Euthanasia Workshops for Swine Producers
Matt Swantek, Swine Program Specialist

Animal advocacy groups have recently released recordings of production practices viewed by those groups as excessive and abusive. Without viewing the recordings, it is difficult to comment on the content. Based on news articles, one of the groups’ concerns is a method of euthanizing piglets that need to be relieved of pain and suffering. Euthanasia is a difficult subject and writing or speaking on this topic is uncomfortable, even for this professional. However, there comes a time when each swine farm faces the decision that euthanasia is needed due to illness, injury or some other unforeseen situation.

The National Pork Board and AASV has published “On-Farm Euthanasia of Swine – Options for the Producer” that can be downloaded at www.aasv.org/aasv/euthanasia.pdf. This booklet details eight accepted methods for swine euthanasia: 1) CO2 gas; 2) gunshot; 3) penetrating captive bolt; 4) non-penetrating captive bolt; 5) electrocution; 2) veterinarian administered anesthetic overdose; and 8) blunt trauma. These appropriate application of these methods are dependent upon; 1) size of pig; 2) training and skill level of personnel; 3) availability and/or cost of equipment; 4) risk to safety; 5) severity of situations; just to list a few. The design of the booklet is to aid producers in making appropriate decisions for euthanizing pigs.

Iowa State University Veterinary College has also made a concerted effort to provide science-based information on proper euthanasia techniques and the latest euthanasia technologies. See materials available at: http://vetmed.iastate.edu/HumaneEuthanasia

In late Spring 2014, ISU Swine Specialists will host workshops on these euthanasia technologies across the state for producers and allied industry personnel who own, manage or influence a sow herd will want to attend. Watch Field and Feedlot as well as ISU Extension websites for dates, times, and locations for these workshops.

The main take-home points are for producers to review their options in their standards of operations for euthanizing pigs. Ask the following questions:
• Are the procedures documented and processes reviewed on a regular basis?
• Are personnel properly trained, and is the procedure being performed correctly and in a timely manner?
• Are there better alternatives?
• Have all safety concerns been addressed and being followed?
• Are personnel working within the production unit properly trained on animal welfare issues, and do they understand the needs of the owner?

Often, the best measure of animal welfare is the level of performance. Animals do not thrive within an environment or husbandry practices that are detrimental to their health and well-being.

Related to swine welfare, Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv) continues to plague producers. More cases across the nation are being reported, and devastating piglet death loss continues disrupting pig flows and economic stability. The 2013 Swine Disease conference held in Ames on November 15 brought veterinarians from the Midwestern states to share their experiences and trials dealing with the complex virus. Similar to TGE, this virus is expected to get worse this winter due to the wet and cold. The main spread of the virus is by fecal to oral contact and biosecurity practices will continue to be the focus of each production unit even if the unit has experienced this disease.

Finally, please take note of other upcoming swine production events:
Feedlot and Cow-Calf Issues
Beth Ellen Doran, Beef Program Specialist

Feedlot Forum 2014 – Cattle feeders and agri-business professionals are invited to attend this day-long program on January 21 at the Terrace View Event Center in Sioux Center. The Forum, which will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., features timely issues affecting northwest Iowa feedlot producers. Along with the forum, participants will also enjoy a trade show displaying new products in animal health, beef nutrition and facilities.

Ken Hessenius, supervisor for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Field Office 3, will discuss small, medium and large CAFO inspections. The IDNR will be operating under a revised protocol that may include a desktop assessment or a combination of a desktop assessment and on-site feedlot inspection. Ken will share what is involved in an inspection and how a producer might prepare for it.

Rick Stowell, associate professor of Biological Systems Engineering at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will focus on air quality regulations for beef feedlots. Currently, large permitted feedlots are required to report air emissions for ammonia and hydrogen sulfide. However, there has been much discussion about regulating dust in agriculture. Rick will focus on current rules and what might be emerging.

Jan Shearer, professor in Veterinary Livestock Production and Animal Medicine at Iowa State University, will visit about hairy heel wart - a common and painful wart-like growth on the feet of cattle that causes lameness. It is estimated to affect 40% of the dairy herds in the Midwest and is becoming more common in feedlot cattle. Dr. Shearer will discuss cause, treatment and prevention.

Matt Deppe, executive director for the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, will present an update on association activities and issues relevant to Iowa cattle producers.

