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

SE RESEARCH FARM FIELD DAY JUNE 23
The Southeast Iowa Research Farm Spring Field Day is set for Tuesday, June 23. Certified Crop Advisor Training is planned with registration at 8:30 a.m. and training held from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Preregistration is required along with a $50 fee; no walk-ins (3 CCCA Ceu’s in Soil & Water Quality).

The tours and Spring Field Day will be held from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with discussions on water quality & bioreactors, why cover crops pay and healthy soils. For full details visit www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/eccrops/meetserc.html

GRASSROOTS GRAZING 2015
This three-part series for beginning and young cattle producers, funded by the NRCS, Iowa Beef Center, ISU Extension and Outreach, and ISU’s Beginning and Young Livestock Producer Network.

No cost, though preregistration is strongly encouraged.

FIRST SESSION:
June 25, 6 p.m. Mahaska County Extension Office, 212 North I St., Oskaloosa. EQIP funding & young producer programs, matching beef cattle genetics with your grazing management, developing a grazing plan, and pasture productivity.

Participants are encouraged to bring laptop computers with aerial maps of current pastures for real-world discussions on grazing plans and pasture improvements. Contact Pat Wall, 515-450-7665 or email patwall@iastate.edu

SWINE INDUSTRY AUDIT TRAINING OFFERED
IPPA, Iowa Pork Industry Center and ISU Extension & Outreach to offer free training and preparation sessions to helping pork producers prepare for a Common Swine Industry Audit (CSIA). Session attendees will have an opportunity to walk through steps of the common audit, evaluate areas for improvement on their farms and customize Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Attendees will receive customizable audit materials for their farms.

Washington Co. Extension is hosting sessions June 12 and July 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Contact Tom Miller, Swine Specialist at 319-653-4811 or timiller@iastate.edu to register; seating is limited.
PESTICIDE TESTING IN WASHINGTON & JOHNSON COUNTY

The Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship (IDALS) will offer pesticide testing on Friday, June 12 at the Washington County Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Monday, July 6 at the Johnson County Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All tests are available at this site and will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tests are administered by the IDALS. Because it may be necessary to cancel or reschedule a test date or site, it is recommended you confirm the test time and site prior to travel.

IDALS offers testing monthly at the Washington County Extension on the second Friday of each month, April through December, from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. and the first Monday of each month at the Johnson County Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Study materials are available for purchase from your local Extension office or on-line from Iowa State University: https://www.extension.iastate.edu/store/ then select the tab “Agriculture & Environment” and “Pesticide Applicator Training Manuals.” For more information contact Washington County Extension 319-653-4811, Johnson County Extension 319-337-2145 or IDALS Pesticide Bureau at 515-281-8591.

2015 IOWA LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISE BUDGETS AVAILABLE

AMES, Iowa – Careful budgeting is key when making purchases for livestock operations. A new publication by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Livestock Enterprise Budgets for Iowa – 2015 (File B1-21), contains estimates of production costs for common livestock enterprises in Iowa. Estimates are intended to reflect average or above-average levels of management using common types of technology. “Livestock investment summaries are available for beef herds, sheep flocks, Grade A dairies and swine production litters,” said author Shane Ellis, farm management specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach. “Inputs such as price of grain, silage and vitamins, or price per pound for livestock weights are averaged during the year and listed for helping producers develop their farm livestock operation budgets.”

The 22-page booklet is available online at Ag Decision Maker's site, www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/ and includes various budget tables for livestock enterprises. For example: a budget for beef cattle production is measured by a “cow/calf” unit. Information for the entire herd is then computed by multiplying the input’s price by the size of the herd.

Each budget tool contains estimates for fixed and variable costs. Most costs occur each year such as depreciation, interest, taxes, and insurance on facilities, breeding livestock, and livestock equipment and facilities. An example of cost estimates for interest averages one-half the original value of facilities over its lifetime, or 5 percent annually. Other costs vary according to the level of production. For these types of estimating, interest may be calculated on feed and other variable costs for one-half the production period. Lee Schulz, assistant professor and Extension and Outreach livestock economist with Iowa State University, explained how operating costs like labor and feed needs are used to calculate and analyze budgets for finding a value of production returns.

