

AG *newsletter*

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"The fees for service will be used to off-set direct expenses and to support the County Extension Program."

LATE HARVEST & CROP INSURANCE COVERAGE

William Edwards, Dept. of Economics

Iowa and other Corn Belt states are experiencing one of the latest and slowest harvest seasons on record. Some producers have had concerns about whether their crop insurance coverage will still be in effect if harvesting drags into December.

The standard policy for corn and soybeans in the Midwest states that Dec. 10 is the end of the insurance period. However, producers may request their insurance company to allow them additional time to complete harvesting. This can be granted when timely notice is given to the agent and the delay is due to an insured cause, such as wet weather or snowfall. This will allow any claims to be settled based on actual harvested production rather than an appraisal in the field.

Generally, if insured acres are still not harvested by early December, producers should contact their crop insurance agents and request additional harvest time beyond Dec. 10. Producers are required to make an honest effort to harvest the crop during the extended period if conditions allow, or to document why they were unable to do so with a written record and even photos.

The Risk Management Agency, which regulates multiple peril crop insurance policies, recently issued a [program announcement regarding wet harvest conditions](#). The standard crop insurance policies cover quality losses due to low test weight, foreign material and mold, as well as low yields and prices. However, increased drying costs and charges are not covered.

TRI-STATE BEEF CONFERENCE



The Tri-State Beef Conference will be held Dec. 17, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at Prairie du Chien and 4-9 p.m. at Calmar. Topics include: feedstuff quality, molds and mycotoxins, fetal programming, adding value with low cost rations, culling decisions, and adding value to calves. Contact Denise Schwab at 319-642-5504 for more information.

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SOWBRIDGE OFFERS FLEXIBILITY & CONVENIENCE

AMES, Iowa -- The successful distance education program SowBridge begins its third year in January 2010.

Iowa State University (ISU) Animal Science Associate Professor and Extension Swine Specialist Ken Stalder said the program received

great reviews from a wide range of participants and that helped solidify the decision to continue offering it.

“We asked participants for suggestions on topics and speakers, and are happy to provide a greater variety of session subjects and speakers from university, public and private entities this year,” Stalder said. “SowBridge provides all participants with the opportunity not only to hear directly from experts, but to contact those experts following the individual sessions.”

Stalder, who also is the Iowa contact for SowBridge, said the program is intended for people involved in managing or caring for boars, sows, and/or their litters, including operation owners, employees, technicians, managers, and technical service providers. SowBridge is designed to improve the understanding and application of various tools and techniques involved in daily care of the breeding herd and piglets.

Before each session, subscribers receive a CD containing that session's presentation, along with information on accessing the live speaker presentation. Most participants will call a toll-free conference line to listen to and interact with presenters. Each subscription costs \$250 (U.S.) which provides access to one phone line per session and all program materials. Each session begins at 11:30 a.m. Central Time and lasts for approximately 45 minutes.

Stalder said the year-long program is offered by subscription only with a Dec. 1 deadline to ensure participants will receive materials for the first session on Jan. 6, 2010. He said materials, delivery process, and program costs are slightly different for those with non-U.S. mailing addresses, and encouraged potential subscribers from outside the U.S. to contact the Iowa Pork Industry Center (IPIC) at (515) 294-4496 for more information.

A brochure with information and a registration form is available on the IPIC website at <http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/SowBridge/2009brochure.pdf>. Iowa residents who want more information can call Stalder at (800) 808-7675.



PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR RECERTIFICATION DATES SET

The 2009-2010 private pesticide applicator continuing instructional courses have been scheduled for Iowa, Johnson, Keokuk and Washington Counties. If you wish to recertify by training and not by exam, you must attend a CIC session each year. Remember, you always have the option of taking the exam. There is a \$20 fee per person. A private pesticide applicator may attend a class offered in any county. Pre-registration is not required.

