Crop Advantage brings the latest crop production information from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to Honey Creek Resort in Moravia, IA on January 16, 2014 beginning at 9:00 am. This will include key statewide topics as well as a program developed by ISU field agronomists specifically southeast Iowa.

Registration includes refreshments, lunch and a copy of the Crop Advantage proceedings booklet.

**2014 Keynote Presentation:**

**Herbicide Resistance in Iowa: Take Action**
Bob Hartzler or Mike Owen Extension weed management specialists Iowa State University

**Scheduled topics:**

- **Herbicide resistance in Iowa: Take action**, Mike Owen
- **What’s new in the updated Iowa P, K, and lime recommendations**, Antonio Mallarino
- **Research update: Corn and soybean yield response to micronutrients**, Antonio Mallarino
- **Make every seed count: Seedling disease and seed treatments**, Alison Robertson
- **Managing cover crops as a cover crop and as a forage crop**, Mark Carlton
- **Crop weather outlook**, Elwynn Taylor
- **Seeding and interseeding to improve pastures**, Steve Barnhart
- **Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy: One farm many practices**, Matt Helmers
- **Crop market outlook**, Ryan Drollette
- **Controlling weeds and brush in pastures**, Brant Mettler, Dow Agrosciences
- **Review of 2013 field crop pests**, Erin Hodgson
- **Nitrogen and inhibitor use in corn production**, John Sawyer
- **Commercial pesticide applicator recertification**, Kristine Schaefer
- **Private pesticide applicator recertification, Hosted by your Iowa State University Extension Field Agronomists**, Mark Carlton (641) 932-5612 Aaron Saeugling (641) 782-8426

Registration is $35 if received by January 9, 2014.

To register for this meeting or for more information call your County Extension Office or visit [www.cropadvantage.org](http://www.cropadvantage.org)
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.

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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**Commercial Manure Applicator Certification** is scheduled for Tuesday Jan. 7, 2014, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at the Jefferson, Wayne, and Wapello County Extension Offices. For information about manure applicator certification requirements contact Greg Brenneman, Ag Engineer, at gregb@iastate.edu or 319/337-2145.

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**2014 Crop Reporting Date for Forage & Fall Seeded Crops**

Producers of perennial forage crops (grass, hay, alfalfa, and pasture) must submit a 2014 acreage report for those crops by December 15, 2013, as well as all fall seeded crops. Late-filed fees will be assessed if not reported by the deadline.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

This change is part of an initiative at the national level to align acreage reporting dates between FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

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**Save the Date For the Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference**

The 43rd annual Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference is scheduled for Saturday, January 18, 2014 at the Bridge View Conference Center in Ottumwa. This is one of the longest running and most successful conferences of its type in the Midwest. For over forty years, the conference has provided an opportunity for producers, researchers, and industry representatives to come together to explore current topics and issues. The conference will feature speakers from all areas of the industry.

Additional conference information will be available at your local Extension office and on-line in December and in the next Ag Newsletter.
Evaluate Equipment for Dangers

The most serious injuries and fatalities on the farm involve machinery and equipment. In recent years, nearly half of all Iowa farm deaths resulted from working with or around agricultural equipment. Farm operators depend on powerful equipment to effectively handle commodities. Although some injuries occur in recognized danger areas, such as around power take-offs, many others occur in areas where hazards are not readily apparent.

For example, more Iowans were injured while operating skid steer loaders than balers in a single year. Farm operators who work with balers know the dangers of getting caught in the windrow pick-up area and take appropriate precautions, while operators of skid steer loaders often fail to recognize the hazard of being crushed by the hydraulic loader arm. Unlike seasonal equipment, loaders are used frequently in some operations, which increases exposure to danger. Side screens on an operator’s cab can help prevent this hazard.

Recognize the dangers

The first step to avoiding danger is to recognize that hazards exist. Carefully read the safety section in operator manuals. Identify specific hazards associated with equipment you use.

Then consider how you use equipment. Are you using it for tasks it was meant to perform? Are you following all safety precautions recommended by the manufacturer?