Page 2 of the publication offers estimates for prices of operation inputs and suggested sale prices for livestock are available on the Ag Decision Maker link https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/ Producer teaching activities and decision tool spreadsheets for specific livestock also are available for making computer calculations or to calculate individual situations and can be printed. Data were drawn from farm record summaries, feed consumption research and price projections and are intended to be used for planning purposes only. For individual farms, expected costs and input requirements based on past results should be substituted whenever possible.
SURVEY SHOWS FARMLAND RENTAL RATES DOWN

A second year of declining rates for renting land in Iowa

AMES, Iowa — Rental rates for Iowa farmland decreased by 5 percent in 2015, according to results from the Cash Rental Rates for Iowa – 2015 Survey (https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Cash-Rental-Rates-for-Iowa-2015-Survey) conducted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. This is the second consecutive year of declining rates after a 15-year streak of increasing rental rates, accumulating a 9 percent loss since 2013. “Average rents were lower in all nine crop reporting districts,” according to Alejandro Plastina, assistant professor and extension economist with Iowa State University. “The average estimated cash rent for corn and soybean land in the state for 2015 was $246 per acre, a decrease of $14 per acre or nearly 5 percent from last year. Low crop prices for the 2014 crop and small- to negative-profit margin forecasts for this year’s crop put downward pressure on rental rates,” Plastina said.

The largest decreases in land rental occurred in central and west central Iowa, at $24 and $23 per acre, respectively. Those districts had the highest rents among all crop reporting districts in 2014. Northeast Iowa reported the highest average in 2015 at $273, and the lowest district value was $187 in south central Iowa. Grundy County had the highest average rent in the state, at $316 per acre.

“It isn’t a trend yet, but it certainly is a reversal of the 15-year trend we’ve seen of land rental rate increases,” said Plastina. “Land rates and other input costs take time to adjust to lower levels of crop revenue; so if corn and soybean prices don’t improve soon, we can expect land rental rates to continue to decline.” Plastina indicated the typical rental rates per bushel of corn yield, soybean yield and the average Corn Suitability Rating 2 point were computed for each county. In addition, typical charges for land growing oats and hay, for grazing pasture and corn stalks, and renting for hunting rights were reported.

Rental values were estimated by asking people familiar with land rental markets what they thought were typical rates in their county. Of the 1,437 total responses received, 49 percent came from farmers, 27 percent from landowners, 12 percent from agricultural lenders, 10 percent from professional farm managers and 2 percent from other professionals.

The Cash Rental Rates for Iowa – 2015 Survey is available online as a downloadable document from the ISU Extension and Outreach Store https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Cash-Rental-Rates-for-Iowa-2015-Survey Other resources available for estimating a fair cash rental rate include the Ag Decision Maker www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/ information files Computing a Cropland Cash Rental Rate (C2-20), Computing a Pasture Rental Rate (C2-23), and Flexible Farm Lease Agreements (C2-21). All documents include decision file electronic worksheets to help analyze leasing questions.

3RD ANNUAL IOWA WOMEN’S LANDOWNER CONFERENCE

Women Land and Legacy (WLL) along with Iowa Land Sales & Farm Management are happy to announce their continuing partnership to host the Third Annual Iowa Women’s Landowner Conference on June 18th, 2015 in Brooklyn, Iowa. 2015 conference sessions will cover: Estate Planning, Grain Marketing, Land Rent and Lease Agreements, and Iowa County’s own Rona Wyant on “Creating a Legacy”. Attendees are encouraged to bring spouses, family members, tenants or whoever else might benefit from the topics. Mike Pearson, host of Market to Market will be moderating. Local session experts include: Angie Cook, Attorney & CPA; Laurel Bower Bergmaier, Producer with IPTV; Elaine Kub, Author, Mastering the Grain Markets; Vince Johnson, Land Broker; Matt Mann, Accredited Farm Manager and Rona Wyant, farmer and owner of Fireside Winery. The conference will be held on Thursday, June 18th at the Michael J. Manatt Community Center in Brooklyn, Iowa. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. concluding at 3:30 pm. Early registration is $30 for those registered by June 8th. After June 8th, the registration fee is $40. Snacks, lunch, handouts and door prizes are all provided. To reserve your seat at the conference, register online by visiting http://iowalandsales.com/. You may also call 319-668-2010 ext. 2 or email mel@wfan.org. Registration fees may be paid in advance or on the day of the event.
2015 FARMLAND LEASE MEETINGS
Topics Include:  1) Current land value & cash rental rate surveys  2) Types of farm lease arrangements  3) Determining a fair cash rent  4) Strategies for writing and terminating a farm lease  5) ISU Extension web-based and other resources
Meetings are 2 1/2 hours in length with a 100-page book provided.  One book per registrant or couple.
Registration Fee: $25 per individual or $40 per couple
Pre-register at least 2 days prior to the meeting you plan to attend. (Additional $5 for late registration)
Sigourney  Friday, July 31 – 1:00 pm  Keokuk County Extension Office  400 220th Ave  641-622-2680
Williamsburg  Monday, Aug. 3 – 6:00 pm  Iowa Co. Extension Office  223 West Welsh St  319-668-1052
Washington  Tuesday, Aug. 4 – 6:30 pm  Washington Co. Extension Office  2223 250th St  319-653-4811
Tipton  Wednesday, August 5 - 1:00 p.m.  Cedar County Extension Office  107 Cedar St.  563-886-6157
Iowa City  Tuesday, Aug. 11 – 1:00 pm  Johnson Co. Extension Office  3109 Old HWY 218 S  319-337-2145
Cedar Rapids  Thursday, Aug. 13 - 6:00 p.m.  Linn Co. Extension Office  383 Collins Road NE, Suite 2001  319-377-9839