Date	Time	County	City	Address
December 15	9:30 a.m.	Johnson	Hills	Community Center
December 15	1:30 p.m.	Johnson	Hills	Community Center
December 18	9:30 a.m.	Washington	Washington	Washington County Extension
December 18	1:30 p.m.	Keokuk	Sigourney	Fairgrounds, Exhibition Hall
January 4	1:30 p.m.	Iowa	Marengo	American Legion, 1240 Lafayette Avenue
February 10	1:30 p.m.	Iowa	I-80, Exit 216	Kinze Manufacturing Conf. Room
February 10	4:15 p.m.	Iowa	I-80, Exit 216	Kinze Manufacturing Conf. Room
February 15	1:30 p.m.	Johnson	Hills	Community Center
February 15	7:00 p.m.	Johnson	Hills	Community Center
February 17	7:00 p.m.	Keokuk	Sigourney	Fairgrounds, Exhibition Hall
March 29	7:00 p.m.	Iowa	Victor	KC Hall, 210 Washington Street
March 31	1:30 p.m.	Washington	Washington	Washington County Extension
March 31	7:00 p.m.	Washington	Washington	Washington County Extension

OVERALL CONFERENCE FOR RURAL WOMEN

Join other women involved in agriculture at the 6th Annual Overall Women Conference set for February 4 & 5, 2010. The conference, coordinated by Iowa State University Extension, will take place at the Isle of Capri Hotel in Bettendorf. Choose from over 30 educational workshops and enjoy a highly-motivating keynote address, *Stand Up for Agriculture*, from Farm Director & Manager of the *Brownfield Ag News*, Cyndi Young. For more information, go to <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/overallwomen/home.html> for conference/registration information. Registration will begin soon!



2010 GROWING GREEN GARDEN CALENDAR ON SALE

ISU Extension Garden Calendars are on sale for \$6 each while supplies last. These calendars make excellent holiday gifts and are full of green thumb tips on shrubs, perennials, ornamentals and fruit & vegetable production.

2010 4-H/FFA COUNTY FAIR BEEF WEIGH-IN

The 2010 market beef weigh-ins are set for 8 a.m. to NOON for Washington County youth on Dec. 19 at the Kalona Sale Barn and on January 2 at the Johnson County 4-H Fairgrounds for Johnson County exhibitors. Contact your local Extension Office for the full set of guidelines. Each youth is limited to nominating 6 head of halter cattle.

BEEF CENTER SEEDSTOCK CONFERENCE



The Iowa Beef Center wishes to extend an invitation to you for our upcoming beef seedstock conference, “Applying Old Rules to New Technology Production.” We’ll start at 12:30 p.m. on Dec. 10, 2009, at the Ames Quality Inn and Suites, just off I-35 at the 13th Street exit. Registration starts at 11:30 a.m. Challenges (genetic defects) and changes (genomic information) abound for bull breeders lately and we realize it’s a challenge to keep up with all the new developments. Additionally, electronic and internet methodologies are here and now, so how can we incorporate these technologies into our marketing strategies? This one-day pro-

gram is packed with leaders and experts who can help you better understand how to deal with these issues. REMEMBER, we start at 12:30, so have your lunch done and be ready to go for a great afternoon and evening. See you December 10!

FORAGE/BEDDING PRICES

Recent auctions in east central/southeast Iowa have resulted in the following forage/bedding prices:

Keosauqua (SE IA) Sat 11:30A Alfalfa: SmSq \$2.50-4.00/bale: Grass : SmSq \$1.75-2.50/bale Straw: SmSq \$1.75-2.25/bale **Kalona** (SE IA) 1st Thurs, Yr-round 11:30AM (& 3rd Thurs Oct-winter) Alfalfa & Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq \$\$2.80-3.30/b; LgRd \$45-6070/bale Grass: (SmSq \$2.75-4.10/bale Jul)

CHECK YOUR MANURE APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/communications/EPC/

Manure applicators that haul or handle manure from a confinement site facility with more than 500 animal units and all commercial manure applicators are required by Iowa law to be certified to apply manure in Iowa. “My best estimate based on historical numbers of certified ap-

plicators is somewhere between 300-800 applicators still need to attend training this year to maintain or renew their licenses to apply manure before the fall application season,” says Angie Rieck-Hinz, Extension Program Specialist. Confinement site applicators must attend two hours of annual training to maintain their three-year license. Applicators must pay certification and education fees. After March 1 of the current year, applicators that are renewing their certificates must also pay a late fee. Commercial manure applicators must attend three hours of training or take and pass an exam annually. Commercial applicators that need to renew their licenses after March 1 will need to pay a late fee in addition to the certification fee and education fee. Commercial manure applicators are reminded they must be associated with a commercial manure service.

