

AG newsletter

ISU Extension Washington County

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June 2012

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

... and justice for all

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PQAPLUS™ TRAINING SESSION-WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington, Iowa -- The Iowa Pork Industry Center and Iowa State University (ISU) Extension are teaming up to provide training for pork producers and others who need certification in the Pork Quality Assurance Plus™ (PQAPLUS™) program. One certification session has been set for June 19th in Washington County.

Washington County administrative assistant Nancy Adrian said the session will be held at the Washington County Extension office, 2223 250th St. Washington, and will be taught by ISU Extension swine field specialist Tom Miller. "The PQAPLUS™ session is set for 7 to 9 p.m.," she said. "Anyone who plans to attend should let us know as soon as possible to ensure that we have adequate materials for everyone."

Cost for this certification program is \$25 per person and is payable at the door. To preregister, contact the Washington County Extension office at (877) 435-7322 or (319) 653-4811. To learn more about PQAPLUS™ please see the National Pork Board Web site at <http://www.pork.org/Producers/PQAP.aspx>

SE IOWA RESEARCH FARM CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY JUNE 21

The Iowa State University Southeast Research and Demonstration Farm near Crawfordsville will be celebrating its 25th anniversary beginning at noon, June 21, with free lunch and a program. The farm was established in 1987 with the purchase of a 198-acre tract of land by the SE IA Agricultural Research Association. This association, representing nearly 2,000 members in 22 counties, advises scientists on current ag research and demonstration activities. In 2002, an additional 76 acres was added to the farm by the association.

CORN GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)

It takes corn about 90 to 120 GDD from planting to initial emergence, and about 80 GDD per leaf stage up to V-10 stage. Plantings and replants May 10-13 show 150 to 115 GDD respectively. Corn should be up.

You can click on the following link to input your planting date for estimated GDD: <http://mesonet.agron.iastate.edu/GIS/apps/coop/gplot.html?var=gdd50&year=2012&smoth=5&sday=1&emonth=5&eday=20>

CROP SCOUTING CARDS AVAILABLE

AMES, Iowa — Farmers and crop scouts can identify and keep track of soybean and corn field problems throughout the season by using a new series of field crop scouting cards. The cards were produced by the Iowa State University (ISU) Integrated Pest Management program with support from the Iowa Soybean Association (ISA).

The series includes nine scouting cards: early, mid- and late-season soybean scouting; early, mid- and late-season corn scouting; and problem-specific cards for white mold, soybean aphid and stink bugs. The cards can be used as a recordkeeping tool to track pest problems in specific fields over time, which then can be referenced when making future decisions. Color images and descriptions on disease and pest cards will simplify the identification of crop issues.

“Identifying insects, diseases and other issues is a critical part of making good management decisions in corn and soybean,” said Daren Mueller, ISU Extension plant pathologist. “These publications can be used by crop scouts as a calling card to let the farmer know the field has been scouted and as a record of any problems in the field.”

The scouting cards were developed to complement the Iowa State field guide series. Several publications in the field guide series and the soybean scouting cards were partially funded by ISA through the soybean checkoff.

Iowa Soybean Association CEO Kirk Leeds said, “ISA is proud to continue to partner with Iowa State on the production and distribution of these useful scouting guides. For more than 40 years, the soybean checkoff program has been working with leading researchers and extension specialists at ISU to provide Iowa’s farmers the latest agronomic information. These guides are another in a series of joint publications all aimed at helping soybean farmers more effectively manage their soybean acres.”

Scouting cards can be ordered from the ISU Extension Online Store at store.extension.iastate.edu or by calling (515) 294-5247 and requesting the appropriate publication. Copies of the soybean scouting cards can also be obtained by contacting the Iowa Soybean Association at 800-383-1423; pdfs are also available at www.iasoybeans.com/productionresearch/productiontech.html.

FARMLAND RENTAL RATES SHOW CONTINUED STRENGTH IN 2012

Anyone who is involved with the rental market for Iowa farmland knows that rental rates have been pushed significantly higher by the favorable corn and soybean prices that farmers have enjoyed since 2010. This trend continued in 2012.

