Feedlot Facility Workshops Coming in February and March

By Russ Euken, ISU Extension Program Specialist, 641-923-2856, reuken@iastate.edu

AMES, Iowa -- The Iowa Beef Center at Iowa State University will offer several workshops focusing on choices in feedlot facilities in February and March 2015. Russ Euken, ISU Extension and Outreach beef program specialist, said the workshops, set in various locations throughout the state, will offer an overview of facility types, advantages and disadvantages, and review research on these types.

"Using several scenarios, workshop participants will work on making appropriate choices for an operation including financing decisions, cost benefit measurements, and production and environmental risk management," Euken said. "Tools and decision aids to help producers analyze the choices of facility type and cost will be used and available to participants."

He said the intent of the workshops is to involve producers in working through the decision-making process for their specific operations.

Producers can reserve their spot and meal by contacting their ISU Extension and Outreach beef program specialist. The registration fee of $20 per person will be collected at the door.

All workshops will run from 9:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the following dates at these locations in our area:

- Feb. 18, Nashua - Borlaug Center meeting room, Northeast Research Farm
- Feb. 24, Manchester - Delaware County Extension office
- Feb. 25, Dewitt - Clinton County Extension office
- Feb. 26, Ames - Hansen Ag Student Learning Center, Iowa State University
- March 3, Emmetsburg - Iowa Lakes Community College
- March 9, Tama - Tama County Extension office

Managing Input Costs and Farm Profitability

Many north-central Iowa farmers will face challenges trying to maintain positive cash flows with the current grain prices and costs of production. Input costs have risen over time, world grain production has increased driven by higher prices and more than half of Iowa farmland is rented.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Mitchell County is hosting a meeting on Monday February 23rd, at 10:00 A.M. to provide information on ways to lower costs and increase revenues.

The meeting will be held at the V.F.W. located at 3693 Hwy. 218, Osage. The meeting is approximately 2 hours in length.

The presenters will be Terry Basol, Extension Agronomist, and Kelvin Leibold, Farm Management Specialist. Basol will discuss strategies to lower costs including, fertility management strategies to consider, as well as how to utilize the Corn Nitrogen Rate Calculator. Leibold will discuss the current grain market, utilizing options to manage risk, updates on crop insurance, impact of the Farm Bill on cash flow and profitability, and tools to use when negotiating rents.

"Due to changes in commodity markets, rents, and government programs farmland owners and tenants have more decisions this year than in previous years", says Kelvin Leibold, Farm Management Specialist. Registration is free. Pre-register by February 20, 2015 by calling the Mitchell County Extension and Outreach office at 641-732-5574.
Yard and Garden: Avoid Problems with Stored Produce
By Richard Jauron, Horticulture, 515-294-1871, rjauron@iastate.edu
As Iowa gardeners dig into the produce they harvested in the fall, they may be having issues with produce storage, leading to disappointment.

Why are my potatoes beginning to sprout?
Potatoes should be stored at a temperature of 40 F and relative humidity of 90 to 95 percent. Tubers often begin to sprout if storage temperatures are above 50 F. Also, don’t store potatoes with apples or other fruits. Fruits produce ethylene gas. Ethylene promotes sprouting of potatoes.

My onions don’t store well. Why?
The storage life of onions is largely determined by the variety (cultivar), harvesting and drying procedures, and storage conditions. When selecting onions, choose cultivars that store well, such as ‘Copra,’ ‘Stuttgart’ and ‘Red Zeppelin,’ ‘Walla Walla,’ ‘Candy,’ and ‘White Sweet Spanish’ are poor keepers.

ISU Students Part of Global Challenge to Reduce Food Insecurity
From ISU Department of Economics News-Posted Jan 23, 2015
Olivia Reicks and Trey Forsyth want to be part of the solution to end world hunger. It's a daunting task considering that it will take a 70 percent increase in food production by 2050 to meet the demands of a growing global population, but that only serves as motivation for the two Iowa State University undergrads.

Iowa Pesticide Education Program Updates Name
By Betsy Buffington, bbuffing@iastate.edu and Kristine Schaefer, schaefer@iastate.edu, ISU Department of Entomology
Effective December 1, the Pest Management and the Environment (PME) program at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will be known as Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP). The name change better describes the programs offered, audiences served and reflects the program’s emphasis on providing educational information throughout Iowa on the safe and effective use of pesticides.

During 2013, PSEP and other Iowa State University Extension and Outreach staff provided Continuing Instructional Course (CIC) training to nearly 26,000 certified applicators who control weeds, insects, disease-causing organisms, rodents and other pests in agricultural cropping systems, forests, structures, turf, ornamentals, rights-of-way, aquatic areas and other important sites. In addition to in-person and distance pesticide safety education training, over 22,000 PSEP Extension publications were distributed in the past year.

For more information about PSEP and its programs, go to www.extension.iastate.edu/psep. To access PSEP extension publications, visit the ISU Extension and Outreach Online Store at http://store.extension.iastate.edu.

Wind Erosion in Iowa
By Mahdi Al-Kaisi, Professor, ISU Agronomy Department, 515.294.8304, malkaisi@iastate.edu
Wind erosion occurs in Iowa even during winter. Its effect is especially noticeable when the snow is covered with black sediments from the erosive force of wind, even at subzero temperatures (Photo 1 and 2).

Water erosion is also a major concern. Erosion caused by water far exceeds the amount of sediment loss by wind because of the high volume of precipitation, and its powerful erosive effects on removing sediments and associated organic matter and nutrients to water ways. However, wind erosion contributes to the significant loss of top soil, especially the loss of organic matter at the soil surface.

