Feeling stretched caring for a loved one?

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a class designed to provide you—the family caregiver—with the skills you need to take care of yourself.

Six ninety-minute class sessions held once a week are led by certified, experienced class leaders. You'll learn to
- Reduce stress
- Improve self-confidence
- Balance your life
- Better communicate your feelings
- Increase ability to make tough decisions
- Locate helpful resources

When you take care of yourself, everyone benefits.

Date
Tuesday evenings beginning January 2014.
January 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th; February 4th, 11th
Registration deadline January 3rd

Time
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Light snack provided

Location
Jefferson County Extension office
2606 West Burlington Avenue Fairfield, IA 52556

Cost
$10

The fees for service will be used to offset direct expenses and to support the Families County Extension Program.

For more information or to register
Barbara Kistler
kistler@iastate.edu
(641) 472-4166

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
NEST Parenting Classes

NEST is open to everyone in Jefferson County! Using the NEST is very simple! Whenever you attend a NEST parent class, prenatal or postpartum care visit, well-baby check-up, Library Story Times, Parents As Teachers, or other related things, you receive points. As you accumulate points, you can spend them like money on baby items in the NEST store! The more points you earn the more items you can buy in the NEST store for ‘free’!

Contact NEST Coordinator Lynne Johnson for more information!

NEST classes are held on Thursdays

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Be prepared to keep food safe when the power goes out.

We can take steps to minimize food waste in the event of a power outage this winter if we are prepared.

Steps to follow AFTER a weather emergency:
- Check temp inside fridge/freezer. Discard any perishable food that has been above 40° for two hours or more.
- Check each item separately; discard any food that has an unusual odor, color, texture or feels warm to the touch.
- Check frozen food for ice crystals. Food may be refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is 40° or below.
- NEVER taste a food to decide of it’s safe.
- When in doubt, throw it out!

Watch the YouTube video from FSIS: Food Safety During Power Outages for tips on keeping frozen and refrigerated food safe.

You can get answers at www.AskKaren.gov as well.

—Patty Steiner, Nutrition/Health Specialist
psteiner@iastate.edu

Steps to follow if the power goes out.
- Put fridge items in the freezer—that includes leftovers, milk and fresh meat and poultry that you may not need immediately—to keep them safe longer.
- Have coolers on hand to keep fridge food cold if the power will be out for more than 4 hours.
- Group foods together in the freezer—this ‘igloo’ effect helps food stay cold longer.
- Avoid putting food outside in the ice or snow. It attracts wild animals or may thaw when the sun comes out.
- Keep a few day’s worth of ready-to-eat foods that do not require much cooking or cooling.
- Keep Fridge/freezer doors closed as much as possible. Food will stay cold about 4 hrs in the fridge if door is kept closed. A full freezer holds its temp for 48 hours (24 hours if 1/2 full)
- Place meat/poultry to one side of freezer or on a tray to prevent cross-contamination of thawing juices.
- Use dry or block ice to keep fridge as cold as possible.

Steps to follow NOW before there is an outage:
- Keep appliance thermometers in both fridge (40°) and freezer (0°) to ensure temps remain food safe during an outage.
- Freeze water in 1-qt. plastic storage bags or small containers prior to a storm. These are small enough to fit around the food in the fridge and freezer to help keep food cold. Don’t overfill the containers as water expands when it freezes.

Training and Continuing Education DVDs Dates

Commercial Manure Applicators: 1/7 9:00am—Noon
Confinement Manure Applicator Class: 2/13 9:30am—Noon
Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT): 3/4 7:00pm

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Bee Keeping Class

Thursdays in February
6:00 pm ~ 8:00 pm
Instructor: Vern Ramsey
Only $5 !!
Yard & Garden: Caring for Holiday Plants

Ames, IA—Holiday plants are one way to extend the cheer of the holiday season and serve as a reminder of cherished time we spent with friends and family. Horticulturists with ISU Extension & Outreach say keeping these plants looking good through the holiday season and beyond is not as difficult as some might expect.