Most machinery accidents result from human error. The operator either forgot something, took a shortcut, ignored a warning, wasn’t paying close attention, or failed to follow safety rules. Be familiar with the operator manual so you know the limitations of your equipment and can follow safety measures automatically.

Carefully evaluate the operation of each implement for safety before starting work. For example, a skid steer loader bucket is a poor choice for a human lift because the bucket is designed to dump its contents. It has no guard rails and no way to prevent the bucket from dropping if hydraulic power fails.

SOUTHERN IOWA FORAGE PRICES

These are hay prices paid for mid to late October. Much of this information is obtained from USDA Hay Market News. Contacts of local Iowa hay auctions secured price information for these market outlets. Other nearby auctions may exist. No endorsement of the listed auctions is intended.

Keosauqua (SE IA) Sale at 11:30A
Alfalfa & Mixed Lg/Gr: SmSq $4.00-6.00/b; Grass: SmSq $2.00-6.00/bale; (LgSq $32-40/b Sept); Lg Rd $35-45/bale; Straw $2.00-2.50/bale

Yoder Auction (Frytown)
Alfalfa: SmSq $5.00-5.90/b; LgSq $55-115/b; Mixed Leg/Gr: (LgSq $77.50-250/b Sept); Lg Rd $110-310/b; Grass: SmSq $3.00-4.50/b ; Lg Rd $60-85/bale; CRP: (Lg Rd $50-62.50/b Sept); Straw: SmSq $4.40/bale; Cornstalks: Lg Rd $30-37.50/bale

Kalona Auction (SE IA) Thursdays 11:00 AM
Alfalfa: SmSq $3.00-8.50/bale; LgSq $40-105/b; Lg Rd $45-65/bale; Grass: (SmSq $5.00/bale; LgSq $70/bale Sept); Lg Rd $55/bale; Straw: (SmSq $2.75-3.25/bale; LgSq $26-35/bale Sept); Cornstalks: SmSq $2.25/bale; LgSq $25-27.50/bale; Lg Rd $30-35/bale

Creston (SW IA) 10:30AM Friday
Alfalfa & Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq $7.00/b; LgSq $90-130/b Sept); Lg Rd $90-130/b; Grass: (SmSq $2.85-3.00/bale Sept); Lg Rd $60/bale; Cornstalks: Lg Rd $29/bale

Private Broker Sales -- Ave. of prices from South Central Iowa (Indianola & Adair); and North Central Iowa, (Hampton)
Alfalfa: Supreme: (LgSq $325/T delivered Sept); Premium: LgSq $260/T delivered; Good: (LgSq $225-240/T Sept) Fair: Lg Sq $180; Utility: LgSq $130/T; Mixed Leg/Gr : Good SmSq $250-280/T; Grass: Good LgSq $150/T; Straw: SmSq $155' Delivered; LgSq $135/T

County Beef Weigh-in Dates Set

The Market beef weigh-in dates are set for Region 19

Appanoose County—December 14, 9-11County/11-1 State Fair
Davis County—December 21, 8:00 am -10:00 am
Jefferson County—December 4, 8-10/County, 10-11/State Fair
Monroe County—December 23, 9:00 am

Bloomfield Livestock Market
Jefferson County Fairgrounds
Russell Livestock Market
Keosauqua Sale Barn
To Be Determined
Wayne County Fairgrounds

Monroe County—December 28, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Van Buren County—December 23, 9:00 am
Wayne County—December 21, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Wapello County—January 4, 2014, 8:00 am

Wayne County Fairgrounds

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Keosauqua Sale Barn
To Be Determined
Wayne County Fairgrounds

Wapello County—January 4, 2014, 8:00 am

Wayne County Fairgrounds
Bob Well, Farm Management Specialist and founding member of Annie’s Project passed away on October 4, 2013 from pancreatic cancer.

