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**News Release**

Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, Communications Coordinator, 563-794-0599, wiemer@iastate.edu

**On-Farm Food Safety Workshop Set for March 13**

CALMAR—As the demand for local and organic food has exploded in the last five years, so has the expectation on the part of consumers and institutional buyers for production and handling systems designed to minimize microbial contamination. Growers interested in improving food safety and post-harvest handling of fruits and vegetables can learn both at an upcoming workshop hosted by the NE Iowa Food & Farm Coalition and ISU Extension and Outreach.

The morning session will be led by Rock Spring Farm’s Chris Blanchard. He will guide farmers through ten simple steps they can take to put their farm on the way to safe food production. He will talk about the methods developed at Rock Spring Farm for meeting the documentation and record-keeping requirements of the GAPs audit process in a way that flows with the work on the farm, rather than existing as a separate set of tasks and requirements. This session would be appropriate for family members or farm employees.

After lunch, Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension, and Johnice Cross, GROWN Locally will lead a hands-on activity where farmers will start working on their farm safety plans. By the end of the day, farmers will leave the workshop with a first draft of a food safety plan completed.

The workshop will take place on March 13 at the NE IA Dairy Foundation Center from 9 am – 4 pm. This free workshop is funded by USDA Specialty Crop Block grant and is open to any Iowa grower. Fruit and vegetable growers of all sizes are encouraged to attend.

For more information or to register, visit [www.iowafreshfood.com](http://www.iowafreshfood.com) or call Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension, at 563-794-0599 or wiemer@iastate.edu.

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**News Release**

Contact: Denise Schwab, ISU Extension Beef Specialist, 319-472-4739, dschwab@iastate.edu
Eastern Iowa Hay Producers Annual Meeting on March 8

Area hay and forage producers are invited to attend the 29th Annual Eastern Iowa Hay Producers Association Annual Meeting and Conference on Thursday, March 8 at Buzzy’s in Welton. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. with the program scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m.

This year’s conference features Dr. Geoff Brink, Research Agronomist at the US Dairy Forage Research Center. The title of his presentation is "Growing, Harvesting, and Storing Cool-Season Perennial Grasses". Brink will discuss management practices to get the most from an often-neglected forage that is experiencing a resurgence in interest. Dr. Brink’s research interests include quality of grazed and harvested grass and legume forages; sward structure - dairy cow utilization relationships in rotationally-grazed pastures; management and persistence of legumes in pastures; and management effects on temperate grass productivity.

Brian Lang, ISU Extension and Outreach forage agronomist, will discuss alfalfa production and management. Other speakers include Virgil Schmitt, ISU Extension Field Agronomist, and Denise Schwab, ISU Extension Beef Specialist, with regional updates.

The annual meeting of the Eastern Iowa Hay Producers Association (EIHPA) will take place shortly after lunch and will include their election of officers and directors.

Registration for the conference is $30 and includes a membership to EIHPA and meal. Tickets can be purchased at the door. Certified crop advisor credits have been applied for. This conference is sponsored by EIHPA, Iowa State University Extension & Outreach, and the Iowa Beef Center.

The Eastern Iowa Hay Producers Association provides educational workshops and field days for forage producers in Jackson, Jones, Clinton, Cedar, Scott and Muscatine counties. However, forage producers from other counties are also welcome to participate. For more information contact Denise Schwab at dschwab@iastate.edu or Kevin Brown at brofarm@windstream.net , or 563-872-4475.

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News Release
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, Communications Coordinator, 563-794-0599, wiemer@iastate.edu

Local Food Directory Needs Producer Info

The Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition (NIFF) is updating the Local Food Directory for Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties. This directory is part of the Iowa Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign.

The directory includes listings for producers of fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, eggs, baked goods, honey, herbs and syrups. In addition, local farmers markets, stores and restaurants featuring local food are also listed.

Any producers or businesses who would like to be listed in the 2012 directory should visit www.iowafreshfood.com for more information. Producers may also contact Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension and Outreach at 563-794-0599. Directory items need to be received by April 1 to be included in this year’s publication.

The Northeast Iowa Food & Farm (NIFF) Coalition and the Food & Fitness Initiative (FFI) are working together to create community environments that support access to fresh, locally grown, healthy, affordable food and safe environments for physical activity and play. More information about these programs can be found at www.iowafoodandfitness.org.
News Release
Contacts: Terry Basol, ISU Extension Field Agronomist – 641) 426-6801

ISU President Steven Leath to Speak at Research Farm Meeting

NASHUA – The new president of Iowa State University, Dr. Steven Leath will be one of the featured speakers at the annual meeting Northeast ISU Research and Demonstration Farm near Nashua on March 27.

The program and annual meeting will begin at 9:30 am at the Borlaug Learning Center. In addition to Leath who started his duties at ISU on Jan. 16, there will be two other presentations. Roger McEowen will discuss the Top 10 ag law issues affecting Iowa farmers, and Ken Pecinovsky will present results from the 2011 Research Farm trials.