“Although manure applicators sometimes complain about having to take annual training, they also say that the training has helped them respond quickly and well to a spill, or learn about law changes that affect their business,” said Jen Christian, DNR Environmental Specialist. Commercial and confinement site applicators may meet certification requirements by scheduling an appointment with their local ISU Extension county office to watch a videotape or by contacting their local DNR field office to schedule an appointment to take the certification exam. Four certification programs will be offered this winter for confinement site and commercial manure applicators:

Commercial manure applicator certification is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2010, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Johnson, Iowa, Keokuk & Washington County Extension Office.

Confinement site certification - Thursday, January 14, 2010, 9:30 a.m. to Noon, Expo Building, Sigourney Fairgrounds

Confinement site certification - Tuesday, January 19, 2010, 9:30 a.m. to Noon, Hills Bank in Hills

Confinement site certification - Thursday, February 11, 2010, 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. , Washington Co. Extension

Confinement site certification (Dry Manure) - Tuesday, February 16, 2010, 1:00-4:00 p.m., Washington Co.

Extension

For information about manure applicator certification requirements contact Greg Brenneman, Ag Engineer, at gregb@iastate.edu or 319-337-2145 and Tom Miller, Program Specialist, at miller@iastate.edu or 319-653-4811.



ANAEROBIC DIGESTION TOUR IN AMANA



The Amana Farms Renewable Energy Center and Iowa State University Extension will be hosting a program, “On-Farm Anaerobic Digestion: Considering the Options,” on Wednesday, Dec. 9, in the Amana Colonies at the Iowa Artists Theatre Co. Livestock producers will benefit from this program geared toward finding answers for their farm. The three-hour program, which will begin at 9 a.m., will be followed by an afternoon digester tour at the Renewable Energy Center. Topics covered during the event include information on the Amana Farms beef manure digester, feasibility considerations for on-farm manure digesters, manure digester opportunities in Iowa and digester methane production for carbon credits. The program includes speakers from Iowa State University, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Amana Farms. Robert Burns, Iowa State University Extension Agricultural Engineering Specialist, will help attendees decide whether a manure digester is right for their farm. Pre-registration for the educational program is not required, although a registration slip available online can be completed in advance and brought to the event with the \$25 registration fee. Lunch is on your own. The registration form and full agenda are available at www.abe.iastate.edu/wastemgmt/amanaprogram.html. For additional information, contact Lara Moody, ISU Extension Agricultural Engineering Specialist, at lmoody@iastate.edu or (515) 294-7355, or John McGrath of Amana Farms at jmcgrath@amanas.net or (319) 622-7557. Funds from the Iowa Office of Energy Independence have helped make this program possible.

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RUSLE2 & P INDEX WORKSHOPS FOR MANURE/ NUTRIENT PLAN WRITERS OFFERED

Livestock producers and service providers can receive training on how to use the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation 2 (RUSLE2) and the Iowa Phosphorus Index for use in nutrient management and manure management plans at workshops being offered by Iowa State University Extension and the Iowa Manure Management Action Group (IMMAG), in collaboration with the Iowa USDA-NRCS.

The workshop will be held on Dec. 17 at the Borlaug Learning Center, located on the Northeast Iowa Research and Demonstration Farm near Nashua, Iowa. The workshop starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. It is an introductory level, hands-on workshop that will provide the participant with software orientation.

This workshop will introduce participants to the operating parameters for RUSLE2; selection of input values for RUSLE2; and developing and saving management operations for RUSLE2. In addition, real field examples will be used in the workshop to determine risk calculations of the Iowa Phosphorus Index and how to incorporate these numbers into manure and nutrient management planning requirements.