Bob was passionate about agriculture and preserving our nation’s food source. He was one of the founding members of the national leadership program for Annie’s Project. His leadership helped take Annie’s Project from a good idea to implementation in more than 20 states across the U.S. He willingly shared his knowledge with clients, colleagues, and friends. Bob will be greatly missed.

We currently do not have a replacement for Bob at this time. If you are located in Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, or Appanoose counties, please contact Steve Johnson at 515-261-4215. If you are located in Wapello, Davis, Jefferson, or Van Buren please call Jim Jensen at 319-385-8126.

Pregnancy Checking Pays
The Bills

By Patrick Gunn, ISU Extension cow-calf specialist

In many parts of the Corn Belt, producers have experienced a second straight summer of abnormally dry weather. The drought, coupled with ergot infestation at relatively high concentrations in some pastures, may be contributing to sub-optimal pregnancy rates in spring calving herds again this fall.

From a benchmarking perspective, in a “normal” summer breeding season it should be expected that 90% of your mature cowherd will become pregnant within a 63 day breeding season. A pregnancy rate of 93% is considered exceptional, and a pregnancy rate below 87% is typically considered below average. The exception to this benchmark is in a heavily-infected, fescue-based system, where producers can expect a reduction in these figures by as much as 3-5%.

Although most producers are trying to minimize costs at a time when feed costs are volatile, skipping an end-of-season pregnancy diagnosis for the herd is not the place to start. I would argue that a pregnancy diagnosis is one of the best investments you can make in your herd. Moreover, with the slim margins noted in many facets of the beef industry, some producers can’t afford not to conduct a pregnancy exam. It may sound crazy, but paying for a pregnancy diagnosis will most likely make you money. Particularly with wintering feed costs exceeding $250 in many locations, identifying even one open cow quickly pays for the veterinary bill with money left over.

For example, if you have 100 cows and pregnancy diagnosis is $6/cow, you have spent $600 in pregnancy diagnoses. Even if you are an exceptional herd, you will likely have 7 non-pregnant cows upon diagnosis. At $250/cow saved in wintering costs ($1750 total), after subtracting $600 in veterinarian fees, the producer is still netting $1150 in opportunity cost.

Once open cows are identified, an appropriate marketing strategy needs to be developed. Cull breeding animals typically represent about 20% of the gross receipts for cow-calf operations. Therefore, careful consideration should be taken to explore all management and marketing options available. Depending on age and body condition, as well as the cause of being open, alternative marketing options may include moving to a different breeding season, sell as an embryo recipient, or if cost of gain allows, feeding to reach a utility market. To assist in this decision, producers should be cognizant of season-al price swings typically noted in the cull cow market.
Avoid Tillage This Year
By Mahdi Al-Kaisi, Department of Agronomy

As the harvest season is getting close, there are a few things we need to keep in mind this fall with regard to soil conservation concerns. Soil conditions are dry across the state. If they continue, it can be advantageous during harvest by reducing potential soil compaction. So, if the rationale for tillage is to reduce soil compaction, it is not valid. Therefore, pay attention to tillage intensity after harvest; tillage affects soil conditions and destroys soil structure, which can create significant problems. Tillage accelerates organic matter loss, which results in more problems of accelerating soil erosion and surface runoff. Those changes in soil condition with tillage during rain events after harvest can also reduce soil profile recharge due to increased surface runoff.

Leaving crop residue on the soil surface has many benefits not only in minimizing future negative effects of soil erosion and sediment and nutrient losses, but also works as an effective method of trapping soil moisture, which later easily penetrates into the soil and recharges the soil profile. Tillage of any kind damages the soil by reducing the residue cover and its effect in protecting the soil surface.

A common misconception is that shredding or incorporating residue with tillage will enhance soil organic matter or improve other physical and biological properties, which are essential to a well-functioning soil. However, research documents that crop residue can be most effective when left intact on the soil surface protecting soil quality, such as soil structure, water infiltration, soil moisture holding capacity, and soil bulk density to name few. During dry conditions, removing residue or incorporating it can affect those soil qualities, especially at the soil surface, causing surface sealing during rain events and subsequent soil crusting.