How do I care for a poinsettia?
Place the poinsettia in a plant sleeve or carefully wrap it before transporting the plant home. Exposing the poinsettia to freezing temperatures, even for a few minutes, may cause its bracts and leaves to blacken and drop. As soon as you get home, unwrap the poinsettia and place it near a sunny window or other well-lit location. However, don’t let the plant touch the cold window pane. Also, keep the poinsettia away from cold drafts or heat sources. Poinsettias prefer temperatures between 60 and 70F.

Water needs can be determined with your finger. Check the potting soil daily. When the soil surface becomes dry to the touch, water the plant until water begins to flow out the bottom of the pot. The pots of most poinsettias are placed inside decorative pot covers. When watering a poinsettia, carefully remove the pot covering, water the plant in the sink, then drop it back into the pot cover.

When given good care, a poinsettia should remain attractive for several weeks. They are normally discarded after the holiday season.

How do I care for a Christmas Cactus?
Plants commonly referred to as Christmas cacti include the true Christmas Cactus (Schumbergera Bridgesii), Thanksgiving cactus (Schumbergera truncate) and numerous hybrids.

While Christmas and Thanksgiving cacti are similar in appearance, there are differences. The flattened stem segments (phyllodes) on the Christmas cactus have rounded margins. Christmas cacti typically bloom in December or January. The phylloclade margins on the Thanksgiving cactus possess two to four sawtoothed projections. Thanksgiving cactus typically bloom in November or December.

Both cacti prefer bright, indirect light and temperatures of 60-70F. In spring and summer (when plants are actively growing) water plants about once every seven days and fertilize every two to four weeks with a diluted fertilizer solution. In fall and winter, keep plants a bit on the dry side. A thorough watering every 7-10 days is usually sufficient.

These cacti are ‘short day’ plants. Plants will not bloom properly if exposed to artificial light at night. In late summer/early fall, place plants in a cool (60-65F) location that received bright light during the day, but no artificial light at night. An unused bedroom or basement may have the proper environmental conditions. Continue to give the plants good, consistent care during flower bud development. Moving plants from one location to another, excessive watering or other marked changes to their care during flower bud development may cause the buds to drop off. The plant can be moved and displayed in another room when the first flowers begin to open.

These are long-lived plants when given good care and a favorable environment. Plants are often passed from one generation to the next.

How do I care for a Norfolk Island Pine?
The Norfolk Island Pine is a popular houseplant. During the holiday season, many individuals turn their plants into living Christmas trees by decorating them with miniature lights, ribbons and ornaments. The NIP thrives indoors when given good, consistent care. Place the NIP in a brightly lit location near an east, west or south window. Rotate the plant weekly to prevent the plant from growing toward the light and becoming lopsided. Thoroughly water the NIP when the soil surface becomes dry to the touch. Discard the excess water that drains out the bottom of the pot. From spring to early fall, fertilize with a diluted solution every 2-4 weeks. A temp of 60-75F is suitable for the NIP. Winter is often a difficult time because of low relative humidity levels in most homes. Raise the humidity level around the NIP with a humidifier or place the plant on a tray or saucer containing pebbles and water (making sure the water level does not reach the bottom of the pot). Adverse conditions (humidity, light levels, or dry soil) may cause branch tip browning and loss of lower branches.
Iowa Farmland Value Reaches Historic $8,716 Statewide Average

ARTICLE | WED, 12/11/2013 - 07:03 | BY MICHAEL DUFFY, ANN JOHANNS, WILLY KLEIN

AMES, Iowa — Average Iowa farmland value is estimated to be $8,716 per acre, an increase of 5.1 percent from 2012, according to results of the Iowa Land Value Survey conducted in November. Values increased in 2013 for the fourth year in a row and achieved historic peaks. The increase is similar to results of other recent Iowa farmland value surveys, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and the Iowa Chapter of the Realtors Land Institute surveys.

