**Upcoming Events:**

Feb. 9 Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training  -  9:30 am and 1:30 pm, Extension Office, Creston. Call to RSVP a spot.

Feb. 17 11 am  2022 Farm Bill Decisions webinar. If you need help deciding on Farm-Bill ARC/PLC options, this free webinar can help. Farm Bill Information | Ag Decision Maker (iastate.edu) for more information or contact the office.

Feb. 9 thru March 2 12:15 to 1 pm Online What About Me? My Wellbeing . Free to attend. Register here: Details of Event | Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Human Sciences (iastate.edu)

March 29 9 am—3 pm Virtual. Mental Health First Aid . No charge skills-based training course that teaches participants to identify, understand and respond to mental health and substance use challenges. Contact the office 641-782-8426 or xunion@iastate.edu for registration information.

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**Inside this issue:**

- Hotlines  pg 3
- Small Farm Beef Production  pg 2
- Recipe  pg 4
- VITA  pg 2

To receive an electronic version of this newsletter, send your email address to xunion@iastate.edu or (641)782-8426.

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**Cybersecurity-On the Farm and Everywhere**

**Doug Jacobson**
Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, ISU

**Ally Frickel**
Program Specialist, Electrical and Computer Engineering, ISU

Cyber attacks are in the news everyday, and it only seems to get worse. Attacks like botnets, malware, ransomware, phishing, and sniffing are against pipelines, hospitals, water plants. Now, there are attacks against meat processors and cooperatives.

Security experts advise several mitigation tactics, while spraying information everywhere. All of the hype and waves of endless information tend to confuse—and overwhelm—people about what is safe and what they should do to protect themselves.

A farmer is likely sitting in rural America wondering what cybersecurity has to do with them and what—if anything—they can do to protect themselves. Here are a few tips to help prepare for a cyber attack.

**Email** Email is a huge opportunity for attackers to trick victims into downloading malware. This tactic is called phishing. In emails, senders will disguise themselves to sound like someone important to the victim. In regards to farmers, attackers may pretend to be a cooperative, supplier, implement dealer—anyone that is critical to farmers’ jobs.

The goal of phishing is to get the email recipient to download and install malware onto the recipient’s computer. Attackers will either attach or link to the malware in the email.

**How do we identify phishing emails?** Trust your instincts. If the email looks fishy, it probably is. Do not trust unfamiliar email addresses. If you suspect an email is a phishing email, do not click on any link or attachment. Delete the email.

**Malware** Attackers have several things they must do to infect a computer with malware.

First, they must get the malware downloaded onto the computer. Then, they must trick victims into installing, opening and running the malware. Finally, they need to collect the bounty—data, money, passwords, etc.—from the malware.

Continued on pg 3
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program offers free tax preparation and electronic filing for low- to moderate-income Iowans.

Certified community volunteers prepare taxes with computer software and help with special tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit, and Credit for the Elderly or Disabled. IRS VITA tax sites are located throughout Iowa and partner with organizations including Iowa State University Extension & Outreach. To find a site near you, visit https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/vita or call AARP volunteer tax preparers at 1-800-906-9887.

Ten Considerations for Small Scale Beef Producers

By Christopher Clark   Southwest Beef Field Specialist, ISU Extension and Outreach
(edited for length. To read complete article, visit https://www.extension.iastate.edu/smallfarms/top-ten-considerations-small-scale-beef-production or contact the office)

Beef cattle production can be a viable option for small farms. Livestock enterprises, such as beef cattle production, can diversify farming operations and complement many other farm enterprises. Here are some key considerations for small-scale beef production.

1. What are your resources? Think about the land, feed, equipment, facilities, labor, etc. that will be required for a beef cattle operation.

2. What is your knowledge level? How comfortable are you with animal health, nutrition, reproduction, well-being, etc.?

3. What would a budget look like for your cattle operation? Working through an itemized enterprise budget can help you identify all the potential costs and potential incomes.

4. What sector of the beef industry is the best fit for you? Think through a marketing plan and determine which sector of the industry would make the most sense for you.

5. How might you add value? As a small player in the commercial commodity market, you will be very much at the mercy of the cattle market. Sometimes, small cattle farms are well positioned to take advantage of niche markets that may add value to their cattle.

6. What production system would work best for you? There are many ways successfully raise beef cattle.

7. When is your calving season? Plan your calving season considering labor availability, weather, facilities, feed availability, marketing plan, etc.

8. What is your breeding plan? Think not only about cost but also about biosecurity and genetics as you make bull decisions.