2015 COUNTY FAIRS IN REGION 15
The 2015 county fair season is just around the corner.  These events take the dedicated efforts of 100’s of volunteers in each county, support from families and local businesses, and the work of Extension/Outreach staff.
The fairs in Region 15 are scheduled for:  
Iowa County Fair July 15-19, Auction July 19
Keokuk County Expo, July 15-19
Washington County Fair July 19-23, Livestock Auction July 24
Johnson County 4-H & FFA Fair July 27-30, Livestock Auction July 31

“LOWERING THE STRESS WITH VACCINE CHOICES & STOCKMANSHIP SKILLS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH & PRODUCTION OF YOUR CATTLE.”

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the:  Live Cattle Demonstration, Friday, June 26, at the Muscatine Agriculture Learning Center, 3200 Lucas Street, Muscatine, Iowa 52761 sponsored by Merck Animal Health, Beef Check-off (iabeef.org) and the Iowa Beef Center.

Registration at 8:30 AM, Seminar classroom: 9 AM, Catered Lunch 12 Noon, Live Demonstration (Arena area) 1 PM  SPEAKERS:  Dr. Tom Noffsinger, Dr. Brent Meyer, Doug Bear – BQA Coordinator
Please RSVP by Friday, June 19th.  Sara Benson , RSVP to (641) 777-9260 or sara.benson@merck.com

BLACK CUTWORM – CUTTING REPORTED
The prediction map for cutting to begin around May 29 can be found at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2015/0514Sisson.htm  The article also covers basic scouting and threshold information.  As you scout fields for other reasons (plant population, uniform emergence, weed pressure, etc.), realize that higher probability problem fields and locations within fields for BCW are areas that had heavier infestations of low growing perennial and winter annual broadleaf weeds during moth flights, fields with heavy soybean residue, low lying areas, and fields with later corn plantings.
ATTEND GREENHORN GRAZING WORKSHOPS TO SHARPEN GRAZING SKILLS

VINTON, Iowa -- Livestock producers wanting to maximize benefits from their grazing practices should attend Greenhorn Grazing workshops in northeast Iowa. Producers of all skill levels are welcome to the five-part workshop series. Greenhorn Grazing will be held in the Clayton, Delaware and Dubuque county area, but is open to all producers in northeast Iowa. Each workshop will have a classroom component led by experienced instructors and a hands-on field component. The workshops are scheduled for 9:30 a.m. to mid-afternoon on the following dates with topics and speakers as described:

- **June 10.** Brian Lang, ISU Extension Agronomist - soil conditions, fertility and plant productivity. Pat Schaefers, Clayton County NRCS - pasture condition scoring and CSP opportunities. Schwab - forage planning and species identification. The pasture component will be at the John Schupbach farm near Elgin featuring new seeding establishment, rotational paddocks, above ground waterline system, wildlife protection systems and custom grazing.
- **July 21.** Larry Tranel, ISU Extension Dairy Specialist - dairy grazing. A fencing demonstration will be part of the pasture portion at the Eric Gaul pasture.
- **Aug. 24.** Dan Morrical, ISU Sheep Specialist - animal grazing behavior, forage requirements and supplementing on pasture. ISU Extension ag engineer Greg Brenneman - watering systems. The Cameron Schulte pasture segment features buried water lines to tanks and a spring water development.
- **Sept. 9.** ISU Extension Field Agronomist Meghan Anderson - weed management. Fall and winter forage management practices such as fall interseeding with Jim Welter; hay field grazing, and planning for winter feeding. Dan, Tom and Mark Welter will host this session.
- **Nov. 10.** Cover crop grazing and companionship of cattle to row crops to be held at the Jack Smith farm near Epworth.

