



Ag & Hort Update

Quarterly/January 2021

Shelby County Extension

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Here is some information for you. Stop in to visit, call or e-mail, we're always ready to help!

Paulette Madson

Ag and Natural Resources Program Coordinator

Upcoming Events:

Commercial Pesticide Training – February through March

Private Pesticide Training-Vets Auditorium February 2nd and at the Extension Office- must pre-register. Call: (712)755-3104

Virtual Farmers' Coffees-Ongoing-check our Facebook Page

Farm Management

Webinars from ISU Extension and Outreach

Farm Transitions in 2021 and Beyond –

January 21, 2021 | 7:00 PM

A free one-hour live webinar featuring David Baker, director, ISU Beginning Farmer Center and Melissa O'Rourke, Farm & Agribusiness Management Specialist, ISU Extension and Outreach.

David will dive into the initial planning stages for farm transitions: values, vision, and goals as well as tips to address communication issues that often arise. Melissa will discuss taking inventory and crunching the numbers; understanding federal estate and Iowa inheritance tax issues, and building your professional team. Presentation will be 50 minutes with time for questions. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation e-mail with instructions and link for joining the webinar. Initial questions for the presenters can be sent to agdm@iastate.edu.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
Shelby County

Additional webinars and events from ISU Extension and Outreach

- [ISU Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation](#)
- [Ag and Natural Resources - Program Services](#)
- [CropsTV](#)
- [Extension Crops Team](#)
- [Iowa Pork Industry Center](#)
- [Iowa Beef Center](#)
- [Driftless Region Beef Conference](#) - January 26-28, 2021
- [Human Sciences](#)

Farmland Leasing Videos

- [Farmland Leasing Overview](#) with Steve Johnson, ISU Extension Farm Management Field Specialist
- Farmland Leasing and Management: Landowner-Producer Communication and Agreements | 3 part series with Melissa O'Rourke, ISU Extension Farm and Agribusiness Management Field Specialist
 - Part 1 | [Resources, Survey, Communication](#)
 - Part 2 | [Legal issues, Written leases, Lease termination, Conservation, Managing Stress](#)
 - Part 3 | [How to use the cash rent survey, Methods to set cash rents, Flexible cash rent](#)

Additional leasing resources from ISU Extension and Outreach can be found on the [Ag Decision Maker Leasing webpage](#).

For questions, contact your [ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Specialist](#).

Updated January 5, 2021

Deductible Livestock Costs for Adjusting 2020 Income Tax Returns

FM 1421 Revised December 2020

Estimated deductible costs of production for use in adjusting farm expenses to exclude the cost of producing home-consumed farm produce.

Prepared by Alejandro Plastina extension economist
plastina@iastate.edu

Pork \$33 per 100 pounds liveweight \$87 per head
Beef \$96 per 100 pounds liveweight \$737 per head
Lamb \$62 per 100 pounds liveweight \$78 per head
Broilers \$ 1.35 per 4-pound bird
Eggs \$ 0.95 per dozen
Milk \$11.40 per 100 pounds or \$ 0.98 per gallon

The above costs include all cash costs, depreciation, and deductible production costs of home-raised feed. No charge is made for the farm operator's labor. If hired labor or purchased grain and roughages are used to produce these products, or if high interest costs are incurred, the costs should be increased accordingly. In arriving at production costs, it was assumed that the young animals were raised and fed.

Farm Financial Planning Program

Farm Financial Planning is Iowa State University Extension and Outreach's farm financial analysis program. It consists of one-on-one financial counseling, a computerized analysis of the farm business, and referral to other extension programs or outside services that may be useful.

Associate Contact Information

Who is it for?

Farm Financial Planning is for anyone who wants to understand a complete picture of their farm financial situation. It helps take the guesswork out of whether or not a change would increase profitability and improve cash flow. Using **FINPACK software**, the analysis may provide a more in-depth evaluation of the farm business, which many lenders are requiring before they will extend further credit.

What does it do?

Farm Financial Planning helps you evaluate your farm business and determine whether or not a change is desirable. It provides an in-depth plan for the farm business so the operator and the lender can make decisions for the future. Farm Financial Planning helps answer three basic questions of sound business management.

