee and pastries will be served in the morning and lunch will be provided. There is no charge to attend this event, but registration is requested. Contact Ashley Kittle, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Ashley.kittle@uni.edu, (319) 273-3828.
Research Farm Late-Summer Field Days Focus on Crop Conditions
By Mark Honeyman, ISU Department of Animal Science, (515) 294-2160, honeyman@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa — Iowa State University Research and Demonstration Farms late-summer field days will cover crop issues heading into harvest. Anyone is welcome to attend Iowa State field days, which take place rain or shine. Field day topics generally cover corn and soybean production, including insect and weed management, soil fertility, tillage systems, water quality, planting dates, crop population, manure management and value-added crops.

On Aug. 19, the field day at the Northeast Research and Demonstration Farm near Nashua will begin at 1 p.m. The research farm is located at 3321 290th St., Nashua. After taking the Nashua exit off of Highway 27 (218), go 1.2 miles west on Highway B60, one mile south on Windfall Avenue (gravel) and 0.2 miles east on 290th Street.

The Northern Research and Demonstration Farm’s field day will begin at 9 a.m. Sept. 3 with a meal at noon. The farm is located at 310 S. Main St., Kanawha.

The complete field day schedule is available at http://farms.ag.iastate.edu/field-days.

ISU Extension Workshop Focuses on Late Season Crop Management
By Warren Pierson, Field Extension Education Laboratory, 515-509-8308, wpierson@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa – Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is offering a Late Season Crop Management Clinic on Wednesday, Aug. 26, and Thursday, Aug. 27, at the Field Extension Education Laboratory near Boone, Iowa. Designed for agribusiness professionals and crop producers, the two-day course provides hands-on, in-field experience and discussions of the 2015 growing season, along with the latest research on disease management and identification from ISU Extension and Outreach specialists.

The clinic will focus on management decisions made throughout the season and the results of those decisions. Presenters will also discuss topics such as cover crops, nutrient applications and other decisions to be made this fall. Finally, specialists will present their most recent research and how the results have formed their suggestions and recommendations.

ISU Extension and Outreach specialists and field agronomists will provide instruction on the principles of Integrated Pest Management with an emphasis on weed, insect and crop disease identification in Iowa corn and soybean production.

Registration check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 26, with sessions starting at 9 a.m. and adjourning at 4 p.m. Sessions will start on Thursday, Aug. 27, at 8 a.m. and adjourn at 4 p.m. Pre-registration is required and must be completed before midnight, Aug. 19. Cost is $250 and includes lunch, refreshments and class materials. To register, go to www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/late. Registration is available online with credit card or by mail with check payment.

For assistance with registration, receipts, cancellation or questions regarding registration status, contact ISU Extension and Outreach program services at 515-294-6429 or anr@iastate.edu.

Yard and Garden: Properly Aerating Lawns
By Richard Jauron, Extension Horticulturist, 515-294-1871, rjauron@iastate.edu
Aeration is an important part of lawn care, but take care to aerate properly and at the correct time of the year. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach horticulturists offer tips on the proper way to aerate a yard at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/yard-and-garden-properly-aerating-lawns.

Native Pollinators Matter, Too
From the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture
We might swat them, but sweat bees (Halictids) are among the 200 species of bees native to Iowa that provide important pollination services.

Three Leopold Center research projects are looking into preserving habitat for our native pollinators: Attracting pollinators and natural enemies to add value to Iowa agriculture, Impacts of landscape and on-farm diversity on the abundance and health of bee pollinators, and Blurring the lines between working and conservation lands: Enhancing bird and pollinator habitat using prairie strips.

Also find more about this research and pollinators in the photo album [Photo by ISU grad student Adam Varenhorst] - at: http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/#sthash.m9o72hQj.dpuf.
Iowa Learning Farms August Webinar - Full Potential of Cover Crops
By Carol Brown, Iowa Learning Farms, 515-294-8912, cbrown1@iastate.edu

AMES, Iowa - The regular monthly Iowa Learning Farms webinar for August will be on Wednesday, Aug. 19, at 1 p.m. This month’s guest speaker is Tom Kaspar who will present “Reaching the Full Potential of Cover Crops in Iowa.”

Although cover crops have been around a long time, we don’t have much experience on their use in modern corn-soybean rotations in Iowa. We do, however, understand the general principles of how winter cover crops improve soil health and reduce losses of sediment, nutrients and organic matter from corn and soybean fields. Today, we have barely scratched the surface of the potential benefits that cover crops might provide. Only continued long-term research and farmer trials will allow us to reach the full potential of cover crops. Log into the webinar to hear Kaspar’s perspective of this timely topic.

Tom Kaspar is a plant physiologist at the USDA-ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment in Ames, and has been with ARS since 1981. Over his career, his research has focused on crop and soil management to improve water quality and soil productivity. Since 1990, he has worked on the benefits and management of winter rye as a cover crop in corn and soybean rotations in Iowa.

The ILF webinars are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. They are free, and all that is needed to participate is a computer with Internet access. To participate, go to: https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/ at 1 p.m. on the afternoon of the webinar and log in through the guest option. Webinar attendees will be able to converse with Kaspar by typing their questions through the chat function. The ILF webinars are recorded and archived on the ILF website for viewing at any time: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/Webinars/. Contact: Tom Kaspar, USDA-NLAE, 515-294-8873.