Scott County, with an estimated $12,413 average value for all farmland, saw the highest average county values in the Iowa State survey. Scott County also had the highest percentage increase and highest increase in value, 12.45 percent and $1,374 respectively, of the 99 Iowa counties. The Northwest Crop Reporting District reported the highest land values at $10,960, which was a decrease of $445 (3.9 percent) from 2012. O'Brien County showed the highest dollar decrease in 2013 of $478. Osceola, Dickinson and Lyon counties along with O'Brien County all shared the greatest percentage decrease in 2013, with 3.72 percent.

“The 2013 land value survey shows a market in flux, with strong and weak price sales occurring at the same time,” said Michael Duffy, Iowa State economics professor and extension farm management economist who conducts the survey. “The key question is if this shows the market is going to settle, if it is just pausing before another takeoff in values, or if the market has peaked and due for a correction.”
Duffy said examining some causes for the current increase in farmland values and the reactions is helpful in assessing the situation. Farmland values are highly correlated with gross farm income. A majority of the survey respondents were concerned about income. Over three-fourths, 76 percent, of the respondents cited lower commodity prices as a negative factor affecting the land markets. Data show the rate of increase in land values slowed and commodity prices started dropping after June 2013.

Iowa corn and soybean price movements are good indicators of gross farm income movement. There was a 33 percent drop in the Iowa average corn price from October 2012 to October 2013 and there was an 11 percent drop in soybean prices over the same time period. The November estimated price for Iowa corn was 39 percent lower than the November 2012 price. Soybean prices were 11 percent lower.

There are many competing forces that will influence prices over the coming years. The Iowa State economist goes on to say, for now it appears there are more factors that will lead to lower prices as opposed to returning to levels of the past few years.

“Farm income is a strong indicator for the direction land values will go, but there are other factors as well,” Duffy said. “Interest rates remain low, but the percent of respondents who reported less sales than in 2012 was the highest it’s been since 1985.

The odds are against a major collapse in land values. But, if projections of a new lower level for commodity prices hold, then Duffy believes we should expect land values to drop. The economist said many respondents commented that the current situation might be a plateau.

**Overview of 2013 Iowa land values**

While the highest county land values were reported in Scott County, Decatur County remained the lowest reported land value, $3,628 per acre. O’Brien County, which showed the highest county average value and greatest dollar increase in 2012, showed the highest dollar decrease in 2013 of $478. Osceola, Dickinson and Lyon counties along with O’Brien County all shared the highest percentage increase in 2012 and the greatest percentage decrease in 2013, with 3.72 percent.

Low grade land in the state averaged $5,298 per acre and showed a 3.5 percent increase or $179 per acre, while medium grade land averaged $8,047 per acre; high grade land averaged $10,828 per acre. The lowest land value was estimated in the South Central Crop Reporting District, $4,791, while the lowest percentage decrease was in the Northwest Crop Reporting District with a 3.9 percent decrease. The Southeast Crop Reporting District reported a 13.3 percent increase, the highest district percentage reported. Maps showing 2013 values, percentage change and comparisons to 2012 data and additional information from Duffy are available at [www.extension.iastate.edu/topic/landvalue](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/topic/landvalue).

The Iowa Land Value Survey was initiated in 1941 and is sponsored by the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station, Iowa State University. Only the state average and the district averages are based directly on the Iowa State survey data. The county estimates are derived using a procedure that combines survey results with data from the U.S. Census of Agriculture.

The survey is based on reports by licensed real estate brokers and selected individuals considered knowledgeable of land market conditions. The 2013 survey is based on 476 usable responses providing 674 county land value estimates. The survey is intended to provide information on general land value trends, geographical land price relationships and factors influencing the Iowa land market. It is not intended to provide an estimate for any particular piece of property.
2014 Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference Focuses on Profitable Expansion

OTTUMWA, Iowa — The premier Iowa educational event for cow-calf producers is offering a comprehensive package of information to attendees. The popular Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference has provided timely, accurate and important information to the state’s beef cattle industry for more than 40 years. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach beef program specialist Patrick Wall said this year’s conference, set for January 18th at the Bridge View Center in Ottumwa, will continue that successful tradition.