- Where am I today?
- Where do I want to be in the future?
- How do I get there?

The computer analysis looks at profitability, liquidity, solvency, and risk-bearing ability. This information is provided for three or more alternative plans at a time. Examples of alternative plans could be the addition, expansion, or phasing out of a livestock operation, or buying, selling, or renting land. Farm Financial Planning can help evaluate ways to correct negative cash flow and profitability problems.

A trained extension associate meets with the family to discuss the results of the analysis and the possible effects if changes are made. The extension worker may introduce other farm and family financial materials or information about outside sources of help.

How much does it cost?

This service is offered at no charge. It is funded by the Agricultural Credit School, a program of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the Iowa Bankers Association.

Who performs the analysis?

The Farm Financial Management associates are part-time extension employees with college degrees and special training in farm budgeting and financial analysis. They have farm backgrounds so they understand the current farm situation.

Is it confidential?

Yes. Only you and the associate will know the results of the analysis. Information will not be shared with other people without your permission.

How long does it take?

The first meeting with the associate to provide information from your records usually takes at least two hours. The second meeting may take anywhere from one to three hours. The time required is dependent upon the size and complexity of the operation.

What steps should I take before meeting with an associate?

How do I make an appointment?

To set up an appointment, contact the **associate** in your area. For more information, contact your **ISU Extension farm management field specialist**.

Swine Resources:

- **Since 2005, PorkBridge has provided relevant and timely information to grow-finish swine producers and other industry professionals across the U.S. and around the world.**
- The 2021 program year series begins Feb. 4 and continues on an every-other-month for six total sessions. **The program is a source of relevant and accurate information for those who own, manage or work in swine grow-finish facilities, according to Iowa State University animal science professor and extension swine specialist, Ken Stalder, who is the Iowa contact for PorkBridge.**
- **SowBridge, the distance educational series for those who work with sows, boars and piglets, and with genetic and reproductive issues, begins its next program year in February 2021, and registration is now underway.** This opportunity pairs electronically provided materials with live presentations via teleconference. **Suggestions from past participants help with planning the next year's topics and speakers, and maintain the program's value, according to Ken Stalder, Iowa State University animal science professor and extension swine specialist.**
- **Iowa Pork Industry Center at Iowa State University has scheduled a series of six virtual certification sessions for PQA Plus Advisors in 2021, and applications are now being accepted for all of them. Iowa State extension swine veterinarian Chris Rademacher will teach the sessions, set for February 12, April 9, June 11, August 13, October 8 and December 10.**

Cow-Calf Commentary for Iowa Cattleman Magazine

By Beth Reynolds, Extension Beef Specialist and Erika Lundy, Extension Beef Specialist