Results from the most recent Iowa State University Extension and Outreach rental rate survey estimated that the average cash rent for corn and soybean land in the state for 2012 was \$252 per acre, an increase of \$38 per acre or 18 percent from last year. This is the largest one-year increase since the statewide survey was started in 1994. The second largest increase was in 2011, with an increase of \$30 per acre. Average rents were higher in all nine crop reporting districts, with increases ranging from \$57 per acre (26 percent) in north central Iowa to \$16 per acre (9 percent) in south central Iowa. High quality land showed the largest increase in rents. Estimated rents for land in the high third of each county increased by an average of 20%, but estimated rents on low third quality row crop land increased by only 15. In many counties respondents indicated that typical rents were \$400 to \$500 per acre or more for the higher quality land. Typical rental rates for land growing oats and hay were also reported, as well as rental rates for grazing pasture and corn stalks. This year rental rates for letting people hunt on farmland were included, too.

The intent of the Iowa State survey is to report typical rents in force, not the highest nor the lowest values heard through informal sources. Rental values were estimated by asking over 3,000 people familiar with the land market what they thought were typical rates in their county. The number of responses received this year was 1,419. Of the total responses, 37 percent came from farmers, 28 percent from landowners, 16 percent from professional farm managers, 16 percent from lenders, and 3 percent from other professionals.

The Cash Rental Rates for Iowa 2012 Survey is available online as a downloadable document; from the **Ag Decision Maker website**, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/pdf/c2-10.pdf>, and from the ISU Extension online store at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/FM1851.pdf>.

Other resources available for estimating a fair cash rental rate include the Ag Decision Maker information files **Computing a Cropland Cash Rental Rate**, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c2-20.html> (C2-20) and **Flexible Farm Lease Agreements**, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c2-21.html> (C2-21). Both documents include decision file electronic worksheets to help analyze leasing questions.

NEW RESOURCE FOR SMALL FEEDLOT OPERATORS

Small open feedlots are used across Iowa to grow and finish beef animals. Operators of these feedlots manage manure and runoff better when they have affordable control and containment solutions, and workable management practices.

Small feedlots don't come under all the regulations of large feedlots, but they can still have a significant impact on water quality. Shawn Shouse, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach agricultural engineer, says management systems that work for big feedlots are too expensive for the small operators.

But there are a variety of affordable practices they can put in place to keep nutrients and pollutants from reaching Iowa streams, and a new resource can help. "Small Open Beef Feedlots in Iowa – a producer guide" was developed by ISU Extension and Outreach with industry and agency partners for small feedlot producers.

The pdf publication is 20 pages (including cover) and available for free download from the Iowa Manure Management Action Group's (IMMAG) website at <http://www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/info/PM3018openbeeffeedlots.pdf>

More information and links to additional information and resources is on the website's small feedlots and dairy operations page here <http://www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/smallfeedlotsdairy.html> These educational resources are part of the Water Quality Initiatives for Small Iowa Beef and Dairy Feedlot Operations project supported by the Iowa DNR, Iowa Cattlemen's Association, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa State Dairy Association, USDA-NRCS, EPA Region 7 and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.



GROWING BEEF

EASTERN IOWA FORAGE PRICES

These are hay prices paid at auction in recent weeks. Much of the price information is obtained from USDA Hay Market News. Personal contacts of local Iowa hay auctions secured price information for these market outlets. Auctions were chosen to reflect prices across Iowa. No endorsement of the listed auctions is intended.

Keosauqua (SE IA) Sat 11:30A Alfalfa & Mixed Lg/Gr: SmSq \$4.75-5.50/bale Grass : SmSq \$3.00-4.50/bale Straw: SmSq \$2.25-3.25/bale

Kalona Auction (SE IA) Thursdays 11:00 AM Alfalfa: (SmSq \$2.75-7.00/bale Apr) Mixed Leg/Gr : (LgSq \$60-100/b; ; LgRd \$17.50-23/b Apr) Grass: SmSq \$3.00-8.75/bale; LgSq \$45-130/bale; LgRd \$47.50-55/bale 'Baleage' (type not stated) (LgRd \$22.50-35/bale Apr) Cornstalks: (LgRd \$11-1536/bale Apr)