“The Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference has been, and will continue to be, successful because it provides information on current topics relevant to cow-calf producers in Iowa,” Wall said. “The steering committee has put together a program of industry experts that can help producers grow the Iowa beef herd responsibly and profitably.”

The 2014 program targets topics designed to help producers of all ages and production goals. From genetic selection for profit to cover crop options and heifer development, professionals from universities and private industry as well as cow-calf producers in the Midwest will lead these sessions and offer attendees valuable information to put into practice on their farms.

“We have three keynote speakers -- internationally recognized speaker and author Dave Robison of Indiana; Lee Leachman, manager of Leachman Cattle of Colorado; and Brian Heudepohl of Williamsburg Veterinary Clinic,” Wall said. “Robison will talk about profit potential of cover crops. Leachman will share expertise on blending composite breeds and explain his $Profit index. And Heudepohl will explain his heifer development program and successful health protocols to help producers expand their operations.”

Afternoon break-out sessions include a panel discussion with individual focus on baleage harvesting, storage and cow economics, featuring Jeremy Erdmann, senior design engineer for John Deere’s Hay and Forage Platform, Dave Robison of Legacy Seeds, Inc., and Patrick Gunn, ISU Extension cow-calf specialist. A risk management discussion includes Ryan Drollette, ISU Extension farm management specialist, and Tony Latcham of Son Risk Management. Wall will target cow-share agreements for beginning or young farmers, and Iowa Angus breeder Jim Werner also will be an afternoon producer speaker.

The 2014 conference at the Bridge View Center in Ottumwa begins with registration at 8 a.m. The official welcome is at 9:30 a.m., followed by two general session speakers, lunch and exhibit viewing. The afternoon begins with a general session speaker in the auditorium, followed by two break-out sessions with four choices. Admission is $15, which includes lunch and a copy of the conference proceedings. No preregistration is necessary.

The Iowa Beef Center was established in 1996 with the goal of supporting the growth and vitality of the state’s beef cattle industry. It comprises faculty and staff from Iowa State Extension and Outreach, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and College of Veterinary Medicine, and works to develop and deliver the latest research-based information regarding the beef cattle industry. For more information about IBC, visit www.iowabeefcenter.org.
Yard and Garden: Shrubs and Trees with Winter Color

AMES, Iowa — An excellent way to brighten the winter landscape is to plant trees and shrubs that possess ornamental characteristics, such as colorful fruit or exfoliating bark. Horticulturists with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach describe shrubs and trees that add color to the winter landscape. To have additional questions answered, contact Hortline at 515-294-3108 or hortline@iastate.edu.

**Which shrubs have colorful fruit in winter?**

One of the most beautiful sights in winter is the bright red twigs of the redosier dogwood (Cornus sericea) set against a backdrop of newly fallen snow. Native to Iowa, the redosier dogwood grows 6 to 10 feet tall. Several colorful cultivars are available. ‘Cardinal’ has bright, cherry red stems. ‘Alleman’s Compact’ is a red-stemmed, compact cultivar that grows 4 to 5 feet tall. Arctic Fire™ is a red-stemmed, 3- to 4-foot-tall shrub. ‘Flaviramea’ is a 5- to 6-foot-tall shrub with yellow stems.

There are also several cultivars of willow that possess colorful bark. The ‘Flame’ willow (Salix ‘Flame’) has reddish orange stems. The stems of the coral bark willow (Salix alba ‘Britzensis’) vary from yellow-orange to orange-red. The redosier dogwood and willows should be pruned on a frequent basis as young shoots possess the brightest colors. ‘Flame’ and coral bark willows should be pruned annually. Cut back plants to near ground level in late winter. The redosier dogwood requires less pruning. In late winter, remove approximately one-third of the oldest stems near ground level.