Lunch will be available to purchase at noon from the Riverton Lucky Clovers 4-H Club. The Northeast Iowa Agricultural Experimental Association board meeting follows at 1:00 pm. The program is free and open to the public. No pre-registration is required. Certified crop advisor credits have been requested. For additional information contact the Borlaug Learning Center at 641-435-4864, or your local ISU Extension and Outreach Office.

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News Release
Contact: Mark Gleason, Plant Pathology, 515-294-0579, mgleason@iastate.edu

Morel Mushroom Certification Workshops Scheduled for March and April

Individuals who would like to be able to sell morel mushrooms legally within the state of Iowa can take a three-hour certification workshop in March or April.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is again offering the workshops this spring at several locations across the state.

“The aim of the workshops is to help assure that misidentified mushrooms are not sold as morels. People can be poisoned by eating mushrooms that are misidentified as morels,” said plant pathology professor Mark Gleason, who is coordinating the workshops.

The workshops fulfill a requirement for anyone wanting to legally sell morels in Iowa. The certification lasts for three years. Registration is open to out-of-state individuals.

The workshop agenda includes: pre-training identification test; PowerPoint presentation on recognizing morels and false morels; examination of fresh and preserved morels and false morels; post-training identification test (and re-testing as needed); and presentation and signing of wall-size and wallet-size training certificates.

This year’s workshop locations include March 30 at the ISU Extension - Dubuque County office, 14858 West Ridge Lane, Suite 2, Dubuque, Iowa from 1-4 pm. The workshop will also be held on April 9 in Altoona and April 13 in Iowa City.

The training costs $45 per person, payable at the session by cash or check. Those planning to attend one of the workshops need to register with Gleason by Monday, March 26, at mgleason@iastate.edu or 515-294-0579.

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News Release
Contact: Lynn Heuss, 515.201.9405, lynn@wfan.org

Women Farmland Owners Invited to Wildlife Management Meeting

EDGEWOOD -- Women farmland owners are invited to learn how to achieve their soil and water conservation goals, manage land for hunting and wildlife, and meet potential beginning farmers at one of the upcoming "Women Caring for the Land" meetings scheduled for Iowa this spring. More than twenty meetings have been scheduled across the state and are sponsored by the Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN).

These events typically include a morning women-only informal discussion, followed by lunch and an afternoon field tour when weather allows. All meetings are free and open to all women who own or manage farmland, or simply want to learn more about conservation and other land management topics.

A Hunting and Wildlife Management Meeting has been set for March 27 at Aunt Necee's Pizza in Edgewood from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Join other women landowners for an informative discussion about how to manage farmland for wildlife habitat, and your rights as a landowner when dealing with prospective hunters. Coffee and registration, informal discussion, lunch is provided, afternoon field tour. Call WFAN Program Coordinator Lynn Heuss at 515.201.9405 for more information or to RSVP by March 23.

WFAN is a community of women involved in sustainable agriculture. We are farmers, landowners, researchers, students, advocates and mothers concerned about our families' health. For more information, visit www.wfan.org.

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News Release

FoodCorps Opens Applications for its Next Class of School Food Changemakers

FoodCorps, a national organization that addresses childhood obesity and food insecurity in underserved communities, opens applications for its second annual class of service members. The selected emerging leaders will dedicate one year of full-time public service in school food systems – expanding hands-on nutrition education programs, building and tending school gardens, and sourcing fresh, healthy, local food for school cafeterias.

The first class of service members have already made a difference in their local schools. The Iowa service members have reached thousands of kids with nutrition education, servings of locally grown foods such as apples, carrots and kale, and have catalyzed the start up and revitalization of many educational school gardens. There are currently two positions in Des Moines and two positions in northeast Iowa.

In its first year FoodCorps gained national attention by attracting 1,229 applicants for just 50 positions, and by providing an innovative, grassroots, scalable approach to solving our national obesity epidemic. Since 1980, the percentage of American children who are overweight or obese has doubled. With one in four U.S. children struggling with hunger and one in three obese or overweight, FoodCorps addresses the root cause of both: access to healthy food.

FoodCorps seeks up to 100 men and women with a passion for serving their country as AmeriCorps service members by building healthy communities in 12 states around the country. Hannah Lewis, Iowa Program Director, is hoping to expand from four to seven positions in Iowa for the next year.
Applications are due March 25th. Emerging leaders interested in getting more information should go to http://foodcorps.org/become-a-service-member.

FoodCorps is a national service organization that seeks to address childhood obesity by increasing vulnerable children's knowledge of, engagement with, and access to healthy food. Service members build and tend school gardens, conduct nutrition education, and facilitate Farm to School programming that brings healthy, affordable local food into public schools. The program also trains a cadre of leaders for careers in food and agriculture.

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This information has been sent to you by Teresa Wiemerslage, Regional Communications Coordinator for Region 4 ISU Extension, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599.

For information about local Extension events and programs, contact:

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