Soil management considerations for this fall

Avoid any unnecessary tillage this fall. Conventional tillage to incorporate residue, such as deep ripping, chisel plow and even vertical tillage, etc., can have negative effects, especially after persistent drought conditions when soil structure is weakened.

Managing residue - whether removing or shredding - needs to be done with care, especially on high slope areas where potential soil erosion can be significant when fields are exposed to high-intensity rain. Shredding residue after grain harvest will reduce its effectiveness in protecting the soil surface.

Generally, standing residue is highly effective in trapping soil moisture and reducing water movement or surface flow over the field and also increases soil water infiltration and subsoil moisture recharge for the following season. Keeping crop residue intact on the soil surface with roots anchored in the soil can help protect soil and reduce soil erosion.

Consider planting cover crops this fall. However, soil moisture conditions are critical for establishing cover crops. The use of cover crops will be a good option on fields where corn was cut for silage, especially on high slope areas. Cover crops help reduce soil erosion and increase soil water storage. Also, cover crops can help extract excess nitrogen in the soil profile after cutting corn for silage or grain harvest. This can be especially important in low-yield areas this season.

If early harvest occurs, soils will be exposed to weather conditions for a longer period of time this year than normal; therefore, leaving crop residue intact will provide protection from potential late-season rain events. As mentioned in number 4, one management decision farmers should consider is the use of cover crops because if the weather holds, there will be a good window of time to establish them this year.

In summary, tillage can be very destructive to soil in terms of reduction of the residue cover in compromising soil quality. We must maintain our soil quality to sustain yield and reduce nutrient loss during the off season. Corn residue left on the field after harvest is a critical source of soil organic matter. It provides protection for the soil against water and wind erosion, and it contributes to the improvement of soil water storage and water quality. All this will depend on the intensity of tillage this fall.

Mahdi Al-Kaisi is a professor of agronomy with research and extension responsibilities in soil management and environmental soil science. He can be reached at malkaisi@iastate.edu or 515-294-8304.

Estimating a Value for Corn Stover
Corn stover is an abundant source of winter feed for beef cows in Iowa. When supplemented with protein, vitamins, and minerals, stover can supply the nutritional needs of cows that are in moderately good body condition during fall and early winter. Corn stover is also in demand for livestock bedding and is a potential feedstock for the production of ethanol.

The obvious advantage of utilizing corn stover is its wide availability and low cost. This has created a small but important market for stover, both as a harvested product and as a standing crop in the field. As with any market, though, a price must be determined. Three general approaches can be used: What is the value to the purchaser, based on feedstuffs replaced by corn stover? What is the cost to the seller of harvesting the stover and replacing lost crop nutrients? What is stover selling for on the market? For more visit www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a1-70.html http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/pdf/a1-65.pdf.
Evaluating Your Estate Plan – Workshop for Farm Families

Talking about estate planning is difficult and implementing an estate plan can be even harder. Questions often include: Who needs to be involved? What information do I need to gather? When is it the right time to start? Where do I start? How do I decide what to do? The Evaluating Your Estate Plan program can help in the planning process.

The Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshop will be held December 11th at the Henry County Extension Office 127 North Main, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641 with registration starting at 9:00. The program runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The program will answer estate planning questions and helps prepare participants to work with their estate planning team.

The presenters for the program include Kelvin Leibold and Melissa O’Rourke, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach farm and business management specialists. O’Rourke is an attorney experienced in agricultural law and estate planning. Leibold joined ISU Extension in 1987 and has vast experience in working with agricultural clients in farm and business planning. The one-day workshop will cover the language of estate planning, gift, estate and inheritance taxes, calculating retirement costs, and many other areas vital to creating a good estate plan. The workshops help those who are confused about building a plan for transferring farm assets or unsure what options are best for their farm operation and family.

Advance registration is required as space is limited. The Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshop costs $20 per person and includes workshop materials and lunch. To register, or for more information, call the Henry County Extension office at 319-385-8126.

PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR DATES SET

The 2013-2014 private pesticide applicator continuing instructional courses have been scheduled for Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Lucas, Monroe, Van Buren, Wayne, Wapello and surrounding Counties. If you wish to recertify by training and not by exam, you must attend a CIC session each year. Remember, you always have the option of taking the exam. There is a $20 fee per person for the session. A private pesticide applicator may attend a class offered in any county. Pre-registration is not required in most counties, but you may want to check if you are going out of your county.

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Sample Fields For Soybean Cyst Nematode

As we work to complete harvest and put the finishing touches on the 2013 growing season, it is not too early to start thinking about 2014 crops. Results of soil samples collected in the next few weeks from fields in which soybeans will be grown in 2014 could mean the difference between “so-so” and profitable yields next year.

The soybean cyst nematode (SCN) is a widespread pest of soybeans in Iowa and the Midwest, and SCN reproduction was extremely high in the 2012 growing season. Many of the fields in which soybeans were grown in 2012 will be planted to soybeans again in 2014.

Fall is a perfect time to collect soil samples to check fields for SCN and to determine the population density (number) of SCN in the fields, if it is present. If SCN is discovered at low or moderate population densities, SCN-resistant soybean varieties should be grown in 2014 to maximize soybean yields in the presence of the nematode. Fall also is a good time to determine if SCN was present in soybean fields in 2013. Collecting samples for this purpose is done in the same manner as sampling fields of corn stalks for SCN in anticipation of the 2014 soybean crop. Following are some sampling guidelines.

How to collect a good sample
- Collect 8-inch-long soil cores.
- Collect 15 to 20 soil cores per sampling area.
- Limit the area sampled to 20 acres or so, if possible.
- Collect numerous multiple-core samples from different areas in large fields.
- If grid sampling, collect one or two soil cores from every grid cell and combine cores from the number of cells that represent approximately 20 acres.
- Collect cores from underneath crop row if soybeans were grown this season.
- Do not collect samples if the soil is muddy or frozen.

Send samples to a private soil-testing laboratory that does SCN testing or to: Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic Iowa State University, 327 Bessey Hall, Ames, IA 50011. For more information about the biology and management of SCN, visit www.soybeancyst.info and www.planthealth.info/scn_basics.htm.

FSA Payments

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) annual rental payments have been issued to participants, with only a few exceptions. The 2013 direct payments (DCP/ACRE) were processed following the CRP payments. These payments were delayed by several weeks due to the lapse in Federal funding.

Please note: 2013 DCP/ACRE direct payments are will be reduced by 8.6% due to sequestration.

The 2008 Farm Bill, extended by the American Tax Payer Relief Act of 2012, provided authority to enroll land in DCP, ACRE and CRP through Sept. 30, 2013; however, no legislation has been enacted to reauthorize or extend this authority. Effective Oct. 1, 2013, FSA does not have legislative authority to approve or process applications for these programs.

Stay Informed - www.extension.iastate.edu/wayne
December 4-5, 2013— Iowa State Center, Ames, Iowa

The Integrated Crop Management Conference offers 34 different seminars and workshops focusing on the latest in crop production technology. Experts from Iowa and surrounding states will provide research updates and results in soil fertility, soil and water management, crop production and pest management. Attendees can choose from up to 5 topics each hour. This format allows you to customize your conference experience to meet your interests and CCA credit needs. It is your conference - get the most from it!

A popular feature of the ICM Conference is the opportunity to interact with invited speakers from other states and outside of the University. Iowa State University specialists invite individuals in their field who bring different viewpoints and the latest research results to the producers and agribusiness professionals of Iowa.

Visit the Extension Store during the conference

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offers many resources for crop production professionals to use in the field to answer management questions and identify crop pests. For this year’s conference we’re setting up a store in the Scheman Building where you can browse available publications, select the ones you want, purchase and take home with you.

Registration is on line at http://www.aep.iastate.edu/icm/registration

Would you like to receive the Ag Newsletter electronically? Call 641-472.4166 or email kistler@iastate.edu and provide your email address!