Read more online at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2015/0127AlKaisi.htm

Iowa Land Values Survey Results & Outlook
Information is posted at: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/articles/duffy/DuffyJan15.html
ISU Extension and Outreach Has Retirement Resources for Every Age
By Barb Wollan, Human Sciences Extension and Outreach, Family Finance, 515-832-9597, bwollan@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa -- No matter how close or far Iowans are from retirement, the new “Retirement: Secure Your Future” Web page from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will help them prepare, said Barb Wollan, a human sciences specialist in family finance. Visit the “Retirement: Secure Your Future” Web page at www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/retirement.

Iowa Learning Farms Webinars
The ILF webinars are held on the third Wednesday of each month, and the live broadcasts will be at 1 p.m. The webinars are free, and all that is needed to participate is a computer with Internet access. To connect to the webinar, go to: https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/ at 1 p.m. on the afternoon of the webinar and log in through the “guest” option.

All past webinars are archived and can be watched anytime on the ILF website: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/Webinars/. Over 45 webinars include soil erosion, cover crops, buffers, bioreactors, and farmer perspectives.

Iowa Beef Center Releases ‘Cattle Bidder’ App
By Garland Dahlke, Iowa Beef Center, 515-294-9910, garland@iastate.edu and Sherry Hoyer, Iowa Beef Center/Iowa Pork Industry Center, 515-294-4496, shoyer@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa – Cattle feeders, order buyers and bankers now have a tool from the Iowa Beef Center to help them make cattle buying decisions. Garland Dahlke said the newly released “Cattle Bidder” app can help users determine maximum bids on feeder cattle purchases. The program also can account for potential death losses.

“The user enters the purchase and sale weights, the expected cost of gain and the desired margin, and the app calculates the maximum purchase price,” he said. “It’s a simple app, but is handy for buyers who know their cost of gain and expected market price by cattle type.”

Cattle Bidder is for Android 2.2 phones and tablets, and is available as a free download from the IBC website at http://www.iowabeefcenter.org/Software/CattleBidder.apk and on Google Play at https://play.google.com/store/search?q=cattlebidder&c=apps&hl=en.

New Corn Coproducts Fact Sheet Series Available from IBC
By Dan Loy, Iowa Beef Center, 515-294-1058, dloy@iastate.edu
AMES, Iowa -- In an effort to extract more value from the corn kernel, new technological advances in the ethanol-making process have resulted in coproduct feedstuffs that are compositionally different from those produced through earlier, more traditional methods. Coproducts can be vital components of beef cattle diets, and Iowa Beef Center director Dan Loy said it’s important for producers to understand what’s available and how best to use them.

All six of the publications in this series, “Ethanol Coproducts for Beef Cattle,” have been peer-reviewed and offer the latest information based on research and demonstration projects. All are available for download at no cost through individual links at http://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/IBCR200A.

Here are the publication numbers, titles, authors and topic summaries:
• IBCR 200A, “The Process and Products,” by Erika Lundy and Dan Loy. This publication includes a review of the ethanol process and new nutrient composition tables based on recent analysis and research.
• IBCR 200B, “The Changing Distillers Grains for Feedlot Cattle,” by Erika Lundy and Dan Loy. Included in this review of current and recent cattle feeding studies is a summary of comparisons between distillers grains that vary in oil content and the resultant change in feeding value.
• IBCR 200C “Factors Affecting the Economics of Coproducts in Cattle Rations” by Dan Loy and Erika Lundy. Various approaches to determining economic value of corn coproduts are reviewed in this publication.
• IBCR 200D, “Distillers Grains for Beef Cows,” by Taylor Geppert and Patrick Gunn. This publication provides an overview of the use of distillers grains as a cost effective supplementation strategy for beef cow rations utilizing medium-low quality forages.
• IBCR 200E, “Handling and Storage Considerations,” by Patrick Gunn, Taylor Geppert and Dan Loy. Small- to medium-sized beef producers can effectively utilize wet corn coproducts through long-term storage strategies outlined in this pub.
• IBCR 200F, “Avoiding Negative Effects of High Dietary Sulfur,” by Mary Drewnoski, Dan Loy and Stephanie Hansen. Through nutritional management techniques outlined in this publication, cattle feeders can feed higher levels of distillers grains that contain elevated sulfur concentrations.
Wednesday, February 18, 2015
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM  Seed Treatment Pesticide Applicator Training, Categories 4 & 10, Extension and Outreach Office, Osage/Mitchell County
3:20 PM - 4:30 PM  Clover Kids St. Ansgar 2nd & 3rd Grade  St. Ansgar/Mitchell County

Thursday, February 19, 2015
3:05 PM - 4:30 PM  Clover Kids Osage Third Grade, Lincoln Elementary, Osage/Mitchell County

Monday, February 23, 2015
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  Managing Input Costs and Farm Profitability, Call to pre-register by Feb. 20th, VFW, Hwy. 218 N., Osage/Mitchell County

Wednesday, February 25, 2015
7:00 AM - 6:00 PM  4-H - State Legislative Trip, Capitol Bldg, Des Moines
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  Statewide Log on and Learn: How to Improve My Credit Score  Bring your lunch and join us at the Extension and Outreach Office, Osage /Mitchell County

Thursday, February 26, 2015
3:05 PM - 4:30 PM  Clover Kids Osage Kindergarten, Lincoln Elementary, Osage/Mitchell County
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM  4-H Leader Training, Extension and Outreach Office, Osage/Mitchell County