Yoder Auction (Frytown) (SE IA) 1st Weds, 11:30AM (winter 1st & 3rd Weds Oct-) Alfalfa & Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq 2.50-\$5.20/b; LgSq \$60-72.50/b/T, LgRd \$460-82.50/b Grass: (SmSq \$2.30-3.80/bale; LgSq \$35-55/bale Apr); LgRd \$52.50/bale Rye Hay: LgRd \$60-80/bale

CHECK NITROGEN STATUS WITH LATE SPRING SOIL NITRATE TEST

With the heavy rains in some areas we have likely lost some nitrogen again this year, but at least so far we haven't had the long stretch of wet weather which should help to reduce the losses compared to the last few years. A good way to check the N status of the soil is to take one-foot depth soil samples when the corn is 6-12" tall. At least 16 soil cores (24 is better) should go into each sample and about a cup of this (soil bag full) sent to a lab for analysis. Cores should be pulled in a systematic way going across corn rows (ie first core pulled in the row, next one-1/8 the distance between rows, next 1/4 distance between rows, etc.).

For more information on the process see <http://www.agron.iastate.edu/soiltesting/pm1714.pdf>. An information sheet for sending samples to ISU is at <http://www.agron.iastate.edu/soiltesting/LSN.pdf>. The cost for analysis is \$5/sample.

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WORKSHOP OFFERS ESTATE PLAN OP- TIONS FOR FARM FAMILIES

Talking about estate planning is difficult and implementing an estate plan can be even harder. And farmers are unique when it comes to retirement and retirement planning. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach understands their situation and is offering Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshops at seven locations during June to discuss estate planning for farm families. "For farmers, there isn't a distinct moment where they just walk out the door to retirement as someone in a regular wage earning job might do," said Kelvin Leibold, farm management specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach. "Rather, farm families often need to think about how to transition the farm business to the next generation during lifetime, as well as having an estate plan in place."

There are options they can consider such as phasing out or transitioning to another generation. The Evaluating Your Estate Plan program can help in the planning process.

The Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshop answers estate planning questions and helps prepare for future farm transitions and estate planning. Questions often include: Who needs to be involved? What information do I need to gather? When is it the right time to start? Where do I start? How do I decide what to do?

Presenters for the workshop are Leibold and Melissa O'Rourke, ISU Extension and Outreach farm and business management specialist. Leibold joined ISU Extension in 1987 and has vast experience in working with agricultural clients in farm and business planning. O'Rourke is an attorney experienced in agricultural law and estate planning.

The one-day workshop will cover the language of estate planning, gift, estate and inheritance taxes, calculating retirement costs, and many other areas vital to creating a good estate plan. The workshops help anyone who is confused about building a plan for transferring farm assets or unsure what options are best for their farm operation and family.

Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshop locations

Registrations for the workshops can be made by calling the county extension office listed with the workshop location. Advance registration is required as space is limited. Workshop sign in starts at 9 a.m. at each site; workshops will adjourn at 4 p.m. The Evaluating Your Estate Plan workshop costs \$50 per person and includes workshop materials and lunch.

- **June 19 – Sheldon, Northwest Iowa Community College.** To register, call 712-737-4230.
- **June 20 – Greenfield, Adair County Extension Office.** To register, call 641-743-8412.
- **June 21 – Oskaloosa, Mahaska County Extension Office.** To register, call 641-673-5841.
- **June 22 – Marion, Linn County Extension Office.** To register, call 319-377-9839.
- **June 25 – Dubuque, Dyersville.** To register, call 563-583-6496.
- **June 26 – Fayette, Upper Iowa University, Student Center Ballroom.** To register, call 563-425-3331.
- **June 27 – Iowa Falls, Agriculture and Renewable Energy Center, Ellsworth Community College.** To register, call 641-648-4850.

For more information, visit the Ag Decision Maker website, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/info/meetings.html>.