**Which trees have attractive bark?**

Selecting trees with attractive bark is an excellent way to add interest to the winter landscape. A widely planted tree that possesses attractive, exfoliating bark is the river birch (Betula nigra). The exfoliating bark varies from salmon-white to reddish brown. Often planted as a multi-stemmed specimen or clump, the river birch may eventually reach a height of 50 to 60 feet.

Two small ornamental trees with exfoliating bark are the paperbark maple (Acer griseum) and Amur chokecherry (Prunus maackii). The paperbark maple grows 20 to 30 feet tall, possesses cinnamon to reddish brown exfoliating bark, and is hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 5 to 8. The bark characteristics of the Amur chokecherry are highly variable. Bark color varies from brownish yellow to reddish brown to cinnamon red. Some exhibit little or no bark exfoliation, while others exfoliate heavily. The Amur chokecherry grows 30 to 35 feet tall.

Other trees with showy bark include the lacebark pine (Pinus bungeana) and Chinese or lacebark elm (Ulmus parvifolia). The bark of both trees exfoliates in patches revealing a kaleidoscope of colors. The multi-colored bark of the lacebark pine contains splashes of green, white, brown and purple, while the Chinese elm is spotted with brown, gray, green and orange.

**Which trees and shrubs have colorful fruit in winter?**

While crabapples (Malus spp.) are usually planted for their flowers, many cultivars also possess colorful, persistent fruit. Crabapple cultivars with red fruit include ‘David,’ ‘Donald Wyman,’ ‘Mary Potter,’ ‘Red Jewel™’ and Sugar Tyme®. ‘Indian Magic,’ ‘Professor Sprenger’ and ‘Snowdrift’ have reddish orange fruit, while Harvest Gold® and Golden Raintrees® are yellow-fruited crabapple cultivars.

Hawthorns (Crataegus spp.) are another group of small, flowering trees that possess attractive fruit. Hawthorns produce white flowers in spring. In fall, their small (one-fourth to one-half inch in diameter) fruit turn red and persist into winter. Two hawthorns noted for their excellent fruit displays are the Washington hawthorn (Crataegus phaenopyrum) and ‘Winter King’ hawthorn (Crataegus viridis ‘Winter King’).

Shrubs that possess attractive fruit in late fall and winter include red chokeberry (Aronia arbutifolia), cranberry cotoneaster (Cotoneaster apiculatus), winterberry (Ilex verticillata), Meserve hybrid hollies (Ilex x meserveae) and American cranberrybush viburnum (Viburnum trilobum). All of the aforementioned shrubs have red fruit. Snowberries and coralberries (Symphoricarpos spp.) have white, pink or purplish red fruit.

The brightly colored fruit of most of the aforementioned trees and shrubs do not remain throughout winter. Very cold temperatures in winter eventually cause many fruit to turn reddish brown or black. Hungry birds and squirrels may also devour the fruit. However, the fruit display in late fall and early winter can be spectacular.

**2014 Garden Calendar is the Wonder of Trees**

The 2014 Iowa State University Extension and Outreach garden calendar celebrates the wonderful gifts that trees provide for other living things. In addition to striking photos, find monthly garden tips, tree-planting instructions, Iowa’s state forests, vignettes of historical trees and quotes that trees inspired.

The [2014 garden calendar](https://store.extension.iastate.edu/) can be purchased at the Extension Online Store.
Jefferson County Business Classes
Tuesday, January 14
11:30 am ~ 1:30 pm
“Simplify your Business!”
Tuesday, January 14, 2014
“Simplify Your Business”
$5.00/lunch provided
(Please register for food count)
Contact Himar Hernandez for more Information at:
641-799-6681 or himarh@iastate.edu
Or call the Extension Office to sign up @ 472-4166

Greater Jefferson County Fair ~ June 25 ~ 30, 2014

FSQA Training
Friday
January 3rd

The office will be closed Wednesday, New Year’s Day and Monday, January 20th