



**Lyon County - O'Brien County - Osceola County - Sioux County**

# **CLIPPINGS**

*A Weekly Column from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach*

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## **Week of October 10, 2016 For Immediate Release**

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### **Farms Across Iowa are Open to Visitors**

*Alyssa Dick, Value Added Agriculture*

*Margaret Murphy, Horticulture Educator and Regional Food Coordinator*

Visiting an operating farm can be a tremendous learning experience, and a fun experience. Seeing how the farm operates and the effort that goes into growing crops or raising livestock provides a fresh appreciation for the food we consume every day.

To encourage visits to farms, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has relaunched its Visit Iowa Farms website at [www.visitiowafarms.org](http://www.visitiowafarms.org). The website serves as a database of farms across the state willing to host visitors.

"Users are now able to find a farm by adventure type, county or distance from a specific location," said Alyssa Dick, agritourism program specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach. "We hope the newly designed website is more easily accessible for users to find farms across the state."

Agritourism continues to grow in the state of Iowa. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture there were 275 farms in the state open to the public.

Farmers wanting to list their operations on the Visit Iowa Farms website can register through the site. After a review by the site's editors, the farm will be added to the directory. There is no charge for listing an operation on the website.

There are also resources for farmers such as producer regulations, business and marketing planning and legal considerations. These resources will help farmers as they set up and publicize their agritourism operation.

"The website is an easy way to find information that can help farmers improve their agritourism businesses," Dick said. "Farmers are also able to contact ISU Extension and Outreach staff if they have any additional questions."

The Visit Iowa Farms program is administered by the Value Added Agriculture program of ISU Extension and Outreach. The Value Added Agriculture program provides unbiased, science-based information to help establish or expand agricultural-related businesses in Iowa.

If you are interested in connecting with some local producers from right here in Northwest Iowa, we invite you to join us for our Harvest Dinner on Thursday, Oct. 20, featuring GoodEetens Produce Farm, Seven Wilson Farm, Boernsen Bees and Calico Skies Vineyard and Winery. The evening will begin with appetizers and wine tasting, followed by an introduction of the producers, and a menu of smoked pork and/or chicken, roasted butternut squash, herbed potatoes, maple glazed carrots, apple honey custard pie, and more! The event will take place at Willow Creek County Park and Recreation Area (5945 HWY 9, Ocheyedon, IA). The cost per person is \$35. Please note that seating is limited to the first 40 registrants. To register, call 712-472-2576 or online at <https://form.jotform.com/4Hregion1/2016-harvest-dinner>.

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