MASTER GARDENER SUMMER WEBINAR SERIES “GARDEN GOODNESS” ANNOUNCED

The Iowa Master Gardener program is once again offering a series of summer webinars. The 2012 series titled "Garden Goodness" will be hosted by Iowa State University Extension county offices on the fourth Tuesday of the month, May through August. Each session will provide information about vegetable gardening, but from a variety of perspectives. “We selected 'Garden Goodness' as our theme for the 2012 series because of the current public interest in growing food,” said Jennifer Boussetot, Iowa Master Gardener and webinar series coordinator. “We want to introduce our participants to as many aspects of growing food as we can during these sessions.” Dates, presenters and topics for the 2012 series are:

- June 26, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Angie Tagtow – Food Gardening and Health; and 7:30-8:30 p.m. Denise Fikes – Glenwood’s Giving Garden. Tagtow is an environmental nutrition consultant;
- July 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Linda Naeve – Peoples Garden Project and Working with Youth; and 7:30-8:30 p.m. Cindy Haynes – Edible Ornamentals.
- August 28, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Angela Tedesco – Top Ten Sustainable Gardening Tips from Turtle Farm, an organic vegetable, fruit and herb CSA near Granger, Iowa. The series, in its third year, is offered by Iowa Master Gardener program in response to requests for more Iowa gardening educational opportunities. The sessions are open to all interested gardeners; participants are not required to have completed Master Gardener training to attend, however the session will fulfill Master Gardener continuing education requirements. www.mastergardener.iastate.edu/info/summerwebinar2012.html. Registration will be made through participating county offices.

YARD AND GARDEN: SUMMER LAWN CARE

What is the correct mowing height for a lawn in summer? Kentucky bluegrass and other cool-season grasses thrive in the cool weather of spring and fall. Hot, dry conditions in summer are stressful for cool-season grasses. Kentucky bluegrass



lawns should be mowed at a height of 3 to 3½ inches during the summer months. Bluegrass lawns should be mowed at a height of 2½ to 3 inches in spring and fall. The additional leaf area during summer shades and cools the crowns of the turfgrass plants. The higher mowing height also provides more food-producing foliage and promotes deeper root growth.

When mowing the lawn, never remove more than one-third of the total leaf area at any one time. Removing more than one-third of the leaf

area severely injures the turfgrass plants and reduces their ability to withstand additional environmental stresses.

Should I fertilize the lawn in summer? Do not fertilize Kentucky bluegrass and other cool-season grasses during the summer months (June, July and August). The best times to fertilize cool-season grasses in Iowa are spring, mid-September and late October/early November. When fertilizing the lawn, do not apply more than one pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in one application.

Do I need to water my lawn in summer? Gardeners have two basic options when confronted with hot, dry weather. One option is to do nothing and allow the grass to go dormant. The alternative is to water the turfgrass during dry weather to maintain a green, actively growing lawn. Cool-season grasses, such as Kentucky bluegrass, can survive long periods of dry weather. In dry weather, the shoots of the turfgrass plants stop growing and the plants go dormant. Dormancy is a natural survival mechanism for turfgrass. While the leaves have turned brown and died, the turfgrass roots and crowns remain alive. Generally, Kentucky bluegrass can remain dormant for four to six weeks without suffering significant damage. Cool-season lawns are at risk of dying if dormant for more than six weeks. To insure the survival of dormant grass, apply 1 to 1½ inches of water in a single application to lawns that have been dormant for six weeks. Water again seven days later. The grass should begin to green up after the second application of water. If homeowners decide to water their lawns, proper watering practices help insure an attractive, healthy lawn and conserve water. Most lawns in Iowa require 1 to 1½ inches of water per week. When watering the lawn, apply this amount in a single application or possibly two applications three or four days apart. Avoid frequent, light applications of water which promote shallow rooting and lush growth. Lush, shallow-rooted turfgrass is less drought-tolerant. It is also more susceptible to pest problems. To determine the amount of water applied by a sprinkler, place two or three rain gauges within the spray pattern. Early morning (5 to 9 a.m.) is the best time to water a lawn. A morning application allows the water to soak deeply into the soil with little water lost to evaporation. When watering is completed, the turfgrass foliage dries quickly. Watering at mid-day is less efficient because of rapid evaporation and strong winds may cause uneven water distribution. Strong, mid-day winds may also carry water onto driveways, sidewalks, or streets, wasting considerable amounts of water. Watering lawns in late afternoon or evening may increase disease problems.

GREENHORN GRAZING COMES TO WASHINGTON



Beef producers interested in learning how to optimize forage and live-stock production while conserving natural resources will want to consider attending the popular southern Iowa Greenhorn Grazing series. The program will be held at the Washington County Extension Office and local farms.

Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach beef program specialist Byron Leu is organizing this series, which consists of five ½ day sessions set for June through October. The program brochure is available at the Washington County Extension website at www.extension.iastate.edu/washington

“This five-part series is valuable for beginning graziers and producers interested in upgrading their pasture management,” Leu said. “Presenters will include experts in grazing systems, animal performance, fencing and watering systems, and weed management.” Greenhorn Grazing has been popular in other southeast Iowa communities and has drawn nearly 150 participants over the past three years.

“This series was developed by ISU Extension and Outreach, NRCS and industry staff to deliver timely materials and hands-on workshops for producers interested in improving their forage management system,” Leu said. “Producers will learn how to improve the productivity and use of their land.”

The workshops are scheduled for June 18, Aug. 1, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, and Oct. 30 at the Washington County Extension office. All sessions will run from 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. beginning with classroom discussions then featuring activities at local farms.

Grants from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and the Iowa Beef Center help keep the series cost low at \$75. Participants are urged to attend all sessions. The fee includes a meal and educational materials for each session. Producers are asked to register by June 11 by contacting Nancy Adrian at the Washington County Extension Office by phone at 319-653-4811 or by email at nadrian@iastate.edu. Registration fees can be mailed to the office at 2223 250th St., Washington, IA 52353. For more information on the series, contact Byron Leu by phone at 641-472-4166 or by email at bleu@iastate.edu.

MASTER WOODLAND MANAGERS PROGRAM - REGISTER NOW!

Beginning on Aug. 28, 2012, the 38th session of Iowa's highly successful Master Woodland Managers Program will begin at the Johnson County Extension office near Iowa City, Iowa. This educational program involves 32 hours of intensive field- and classroom-oriented forestry instruction designed specifically for woodland owners or managers, public land managers, and natural resource consultants.

Course instruction focuses on various aspects of woodland management, including tree and shrub identification, basic tree biology, land and tree measurements, protection from insects and diseases, tree planting and pruning, wildlife management, timber marketing, and wood utilization. Both indoor classroom instruction and outdoor laboratory sessions will be used in this program. Professionals from various agencies and organizations including Iowa State University, Iowa DNR, tree farmers and county conservation boards will provide instruction. A textbook and a reference notebook, plus various other technical handout materials will be provided as supporting materials.

This educational program will consist of a total of 32 hours (6 to 10 p.m. Aug. 28, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 4, 6 to 10 p.m. Sept. 11, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 18 and 25). A \$50 (\$65 for couples) registration fee to help cover costs of materials is required and graduates are expected to contribute at least 30 hours of public service after completing the course. Service projects could include a variety of activities designed to improve and expand tree resources in Iowa (assisting with 4-H projects, community tree plantings, forestry field days, etc.).

The Master Woodland Managers Program is sponsored by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, ISU Forestry Extension, Iowa Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry, the Iowa Tree Farm Committee and county conservation boards. To date, 934 individuals have graduated from this program since it was initiated in 1988, and more than 22,000 public service hours have been contributed.

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MAKING REPLANT DECISIONS

Stands of 30,000+ will result in maximum yields. Half a corn stand does not mean half the yield, but yield a yield reduction of 20-25% would be typical. The cost of re-planting and yield loss from late planting needs to be compared to any yield loss from stand losses to make a good decision. The following table can help with re-plant decisions: **Influence of planting date and plant population on corn grain yields in Iowa**

----- Corn Yields (% of maximum) -----

Stand	April 20 - X 1,000 May 5	May 5 - May 15	May 15 - May 25	May 25 - June 5	June 5 - June 15
35	100	96	87	70	54
30	99	95	86	69	53
25	95	91	83	67	51
20	89	85	77	63	48
15	81	78	71	57	44
10	71	68	62	50	38

This table comes from the latest Iowa research and modeling which is found on page 12 of the new Corn Field Guide (CSI001). Numerous gaps of up to 4-6 feet can reduce yields by an additional 5-6%.

The usual method to check corn populations is to measure off 1/1000 of an acre in a row. That is 26'2" in 20" rows, 17'5" in 30" rows, 14'6" in 36" rows, and 13'9" in 38" rows.