Support from the Clayton, Delaware and Dubuque County Extension districts, Theisen’s Home-Farm-Auto, Arrow Cattlequip, Innovative Ag Services and Welter Seed & Honey Co. help offset the cost of the short course. The $75 per person fee is for all five sessions in the series. It includes a resource notebook and lunches, and assists in covering speaker travel. For more information on specific locations or details contact Schwab by phone at 319-721-9624 or email at dschwab@iastate.edu. To register, contact the Delaware County Extension Office at 563-927-4201.

SOIL TEMPERATURES

Current soil temperatures are in the mid-50’s. Wait for soil temperatures of 60F and increasing, preferably around 65F for planting warm-season grasses like sorghum-sudan, millet and teff. This often occurs around June 1 for northeast Iowa. You can monitor soil temperatures at: [http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/NPKnowledge/](http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/NPKnowledge/)

AUGUST FRUIT AND VEGETABLE FIELD DAY TO COVER PRODUCTION AND BEST PRACTICES

Commercial production topics and practices will be featured at the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach 2015 Fruit and Vegetable Field Day on Monday, August 10 at the ISU Horticulture Research Station, near Ames. The event begins at 1:30 p.m. and conclude with a social and dinner following the educational components. The Research Station is located at 55519 170th Street, north of Ames. This year’s field day will showcase small-scale fruit and vegetable production systems, cropping practices, research projects, and tools and equipment needed. The event is free, but pre-registration is required for dinner. Online registration is open through Aug. 4. To register, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/vegetablelab/fieldday](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/vegetablelab/fieldday). There will be limited on-site registration the day of the event. Sign-in begins at 1:30 p.m., with educational program from 2 to 5:30 p.m., followed by social time and dinner. The event concludes at 7:30 p.m.
LEARN HOW TO PROPERLY PRESERVE FOOD AT HOME

ISU Extension and Outreach Offers “Preserve the Taste of Summer” Online Classes and Hands-on Workshops

AMES, Iowa -- Due to an increased interest in home food preservation, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has developed the “Preserve the Taste of Summer” program. [www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer)

This program includes both online lessons and a hands-on workshop focusing on home food preservation with the most current USDA-approved food preservation recommendations.

“Preserve the Taste of Summer” is a comprehensive food preservation program offered for those 18 years or older. This program includes eight online lessons and the choice of one of four hands-on workshops. The workshops and classes focus on how to can, freeze, make jam and dehydrate food properly. “We created ‘Preserve the Taste of Summer,’ to help Iowans learn research-based food preservation information,” said Sarah Francis, a human sciences state specialist in nutrition and wellness. “Everything we teach is research based.”

When food preservation is done correctly, it is a great way to have fresh, home grown produce year round. However, when food is preserved incorrectly, it has great potential to cause foodborne illness to a person or family. The "Preserve the Taste of Summer" program teaches research-based food preservation techniques to show how to properly preserve food and stay away from foodborne illness, like botulism. “We are your source for research based food preservation,” said Francis. Two participation levels are offered with “Preserve the Taste of Summer.” The first level, professional, is offered for registered dietitians and Iowa teachers. This level is $100 and includes the eight online lessons and two hands-on workshops as well as continuing education credit, one renewable credit for teachers and 12 credits for dietitians.

The second level, home food preserver, is offered for those not needing continuing education credits. This level is $35 and includes the eight online lessons and one hands-on workshop. Additional workshops are $20. "Preserve the Taste of Summer" registration is now open. Workshop dates are coming up fast and participants must complete the online lessons to attend a workshop. [www.extension.iastate.edu/registration/events/conferences/preservation/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/registration/events/conferences/preservation/) For more information on “Preserve the Taste of Summer” online lessons and specific workshop locations and dates visit [www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer).

LEARN ABOUT COVER CROPS, PRAIRIE STRIPS JUNE 16 AT MCNAY RESEARCH FARM

Iowa Learning Farms, along with the STRIPS project and the Iowa Cover Crop Working Group, will host a field day Tuesday, June 16, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the ISU McNay Research & Demonstration Farm, rural Chariton.