9. What are your feed resources?

10. What are your talents and interests as they relate to beef cattle production? What aspects of cattle production do you enjoy? You are much more likely to be successful if you are interested in and passionate about what you are doing.
A common way to trick people into downloading malware is through a phishing email. Attackers attach a link to a website with malware to an email, or they tell victims in an email to visit a website where the malware is stored. Sometimes, attackers will capture login information of victims if they design a website that tricks people into thinking they have an account with.

Next, the computer would install the malware by opening the attachment or running the program, prompted by the website.

When installing any program onto a computer, a message pops up asking if it’s okay to install the program. The pop-up should mention what company created the software. If the publisher is unknown, that is a red flag for malware. Computers will ask questions like “do you want to run this program” in pop-up windows to protect users from common mistakes.

In the event that malware is downloaded, delete the email and attachment, or delete the file downloaded from the web. If malware is installed, contact a computer expert.

**Authentication (passwords)** Attackers try to learn about victims and guess their passwords based on what they’ve learned. For example, they might try your pet’s name, favorite sport team, etc. as a password if they see your pet on your social media. With social media and internet searches, it is easy to gather information.

Many people focus on password strength, which is creating a password that no one can guess. One trick to create a strong password is to use the first letter of a phrase coupled with numbers, such as “I like to watch science fiction with my wife 16,” which gives me a password of: iltws-fwmw16.

Password secrecy is not sharing your password with others. While this may seem obvious, it is still worth thinking about. For example, like we tell people to not write your PIN on your ATM card, your password shouldn’t be written a sticky note on the screen or in a document on your computer.

Password diversity refers to using different passwords for different logins. Use different passwords for sensitive information—email, bank, medical and investments—where the loss of your identity is costly.

This may mean creating possibly dozens of different and hard-to-remember passwords. It’s understandable to be a bit overwhelmed. One suggestion is to write the passwords down in small notebook and keep it in a safe place. Do not create a document on your computer with account information and passwords. Otherwise, download a password keeper program, like 1Password or Keepass. These programs manage your passwords and keep them locked using a single, strong password, so you only need to remember one password.

**Backups** Backups are like insurance for your data. It is something you need but hope you never have to use.

We all have data—often photos—which would be devastating to lose. To prevent losing this data, perform a periodic archive to secure storage. The point to backing data up to a secure storage—the cloud—is to be able to recover the data later.

Another type of backup is the ongoing backup of data on your computer. This can be done via cloud storage or via a USB device, like a small hard drive. Most operating systems come with backup software and will start backing up when the removable drive is connected. Both cloud backup and USB drive backup are good options. The cloud provides off-site backup, so in the event that things in your home are destroyed or unattainable, you will still have the data that was backed up to the cloud.

**Key Takeaways**
- No legitimate organization will ever ask for your bank information, social security number or password.
- Use multifactor authentication.
- Consider using cloud-based backup to protect from cyber attacks and natural disasters.
- If you need the help of a tech person, there are many qualified people that can help.

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**Need help? Its just a phone call away**

**Iowa Concern** 1-800-447-1985
Available all hours, all days. Financial, legal questions, stress counseling, referral for basic needs (food, rent, utility)

**AnswerLine** 1-800-262-3804
Monday-Friday, 9am –Noon, 1 pm –4pm
Home and family questions.

**Teen Line** 1-800-443-8336
Available all hours, all days.
Personal and health-related information and referral.

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**Ask an Expert** bit.ly/ask-expert-iowa
Submit your question online and we’ll send it to someone in Extension who can answer it. A response will be sent to your email address.

**Iowa 2-1-1** phone: 2-1-1
Available all hours, all days
Resource referral for housing, health, food, family, transportation, employment, education, legal assistance.
INGREDIENTS:
• 1 tablespoon oil (canola, olive, or vegetable)
• 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
• 1 tablespoon lemon juice
• 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
• 1 can (15 ounces) beans (drained and rinsed)

• 3/4 cup frozen corn, thawed
• 1/2 cup onion, diced (1/2 medium onion)
• 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced (1/2 medium bell pepper)
• 1 cup tomatoes, chopped (1 medium tomato)
• 1 avocado, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Whisk oil, vinegar, lemon juice, and mustard in a small bowl.
2. Stir beans, corn, onion, bell pepper, and tomatoes in a medium bowl.
3. Pour liquids over bean mixture. Cover. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
4. Add avocado just before serving. Gently stir to combine.

Source: Spend Smart. Eat Smart. https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu

Just in time for the SuperBowl. Serve with chips or as tortilla filling.

Cowboy Caviar
Serves 10. Serving size 1/2 cup Cost per serving: $0.39

Nutrition Facts

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* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NA* - We are currently in the process of integrating the new FDA Nutrition Standards. Added Sugar information is not currently available for the recipe. We will be updating the information shortly.