There is currently a trend for more feedlot cattle to be sold on a grid formula, which reduces the number of cattle sold on the spot market. Yet, the base price for the grid formula is determined by cattle sold on the spot market. Ed Greiman, president of the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, will visit about a national cash market study and how formula grids may affect market price for finished cattle.

Other factors, such as the shortage of feeder cattle, competition for grain and the general economy, may likely pressure cattle feeding profits. Andrew Gottschalk, Sr. Vice President of RJ O’Brien and Associates, will close the forum with a discussion on market situation and outlook for both cattle and grains.

Registration ($25/person) is due at the Sioux County Extension Office by January 15. Brochures will be mailed in December, but for more information, contact Beth Doran at 712-737-4230 or doranb@iastate.edu.

Financial Impact of the 2012 Drought

This is the final article regarding the impact of the 2012 drought. Holly Enerson and Dallas Van Gelder, Dordt College students, summarized 110 replies from a survey mailed to over 300 Iowa cow-calf producers in NW Iowa. The purpose of the survey was to determine how the 2012 drought impacted cow-calf operations and how producers intended to manage the aftermath of the drought. Drought has the potential to impact the financial position of cow-calf operations in various ways, depending upon how the operation is managed. Feed prices go up and can thin the pocketbook. Heat associated with a drought year may cause reproductive issues, which can lead to loss of income in the following calving seasons.

This survey asked producers how drought impacted them financially (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Financial Impact of the 2012 Drought on NW Iowa Cow-Calf Operations

The majority, 75%, of the operations indicated the drought had little impact on their financial position, and they felt their finances would be similar to the previous year. These producers likely had a sufficient supply of home-grown feed and would not have had to purchase high-priced feedstuffs.

Approximately 25% responded that their financial position would be poorer. Ten percent indicated they would need to borrow operating capital. To cope with decreased income and increased expenses, some producers reported they would sell part of their cows, sell the 2012 calves and/or sell the 2012 replacement heifers.

Surprisingly, a few producers indicated that their financial position was stronger in 2012 compared to 2011. Drought did not affect some areas of northwest Iowa quite as much. Perhaps these producers sold extra feed for additional income, and usually feed prices during drought are higher-priced compared to normal growing conditions. Despite this, the aftermath of a drought has the potential to linger into the consecutive year.

Understanding CSR2 – an updated farmland assessment system
Paul Kassel, Crops Field Specialist

Corn suitability rating (CSR) was initially developed in 1948 by Iowa State University scientists in response to a request by the Taylor County assessor who sought to use the recently completed county soil survey to equalize assessment of farmland. The CSR system was further developed and first published in 1971, reflecting expertise of ISU scientists and their multiyear detailed analysis on productivity of Iowa farmland. CSR development was driven by the need for an index system that would minimize the impact of management and allow for the equalization of farmland assessment based on inherent soil productivity.

The primary purpose of CSR and now CSR2 is for assessment of agricultural land. The Iowa Code mandates the use of modern soil surveys for equalization of ag land within each county. CSR minimizes the impact of management and allows for comparison of farmland based on the productivity of the tract of land. Corn suitability ratings are now also used to predict crop yields, adjust rent values and compare land sale values. These uses are by-products of the original intent of the CSR.
The knowledge base of soil properties has changed since 1971. The current system for soil classification was not in place 40 years ago. Today, more than 500 soil series are recognized in Iowa, 150 more than when the CSR was first published.

Iowa State University is releasing a new method to determine CSR values for Iowa soils. This update, called “CSR2,” generally provides an index comparable with the original CSR but with greater transparency, consistency and method of calculation. A key feature is to provide a system that allows any interested person (e.g., a county assessor, farmer, realtor) to readily and clearly understand the factors used to calculate CSR.

Four factors used in calculating CSR2 are: (1) Inherent soil properties; (2) specific field conditions captured by each soil map unit; (3) soil depth (60 to 80 inches) and erosion resilience; and (4) expert judgment. Expert judgment reflects the fact that soil productivity is a complex property that extends beyond readily observable soil properties, site conditions and local climate. Expert judgment factors will be decided by mutual agreement between ISU scientists and local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil scientists.

The CSR2 values are available on the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Iowa soil properties and interpretations (ISPAID) database (http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm). The file called ‘preliminary – Subject to revision’ can be downloaded. This file has CSR and CSR2 info for each soil mapping unit in Iowa.