The project, Science-based Trials of Rowcrops Integrated with Prairie Strips, focuses on planting a small percentage of a field into strips of perennial prairie plants to reduce soil erosion and water runoff, and to create habitat for pollinators. Speaking at the field day are Liz Juchems, ILF, and Sarah Carlson with PFI, who will discuss the benefits of using cover crops. They will cover seeding and termination details, types of cover crops to plant and the latest research findings from on-farm yield studies. A complimentary supper will be served with the Lucas County Cattlemen at the grill. The field day is free and open to the public, an RSVP is requested. Contact Iowa Learning Farms, 515-294-8912 or ilf@iastate.edu, to be counted for the meal. The field day will be at the McNay Research farm, 45249 170th Ave., Chariton. From Lucas: at the intersection of Highways 65 and 34, go south four miles on Highway 65, then 2.5 miles east on 450th St./Morman Trail; turn north onto 170th Ave., and go a quarter-mile. The farm’s headquarters is on the east side of the road.
IOWA MEET THE PRESS: AVIAN FLU

This past week’s Iowa Press featured a segment on Avian Influenza. ISUEO has implemented steps to provide research and education to our Iowa producers (commercial and backyard), communities, and consumers at the county level.  

http://www.iptv.org/iowapress/episode.cfm/4233/video/ip_20150522_4233

POULTRY EXHIBITION IN IOWA CANCELLED FOR 2015

As of May 21, 2015, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has canceled all live bird exhibitions at county fairs, the Iowa State Fair and other gatherings of birds due to avian influenza. The order begins immediately and is effective through the end of 2015. This cancels the live poultry shows in Iowa, Keokuk, Washington and Johnson County.

Iowa 4-H is working diligently to create some alternative activities and experiences for poultry members to participate in at the county fair this year. These activities will not include live birds but will allow members to showcase and communicate their project knowledge. More details to be announced and will be sent directly to poultry exhibitors.

The official news release sent from IDALS and State Vet can be found here:  http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/exhibitions-birds-cancelled-2015-due-avian-influenza

COST-SHARE FUNDS FOR FARMERS

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey announced on May 12, 2015 that funds are available to help farmers install nutrient reduction practices. Practices eligible for this funding are cover crops, no-till or strip till, or using a nitrification inhibitor when applying fertilizer. Details are available at http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/press/2015press/press05122015.asp.

JULY 14-15, CROP MANAGEMENT CLINIC, BOONE

The program occurs on the 23-acre teaching and demonstration facility dedicated to a hands-on learning experience for crop production professionals. Field plots show a wide range of management problems, solutions, and diagnostic challenges. Air-conditioned classroom facilities complement the field sessions. For program details, go to: http://www.aep.iastate.edu/feel/.  

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Would you like to receive the Ag Newsletter electronically? Call 641-622-2680 or email joriea@iastate.edu and provide your email address!

AHLERS IS NEW AGRONOMIST FOR SOUTHEAST IOWA
WASHINGTON, Iowa – Rebecca Ahlers has been selected as field agronomist for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, replacing Mark Carlton who retired in March. In this position she will assist ag professionals, crop producers, seed growers and agribusinesses in Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Lucas, Mahaska, Marion, Monroe, Van Buren, Wapello and Wayne counties.

Ahlers earned a bachelor’s degree in agronomy from Iowa State University in May 2014, with an emphasis in agroecology, the whole systems approach to agriculture and food systems. Graduating with honors, she has a minor in journalism and mass communications. While attending Iowa State, Ahlers worked as an assistant focus group moderator with the Women, Food, and Agriculture Network in Ames, a peer mentor with the ISU Department of Agronomy’s New Student Learning Community, and as a summer reporter for the Le Mars Daily Sentinel.

Prior to joining Extension and Outreach, Ahlers was the Emerging Leader Agronomist at DuPont Pioneer’s Production Plant in Durant, Iowa. Ahlers mentored summer crop scouts in the Durant area and was a valuable resource as a seed corn production agronomist. Ahlers also interned with DuPont Pioneer for two years as agronomy sciences intern in Johnston, Iowa, where she helped manage the Johnston Expo showplots and co-authored the Crop Insights (2012) article “Foliar Fungicide and Insecticide Use in Soybeans.” She also co-edited the Growing Point Agronomy booklets “Growing Productivity with Innovative Research” (2013) for corn and soybeans. Ahlers grew up on her family’s farm in northwest Iowa near Le Mars, where they raised beef cattle, corn and soybeans. For nine years, she was an active member of the Plymouth County 4-H program. Ahlers can be contacted through the Washington County Extension Office at 319-653-4811 or rka8@iastate.edu. Follow her on Twitter @rebecca_ahlers.

Stay Informed - www.extension.iastate.edu/keokuk