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News Release

Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension program coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599

Wedemeiers Host Pasture Walk on June 23

MAYNARD – A pasture based dairy system and will be featured at the next Northeast Iowa Graziers Pasture Walk on Wednesday, June 23 at the Gary and Scott Wedemeier farm near Maynard.

The Wedemeiers have a 140 cow dairy herd which is 75/25 percent Holstein, Brown Swiss and crossbreds. Scott returned to the family farm in 2003. After a few years, they were looking to increase the cash flow of their operation without a large capital investment. By implementing a pastured cow and grazing system, they were able to add cows to the herd without adding facility costs. The Wedemeiers have been using this system for three years and seeded another 45 acres of pasture last year.

According to Penn State, grazing results in about $100-200 advantage in profit per cow per year compared with confined feeding systems. Savings in feed costs likely account for at least half of the decrease in total costs and improved farm profitability with grazing systems.

In addition to the tour, Jennifer Bentley, ISU Extension Dairy Specialist, will briefly talk about colostrum management for dairy calves. Colostrum management has a larger impact on calf health than any other management factor.

The walk will run from 1:00-3:00 pm and is open to grass-based farmers or “grazers” of all species and at all levels. The Wedemeier Farm is located at 18663 110th Street. From Maynard go 3 miles west on C33 to W14, then north 1 mile on W14 to 110th Street, then west 3/4 mile on 110th Street to the first farm.

The Northeast Iowa Graziers plan monthly walks to local farms to help producers learn how better pasture management can result in both healthier profits and a healthier environment. The walks are organized by area graziers and supported by Iowa State University Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Northeast Iowa Community Based Dairy Foundation.
For more information about the 2010 Pasture Walks, contact Jennifer Bentley, ISU Extension Dairy Specialist at 563-382-2949 or jbentley@iastate.edu.

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**News Release**

Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension program coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599

**Local Food Directories Available**

The Northeast Iowa Buy Fresh Buy Local chapter announces the 2010 Local Food Directory is available. The directory has been connecting consumers with direct marketing farmers for five years. Buying local products from farmers keeps money circulating our communities.

Iowa has some of the best soils in the world and a good climate for growing crops; yet as a state, we import more than 80 percent of our food. A study by the Leopold Center found that 16 common crops that grow in Iowa travel an average of 1500 miles to reach grocery stores here. Bought from local growers, the food traveled only 56 miles.

Research has shown that of each dollar spent at a traditional food market, only 9 cents goes to the producer as compared to a farmer’s market where 80-90 cents is retained by the producer.

The Local Food Directories are available from your County ISU Extension office or Economic Development office. The directories are also available online at [www.iowafreshfood.com](http://www.iowafreshfood.com) – click on Finding Local Food.

The Northeast Iowa Buy Fresh Buy Local Chapter is part of the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm (NIFF) Coalition and the Food & Fitness Initiative (FFI). Together, they are working to create community environments that support access to fresh, locally-grown food. More information about these programs can be found at [www.iowafoodandfitness.org](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org).

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**News Release**

Media Contact: Sally Worley, Practical Farmers of Iowa, (515)232-5661, sally@practicalfarmers.org
Field Day Contact: Jeff Klinge & Deb Tidwell, Home Farm Organics, (319) 231-9576, jefkling@neitel.net

**Field Day Focuses on Water Quality Issues and Transitioning to Organic**

FARMERSBURG -- For over forty years, studies on groundwater quality have influenced the way Jeff Klinge farms. His farm, Home Farm Organics, drains into a body of water called Big Spring which discharges into a fish hatchery. That’s why the Jeff Klinge and Deborah Tidwell field day will begin at Big Spring Fish Hatchery in Elkader, Iowa on June 18. A discussion will be led by DNR staff about water quality issues, including nitrate and how erosion affects water quality.

The field day continues at Home Farm Organics in Farmersburg, Iowa. Klinge will give a tour of the farm while sharing his transition-to-organic story. Discussions will include weed, pest, and soil fertility management; as well as the profitability of organic farming and the requirements for making the transition. MOSES staff member, Harriet Behar, will lead a discussion about becoming organically certified.

This field day lasts from 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm. It is free and all are welcome. A light supper will be provided. After supper there will be a visit to Pikes Peak State Park for anyone that is interested.
Home Farm Organics is a fifth-generation, 300-acre diversified farm. Klinge and Tidwell have produced organic corn, alfalfa, and barley since 1997 using extensive crop rotations. They also manage a beef operation, selling to a specialty market.