One area of concern regarding the CSR2 is the effect on land value assessments. The CSR2 values will be used in the same way CSR is used now. The main intent will be to equalize tax assessments on ag land. Property taxes may change indirectly because of CSR2. However, the change will be related to the net earning capacity of ag land. The net earning capacity of the land has increased in recent years because of increased commodity values.

There will be noticeable increases in CSR2 values for farmland in parts of western and northwest Iowa. The rainfall adjustment factor has been dropped from the CSR2 calculation. Normal rainfall applies to all soils in western and northwest Iowa. The rainfall adjustment factor has been extended beyond readily observable soil properties, site conditions and local climate. Expert judgment factors will be decided by mutual agreement between ISU scientists and local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil scientists.

The topics of the program will discuss what a producer should know before they start building or expanding a livestock farm. It is important to select the most neighbor/environmentally friendly location for the facility, to be aware of and accurately complete all components of the permitting process, and to understand the potentially wide variation in manure value.

Dave will discuss the value of manure. Today’s swine nutritionist is able to change the nutrient content of manure substantially. Because the first manure plan must be based from book values, a basic understanding of how swine diets impact manure nutrient value is essential.

Kris will be discussing various regulations and give insights regarding the process of siting in a new livestock facility. The Internet today has many free sites that can be explored to measure distances to optimize locating the sites.

The coalition to support Iowa’s Farmers will outline the services they offer for farmers to maintain good community relationships so that livestock farms maintain good reputation in Iowa.

Space is limited. Please call the Cherokee County Extension and Outreach office to register at 712-225-6196. See more details at www.extension.iastate.edu/cherokee.

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CLIPPINGS - Poinsettias Make the Season Bright

By: Beth Ellen Doran, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Beef Program Specialist

It’s the holidays and that time of the year when people are decorating their house, lawn and rooms with lights, wreaths, bows, and of course, the familiar poinsettia.

The poinsettia is the most popular Christmas season plant, with the red color prevalent in 75% of the homes. But, you would be surprised at the variety of new colors and shapes that are springing up across America. Poinsettias now range the gamut of red, white (really cream), pink, coral, and plum.

And then, there are special effects! I’m sure you have seen some of these –poinsettias that are marbled, speckled or splashed. Usually these special effects are in shades of red, pink and cream.

But, the variety doesn’t stop there. There is a variegated poinsettia, where the leaves are a mixture of green and cream.

And if this doesn’t offer you enough choices—there are miniature poinsettias and the “rose” poinsettia, where the colorful leaves curve inward, creating a flower that resembles a rose.

So, how do you go about selecting a poinsettia? The color, special effects and leaf shape are up to you, but there are some basic tips in purchasing a poinsettia. Poinsettia plants are priced according to the number of blooms—those with more blooms are more expensive. To make the most of your purchase, look for plants with bright green foliage all along the stem and a number of brightly colored leaves on each stem.

Next, check out the “flower.” Actually, most of us think the colored part is the flower. But, really this part of the poinsettia is the leaf, or what florists technically call “bracts”. The true flower of the poinsettia is in the center of the bract and is small and yellow. Select plants that have the least amount of pollen showing from the true flower. Plants with old flowers that have shed most of their pollen will drop their brightly colored bracts sooner.

A word of caution—be sure to wrap your plant before you take it outside. Sudden drops in temperature to 50°F or below can cause wilting and premature dropping of the bracts. Poinsettias usually do best when placed in a room that is 60-70°F with high relative humidity and maximum sunlight. This is natural since the poinsettia is native to Mexico.

Water your poinsettia when the soil feels dry to the touch. Always add enough water so that it drains from the pot. This will require that you punch a hole in the foil that usually wraps the pot. Do not allow the plant to stand in excess water.

For a new adventure this season, try using poinsettias as a cut flower for short-term arrangements. The trick is to cut the stem between the nodes and seal the stem to prevent the milky sap from leaching out. The stem can be sealed by dipping the cut end in boiling water for 30 seconds or searing it with a flame. Then place it immediately in cool water. Be sure to protect the bloom and rest of the stem from the heat while sealing the cut end. To extend the life of the flower, recut and seal the stem periodically.

This season experiment, have fun and make the season bright with your poinsettia. Happy Holidays!