New for this workshop will be the inclusion of parameters for RUSLE2 and P Index calculations on snow-covered or frozen ground. Soil sampling requirements for manure management plans will also be discussed. The cost of the workshop is \$160 if registered on or prior to Dec. 10; the fee is \$175 for registering after Dec. 10. The workshop fee includes handout materials, refreshments and lunch. Because software will be provided, participants are required to bring a MS Windows compatible laptop equipped with a CD-ROM drive and Microsoft Excel software. Participants must have their administrator password to the computer they bring in order to install software. The workshop is limited to 30 participants. Online registration, program information and directions to the workshop are available at: www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/rusle2/home.html. **Questions regarding these workshops should be directed to Kapil Arora at (515) 382-6551 or Angie Rieck-Hinz at (515) 294-9590.**



MANAGEMENT OF HARVEST RUTS

By Mark Hanna, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, and Madhi Al-Kaisi, Department of Agronomy

Combines working in wet conditions to harvest crops have formed ruts in fields. About three-fourths of combine mass and virtually all of loaded grain tank weight are carried on the combine front axle. With good yields, grain tank extensions, and a 12-row head, front axle load can be 18 to 20 tons. The consequences of such wet conditions are significant soil compaction caused by this heavy equipment and yield reductions that will be realized next season. Compacted soil created beneath the rut may interfere with subsequent crop rooting and development. Ruts deeper than about two inches can also interfere with maintaining seed depth during planter operation next spring, unless they are leveled. Using tillage to loosen the soil and relieve compaction requires soil to be dry enough so that soil shattering is effective. Because soil moisture has refilled the top 12 to 24 inches of the soil profile, deep tillage with a chisel plow or subsoiler this fall or next spring will use fuel and time – but is unlikely to loosen soil effectively between tillage shanks. However, the full soil moisture profile in upper layers will freeze and thaw over the winter and help loosen soil, depending on air temperatures and snow cover. Entering the field this fall in wet moisture conditions for deep tilling or any type of tillage will be counter productive by creating much deeper soil compaction. Ruts deeper than planting depth will need to be leveled before planter operation. A good strategy may be to wait until a week or two before planting next spring and use a light tillage pass, such as with a field cultivator, light disk, harrow, or soil finisher. If only a portion of the field is rutted, consider tilling only that area to avoid recompacting subsoil in other parts of the field. Waiting until warmer weather next spring allows for some potential drying of the top two or three inches of soil and avoids further compaction of wet, plastic soil on the surface – which will happen with a tillage pass this fall. If compaction effects are observed during the 2010 growing season and soil is dry after harvest, tillage next fall may be considered deep enough to break through the compacted layer.



FEEDLOT FORUM 2010 SERIES BEGINS

Production and financial information to help feedlot producers tackle current issues will be presented by Iowa State University Extension staff during the Iowa Beef Center winter meeting series, Feedlot Forum 2010. Seven meetings will be held in six locations across the state between Dec. 8, 2009, and Feb. 11, 2010. Presentations at each workshop will include Dan Loy, ISU Extension Beef Specialist, who will discuss feed management. Dr. Grant Dewell, ISU Extension Veterinarian, will speak on keeping compromised cattle out of the marketplace and cattle health. John Lawrence, Iowa Beef Center Director and ISU Extension Livestock Economist, available via voice-over PowerPoint, will talk about the market outlook for 2010; and Brian Waddingham from the Iowa Beef Industry Council will present the council's feedlot animal welfare assessment tool. Remaining workshop agendas will vary by location, but will include area beef program specialist presentations on the management and performance of cattle in hoop and mono-slope barns. The following are meeting locations near producers in SE Iowa and Extension Beef Program Specialist contact information for each site:



- Dec. 15 (7-10 p.m.) – Oskaloosa, Byron Leu, (641) 472-4166, bleu@iastate.edu
- Jan. 22 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) – Cascade, Denise Schwab, (319) 472-4739, dschwab@iastate.edu
- Feb. 1 (1-4 p.m.) – Lewis, Joe Sellers, (641) 774-2016, sellers@iastate.edu

To register for any of the meetings, contact the program specialist in charge of the location or download the registration form at www.iowabeefcenter.org. Registration for each meeting location is \$20 if preregistered (up to three days before the meeting date). After that and at the door, the fee is \$30.