January 2021

10 cost saving tips to add to your 2021 resolutions

- 1. Make a marketing plan early and stick to it.** This includes a plan for calves, open or late bred cows, injured bulls, and retired breeding stock. Keep market price seasonalities in mind and schedule traditional management schemes like preg checking and weaning early to avoid marketing during seasonal lows. If facilities and feed resources allow, it may be advantageous to feed young or thin cows for 60-75 days, early wean calves, or background calves to hit a more ideal market.
- 2. Add a new rotation into the grazing season.** Beef cattle enterprise records have consistently shown grazing days is positively correlated to profit potential. To increase grazing days, consider stockpiling forages like tall fescue or hay acres, utilizing cool and warm season annual forages, and grazing corn residue. Feed costs for grazing corn residue this past fall was approximately \$0.40/cow/day at \$12/acre rent compared to \$1.70/cow/day when accounting for establishment costs of grazing cover crops, while feeding stored hay was \$2.50/cow/day at \$125/ton hay.
- 3. Improve pasture productivity.** Routine soil sampling is necessary to address soil fertility needs including soil pH, phosphorus, and potassium to support and enhance forage growth. Split nitrogen application in spring and fall can help match yield potential with grazing pressure. Rotational grazing, controlling weed presence, interseeding new species, and revitalizing thin sidehills or winter feeding areas also increase yield. Sometimes the best remedy for improving forage yields is simply allowing pastures to rest.
- 4. Capitalize on maternal heterosis.** Crossbred females hold several production and reproduction advantages over straight-bred or purebred females. Crossbred females are more likely to conceive earlier in the breeding season consecutively, wean a higher percentage of calf crop, wean heavier calves, and provide an improved immune response to calves. Perhaps the most valuable component of maternal heterosis is the increased longevity and stayability in the herd of approximately 1.3 years.
- 5. Condense the breeding season.** Females that calve early year after year provide greater profit potential compared to those who calve later. By narrowing the window, you are directly selecting for increased fertility, a more uniform calf crop when marketing, and decreased calf morbidity and mortality risk. Additionally, a condensed window simplifies management of breeding, nutrition, and health since females are at a similar stage of production.
- 6. Be strategic with mineral supplementation.** Remember specialty or seasonal minerals (ie - breeder's pack, fescue mineral) are formulated to provide a performance boost during a certain stage of production or time of year.
- 7. Calculate and know your Unit Cost of Production (UCOP).** For calves, the UCOP is typically figured as the cost per pound of calf produced (total expenses / total pounds of calves weaned). This calculation encompasses all expenses involved to produce a pound of calf from conception to weaning including feed, equipment, bull power, veterinarian costs, etc. By taking time to calculate this, informed marketing decisions can be made every year and serve as enterprise annual benchmark.
- 8. Manage more groups.** Separating cows based on age and nutritional needs allows for targeted feeding strategies, reduces competition, and reduces overall feed costs. If managed together, feeding to meet the requirements of first- or second-calf heifers results in overweight mature females and an expensive feed bill while feeding to meet mature female requirements hinders younger female performance and breed back rates.
- 9. Get a forage analysis.** Perhaps the greatest return on an investment is submitting and utilizing a forage nutrient analysis. For approximately \$25/forage sample, you can work with a nutritionist or extension beef specialist to design a supplementation strategy that will meet the true requirements of your herd. Overfeeding or underfeeding is an expensive mistake that can decrease production performance.
- 10. Keep records and use them!** In extension, we often encourage producers to keep better records, but remember, there's only value in having records if they are utilized! Take the time to get individual cow and calf data year-round and make informed selection decisions utilizing those records. Maintain a detailed, up-to-date feed inventory so that you can be proactive in finding affordable feed resources to fill possible gaps. Operations aren't likely to improve overtime if a record system isn't in place to track progress.

However, these packages are more expensive, so only feed for the intended time frame and utilize a more affordable mineral otherwise. There is value in buying in bulk, but be aware that vitamins included in the mineral will degrade overtime. Supplemental vitamins via mineral are most important during winter months when green forage isn't available.

Iowa Beef Center, 313 Kildee Hall, Iowa State University Ames, IA
50011-3150 Phone: 515-294-BEEF (2333), Fax: 515-294-3795, beefcenter@iastate.edu.

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Specialty Crops

Specialty crops risk management webinar series begins January 6

by Olivia Hanlon, FFED extension education specialist

The pandemic provided opportunity for specialty producers in Iowa to expand production and sales. But managing risk for specialty production is critical to capitalizing on new market opportunities.



The FFED Small Farms Team will sponsor a series of free webinars for specialty crop producers Jan. 6—March 10. They will feature new tools and resources on how to manage risk. The webinars will take place on consecutive Wednesdays over the noon hour. Please join us for any or all of the webinars! They will be presented live with time for Q&A, then archived on the [Small Farms page](#).

The 10 sessions will cover various risk management topics, each featuring different speakers. Topics will include Why is Risk Management Important, Types of insurance Policies and Options for Specialty Crops, Whole Farm Revenue Protection, Developing a Diversified Market & Profitable Crops, and Weather Patterns and Management Tools.

Sign up here for any or all of the webinars.

Dates and topics

Below is a list of dates, topics covered and speakers for each webinar.

Need more information? Contact Olivia Hanlon at ohanlon@iastate.edu.

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Local Produce

Register now for 2021 ISU Community Food Systems virtual event

The 7th Annual [ISU Community Food Systems Event](#) will take place **Friday, February 12, 2021!** Due to COVID-19, this event will take place entirely online, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Register for the**

conference here. Cost is \$20 and registration closes Feb. 5.



This year's event will focus on *Retail and Leadership Within Community Food Systems*, lifting up best practices around the nation in all community food systems areas. Join us to learn, engage, and discuss ways to promote community engagement, collective action and food systems projects.