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Contact:
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Email: doranb@iastate.edu Office: 712-737-4230
Events at ISU Extension-Lyon County

UPCOMING PROGRAMS - Call 712-472-2576 to confirm dates and times. Thanks!

Commercial Pesticide Applicators Training - 2013
Dec 4 - 9:00 am - Pest Control Operators
Dec 9 - 9:00 am - Aerial Applicators

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - 2013-2014
Dec 12 - 9:30 am - Legion Hall, Paullina
Dec 16 - 9:30 am - Sioux County Extension, Orange City
Dec 17 - 9:30 am - Forster Community Center, Rock Rapids
Dec 17 - 1:30 pm - Presbyterian Church, Sibley
Jan 16 - 7:00 pm - Sioux County Extension, Orange City
Feb 7 - 1:30 pm - Sioux County Extension, Orange City
Feb 13 - 7:00 pm - Community Center, Inwood
Mar 4 - 1:30 pm - Community Center, Primghar
Mar 20 - 1:30 pm - Community Center, George
Mar 20 - 7:00 pm - Presbyterian Church, Sibley
Last Chance: Apr 8 - 7:00 pm - Building A; NCC, Sheldon

Pesticide Applicator Testing - 2013
10:00 am - 2:00 pm  Pesticide Bureau - (515) 281-8591
http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/Pesticide/pesticidetesting.asp
Dec 2 - O’Brien County Extension, Primghar - 712-957-5045
Dec 9 - Woodbury County Extension, Sioux City - 712-276-2157

Commercial Manure Applicator Training - 2013 - RESHOW
Dec 12 - 9:00 am - Extension Office, Rock Rapids

Commercial Manure Applicator Training - 2014
Jan 7 - 9:00 am - Extension Office, Rock Rapids
Jan 7 - 1:00 pm - Extension Office, Rock Rapids

Confinement Site Manure Applicator Training - 2013 RESHOW
Dec 12 - 1:30 pm - Extension Office, Rock Rapids

Confinement Site Manure Applicator Training - 2013 RESHOW
Feb 3 - 1:30 pm - Forster Community Center, Rock Rapids

Manure Applicator Testing
DNR Field Office #3, Spencer - (712) 262-4711
http://www.iowadnr.gov/

Nature Explore Program
Apr 10, 2014 - 6:30 pm - AB Room: Forster Community Center, Rock Rapids

Master Gardener Training
Jan 16, 2014 - 6:00 pm - Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon

PUBLICATIONS

Cash Rental Rate Survey - 2013
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/pdf/c2-10.pdf

Custom Rate Survey - 2013
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/pdf/a3-10.pdf

Farmer's Tax Guides - 2012

Happy Holidays
**LYON COUNTY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotlines Available For All</th>
<th>Hotlines Available to Iowa Residents Only</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iowa Concern (800-447-1985)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Families Answer Line (800-262-3804)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Farm On (877-BFC-1999)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hortline (515) 294-3108</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teen Line (800-443-8336)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Iowa Healthy Families (800-369-2229)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>BETS OFF (800-BETS-OFF) (800-238-7633)</strong></td>
<td><strong>PORKLine (800-808-7675)</strong></td>
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**Don't Miss:**
- Dec. 2  IDALS Pesticide Testing  Primghar
- Dec. 3  Advanced Swine Reproduction Seminar  Sheldon
- Dec. 5  Goal Setting & Belonging: 4-H Volunteers Continuing Education Series  Sheldon
- Dec. 6  Expanding Livestock Farming in your Future?  Cherokee
- Dec. 10  Cover Crop Meeting  Boyden
- Jan. 16  Master Gardener Training starts  Sheldon
- Jan. 21  Feedlot Forum 2014  Sioux Center
- Jan. 28  Heifer Development 2: Maintaining Your Investment  Spencer
- Jan. 29  Heifer Development 2: Maintaining Your Investment  Holstein

**Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Dates & Locations:**
- Dec. 12  Paullina Legion Hall  9:30 a.m.
- Dec. 16  Sioux County Extension Office  9:30 a.m.
- Dec. 17  Rock Rapids Forster Community Center  9:30 a.m.
- Dec. 17  Sibley Presbyterian Church  1:30 p.m.
- Dec. 18  Spencer Schools Admin Bldg.  9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
- Dec. 19  Kingsley Community Center  9:30 a.m.