MINIMIZE DEICING SALT DAMAGE IN THE HOME LANDSCAPE

Richard Jauron, Extension Horticulturist, Iowa State University

Snow and ice are headaches for motorists and pedestrians. To prevent accidents on slippery surfaces, highway departments, businesses and homeowners use deicing compounds to melt ice and snow on roadways, parking lots, sidewalks and driveways. While deicing materials improve travel conditions, they can damage automobiles, concrete surfaces and landscape plants.

Deicing Materials - Most deicing materials are salts that melt ice and snow by lowering the freezing point of water below 32 degrees F. Commonly used deicing salts include sodium chloride (NaCl), calcium chloride (CaCl₂), potassium chloride (KCl), and magnesium chloride (MgCl₂). Abrasive materials, such as sand, do not melt ice or snow. They improve traction on snow and ice-covered surfaces.

Effects of Deicing Salts - Deicing salts can damage landscape plants when excessive amounts accumulate in the soil. The most serious damage typically occurs near major streets and highways where salt from run-off accumulates in the nearby soil. Excessive use of salt by homeowners can also create problems. Trees, shrubs, perennials and turfgrasses are susceptible to salt damage. Additionally, spray from passing vehicles can damage roadside plants, particularly evergreens. Salts affect plant growth in several ways. When high levels of salt are present in the soil, plants are unable to absorb sufficient water even though soil moisture is plentiful. Plants suffer a salt-induced water shortage termed “physiological drought.”

High levels of salt restrict the uptake of essential nutrients by plant roots. Excessive amounts of sodium and chloride ions in plant tissue are toxic to many plants. Soil structure is damaged by high levels of sodium. Salt deposited directly on plant foliage can cause dehydration of plant tissue. Avoid piling salt-laden snow and ice around trees and shrubs. While the amount of salt applied to major roadways can not be controlled, steps can be taken to minimize damage. As soon as the ground thaws in early spring, heavily water areas where salt accumulates over winter. A thorough soaking should help flush the salt from the root zone of plants. If possible, alter the drainage pattern so winter run-off drains away from ornamental plants. When planting trees near the symptoms of salt, injury to deciduous trees and shrubs include stunted growth, marginal leaf scorch, early fall coloration and twig dieback. Accumulation of salt in the soil over several years may result in progressive decline and eventual death. Salt damage to evergreens results in yellowing or browning of the needles and twig dieback. Evergreens near heavily salted roadways are often damaged by salt spray. Spray damage is most severe on the side of the plant nearest the highway. The severity of plant damage depends upon the type of salt and other factors. Calcium chloride, potassium chloride and magnesium chloride are less harmful to plants than sodium chloride. The degree of salt damage also depends upon the amount of salt applied, soil type, amount of rainfall, direction of run-off and prevailing winds. The condition and type of plant material is also important. Healthy, vigorous plants are more tolerant of salt than poorly growing specimens. Bur oak, honeylocust, northern catalpa, Kentucky coffeetree, horse chestnut and Norway maple are tolerant of soil-borne salt, while sugar maple, American linden, Canada hemlock and white pine are sensitive to soil salt.

Salt Injury Prevention - Homeowners can minimize salt damage by using deicing salts prudently. Before applying salt, wait until the precipitation has ended and remove as much of the ice and snow as possible. Use deicing salts at rates sufficient to loosen ice and snow from driveways and sidewalks, then remove the loosened ice and snow with a shovel. (Deicing salts need to be applied at much higher rates to completely melt ice and snow.) Mix salt with sand or another abrasive material. Fifty pounds of sand mixed with one pound of salt works effectively. Major streets or highways, select salt tolerant tree species. Deicing salts are both good and bad. Judicious use of deicing salts helps insure safe travel conditions for pedestrians and motorists and minimizes damage to landscape plants and the environment.

Iowa State University Cooperative Extension

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