Big Spring Fish Hatchery is located at 16212 Big Spring Road, Elkader. Travelling on Gunder Road (CR X16) from Elkader, continue on X16 for 4.6 miles. Turn left onto Big Spring Rd for 3.5 miles.

Home Farm Organics is located at 16609 Hwy 13, Farmersburg. From Elkader, go North on Hwy 13 for 10 miles.

This field day is in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Practical Farmers of Iowa and is sponsored by MOSES, Iowa Environmental Council, SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education), Iowa Environmental Council, The McKnight Foundation, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

News Release

Contact: Brianne Simonsen, 2010 IVMA Summer Intern, 712-251-0674, bsimonse@iastate.edu.

Vet Camp Coming to Winneshiek County Fair

DECORAH -- The Iowa Veterinary Medical Association (IVMA) will be hosting a vet camp at the Winneshiek County Fair on July 6 for youth interested in veterinary medicine. The vet camp is open to kids ages 14-18 and is free of charge.

Youth attending the camps will get the opportunity to work with local veterinarians and Iowa State University vet students while learning skills such as taking blood samples, completing a physical exam on a small animal, suturing, reading radiographs, bandaging, and interpreting pathological specimens.

Youth will have the opportunity to ask about high school and college courses that are helpful in preparing for vet school, the admissions process, veterinary school curriculum and opportunities in the veterinary field.

Register for the camp on the IVMA website at www.iowavma.org. For more information, contact Brianne Simonsen at 712-251-0674 or bsimonse@iastate.edu.

News Release

Contacts:
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Compassion Guides Farm Financial Planning Associate through 25-Year Career

ELKADER—The farm financial planning program provided by Iowa State University Extension allows farmers to evaluate changes in their operations. The program, which has attracted farmers for more than 25 years, will be one associate short when Charles Morine, an employee since 1985 and an adviser of the Northeast Iowa counties, retires on June 30.
“Chuck is one of the most conscientious people I have met. He is very compassionate, works hard and considers the families that he encounters,” said Mike Duffy, ISU Extension farm financial planning program director. “His retirement will leave a hole in the program, not just for the people of Northeast Iowa, but the program statewide.”

Farm financial associates like Morine meet with farmers in one-on-one counseling sessions using a computerized model to evaluate their farm businesses and determine if any changes are desirable. Associates are knowledgeable beyond the computer program and know other sources of information to aid in the decision making.

Farmers generally use the system either when they are considering expansion or when under financial stress, according to Duffy.

Anne and Mary Clare Sweeney are fourth generation Dubuque County farmers who asked for assistance from Morine in December 2009. They had trouble deciding whether to continue raising livestock or to rent the entire farm.

“He explained the program very clearly and left no doubt in our minds as to the benefit of the program,” Mary Clare Sweeney said. “He was also able to answer other related financial questions and direct us to other resources that are available in our area.”

The Sweeneys said the financial assessment is helping them make better decisions and run their farm more efficiently. They are also impressed by Morine’s dedication.

“The advantage of working with ISU is that we are a neutral, third party that is only interested in the farm family making the best decision,” Duffy said.

Morine is one employee who realizes that many factors, like weather, markets and disease, are completely out of a farmer’s control. He recognizes that hard-working people making good decisions can face financial failure through no fault of their own.

“My compassion for such folks is something I have certainly learned over these 25 years,” Morine said.

Morine advises farmers to seek financial counseling early. The service is provided at no charge because financial planners’ expenses are covered by a grant from CF Industries.

“Many farmers wait too long to decide to do an analysis,” Morine said. “The most important time may be at the first sign of financial difficulties.”

Morine’s experience taught him that the program, which uses the computer analysis system called FINPACK, is just as needed today as it was during the farm crisis of the 1980s. Whether it is used to plan for expansion or to help distressed clients, the efficiency of the program continues to improve.

“Today with the much more streamlined inputting and probably better record keeping by the average farmer, gathering information for the FINPACK is much simpler and therefore much faster,” Morine said.

Despite advances in technology and changes in funding, the basic principle of the program has remained the same since the 1980s, which is to provide a third party analysis of a farm business.

The program divides the counties of Iowa into nine areas, each with a financial planner contact. Farm Financial Planning is a program of the Beginning Farmer Center.

To learn more about the program visit the farm financial planning website at www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis.
Other Releases

6/9/2010 - Fruit and Vegetable Summer Field Day Is June 29
Vegetable and fruit growers will not want to miss this event, which features information about production and marketing techniques and the results of cultivar trials on several fruits and vegetables.

Iowa State University Extension news releases are available on the World Wide Web at http://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/.

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

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