The agenda includes a morning keynote from three food entrepreneurs: Todd Manly of Mutiny Island Vodka and Karla Fennessy of Quality Food (St. Croix, US Virgin Islands) and Taufeeq Shah of Lola's Fine Hot Sauces (Des Moines).

Two afternoon breakout sessions will cover three topics: business and organizational tools, community food access and minority-owned business strategies.

Find the full event program here.

Here is a brief overview of the agenda:

- 10:00 | Welcome
- 10:15 | Opening Keynote
- 11:15 | Breakouts, Morning Session
- 12:00 | Lunch Keynote & Lightning Round Presentations
- 1:00 | Breakouts, Afternoon Session
- 1:45 | Closing Keynote
- 3:00 | Adjourn

Pre-conference sessions Feb. 5

A **Local Food Leader Train the Trainer** workshop (\$200 for new certification, \$100 for recertification) and **Iowa Retail Initiative Champions** session (\$85) will be offered virtually on Friday, February 5. **Register for your choice of these sessions here.** Registration closes Jan. 29.

- The **LFL Train the Trainer** session is for people who have taken the Local Food Leader certification. This next-level training equips them to host Local Food Leader workshops in their own community.
- **Iowa Retail Initiative Champions**, from the ISU Extension and Outreach Community and Economic Development program, is coaching program designed to strengthen independent retail in Iowa communities. Attendees typically include planners and leaders in business development and anyone whose work supports small businesses.

Need more information? Contact Bre Miller at millerb@iastate.edu.

Market Ready Workshops

Are you a food producer who's considering whether to sell your products to wholesale markets? MarketReady is a virtual workshop series to help Iowa farmers sell food to restaurants, grocery stores, food service buyers, and schools.

This program is offered by county extension services; contact your local office to ask if they will sponsor a series in your area. FFED staff will work with them to schedule and deliver it.

The workshops address the market development risks and relationships farmers and ranchers need to manage as they plan to scale up. Each workshop includes a panel of area wholesale buyers who share information on what they are looking for from growers.



Workshop topics include:

- communications and relationship building
- packaging and labels
- supply and delivery
- post-harvest handling for produce
- grading
- insurance
- regulatory issues
- marketing

Questions? Contact Leigh Adcock, laadcock@iastate.edu.

Register now for Iowa Specialty Producers Conference Jan. 19-20

January 5, 2021

Register now for the [Iowa Specialty Producers Conference](#) on Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 19-20, 2021. This second joint gathering of the [Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association](#) and the [Iowa Wine Growers Association](#) will take place entirely online.



Agri-tainment consultant Hugh McPherson will keynote the 2021 ISPC.

Keynote speaker Hugh McPherson will share best practices for incorporating "agri-tainment" into a farming operation. He owns Maize Quest Fun Park near

York, Pennsylvania. He also advises a network of 80 more agritourism farms in the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom.

Five breakout tracks each day will feature sessions on fruits, vegetables, viticulture (wine-grape growing), enology (wine-making) and other specialty crops. Speakers include producers, industry experts and specialists from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

"We are excited for the opportunity to offer this year's conference virtually to our members and specialty producers in our state and beyond, said Kendra Meyer, FFED extension education specialist and member of the planning committee. "We have a great lineup of speakers giving talks on a wide variety of specialty crop management, business, and marketing."



The event also will feature virtual exhibitors offering products and services of interest to Iowa's specialty producers. For information on sponsoring, contact Christie Jensen at christie@iowawinegrowers.org. This event is supported by grant funding from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). Cost is \$90, with a discount for members of IFVGA and IWGA.

Horticulture

Become a Master Gardener

Who are Master Gardeners?

They are passionate about serving their communities and sharing gardening best practices. Master Gardener volunteers are individuals who have completed the Master Gardener training and share their time and expertise as volunteers in community gardens, city beautification projects, and farmers markets to name a few.

Important Dates

This year the Master Gardener Training will be offered online! www.extension.iastate.edu/news/master-gardener-training-be-held-online-fall

Before August 1, 2021 (start dates vary by location)

Steps to Become a Master Gardener

Apply online by August 1, 2021 to attend the training in a location near you

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Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.