

AG

ISU Extension & Outreach

Washington County

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Washington, IA 52353

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newsletter

April 1, 2014

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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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LAST CHANCE PRIVATE PESTICIDE TRAINING

The last chance for farmers to attend private pesticide training locally will be April 14, Iowa County Extension Office, 9-11 a.m.

April 14, Washington County Extension Office, 7-9 p.m.

April 15, Johnson County Extension Office, 9-11 a.m.

April 15, Keokuk County Extension Office, 1-3 p.m.

April 15, Iowa County Extension Office, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

The cost of the training is \$20. This training will be done by webinar. There will be no trainings held anywhere after April 15. Pre-registration is not required but applicators are encouraged to contact the Extension Office. Pesticide applicators who wish to recertify by training and not by exam must attend a continuing instruction course each year. There is also the option of taking an exam to recertify.

Washington & Johnson County Extension are field test sites for those needing to take pesticide applicator tests. In Washington Co., the next test will be offered on April 11, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and in Johnson Co. the next test will be offered April 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All tests are available at this site and will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tests are administered by the Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship. Please contact your County Extension Office for more information.

2014 IOWA FARM CUSTOM RATE SURVEY

The 2014 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey followed the recent trend of small, but consistent increases in rates each year. Most operations showed increases of 4 to 6 percent over the average rates in the 2013 survey. The survey includes information on tillage, planting, spraying and harvesting grain or forages. Also included are values for miscellaneous services and machinery rental. These values are intended only as a guide to help both custom operators and people who hire custom work done arrive at a reasonable rate.

There are many reasons why the rate charged in a particular situation should be above or below the average. These include the timeliness with which operations are performed, quality and special features of the machine, operator skill, size and shape of fields, number of acres contracted, and the condition of the crop for harvesting. The availability of custom operators in a given area also will affect rates.

The Ag Decision Maker offers a Decision Tool to help custom operators and other farmers estimate their own costs for specific machinery operations. The Machinery Cost Calculator, File A3-29 can be found under Crops, then Machinery in the Ag Decision Maker table of contents.

The 2014 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey is available at your county extension office or online as publication FM-1698, from the Extension Online Store, or as Information File A3-10, Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey, on the Ag Decision Maker website www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/.

MANURE APPLICATOR PROGRAMS

Washington County Extension will reshew both the Commercial and Confinement Manure Applicator Programs on Friday, April 4, 2014 for those that were unable to attend a workshop. These programs are shown free of charge on the first Friday of each month. Applicators that need to schedule a reshew at any other time will be charged a \$10 fee per person. The Commercial Manure Program (3 hours in length) will be shown at 8:30 am and the Confinement Manure Program (2 hours in length) will be shown at 1:30 pm at the Washington County Extension Office, 2223 250th St., Washington, IA 52353. Anyone not able to attend training or those who prefer to retest should schedule an appointment with their DNR field office to take the certification exam. Please contact the Washington County Extension Office at 319-653-4811 with any questions.

COVER CROP FIELD DAY ON APRIL 3

A field day is scheduled for Thursday, April 3 at the Joe Kriegel farm near Malcom, Iowa. The field day runs from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The event is free and includes a complimentary lunch; RVSP by March 24 to the Poweshiek County NRCS office by calling 641-528-4115, ext. 3. Attendees will meet at the Malcom Auditorium, 212 Main Street, Malcom; then car pool to the Kriegel farm to view three cover crop sites. The group will return to the auditorium for lunch and follow-up questions. The Iowa Cover Crop Working Group's goal is to increase the amount of living cover on Iowa agricultural lands. The group provides a unified voice from academy, non-profit and industry sectors on the importance of cover crops and the encouragement of their use in cropping systems across the state. For more information about Iowa Learning Farms, visit the website: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/>.

YARD AND GARDEN: PRUNING SHRUBS IN SPRING To have additional questions answered, contact the horticulturists at Hortline by calling 515-294-3108 or emailing hortline @iastate.edu.

What is the best way to prune large, overgrown shrubs?

Proper pruning can renew or rejuvenate overgrown lilacs, dogwoods, privets, forsythias and many other deciduous shrubs. One option is to prune the shrubs back over a three year period. Begin by removing one-third of the largest, oldest stems at ground level in late winter/early spring (March or early April). The following year (again in March or early April), prune out one-half of the remaining old stems. Also, thin out some of the new growth. Retain several well-spaced, vigorous, new shoots and remove all of the others. Finally, remove all of the remaining old wood in late winter/early spring of the third year. Additional thinning of new shoots also should be done. A second way to prune overgrown, deciduous shrubs is to cut the shrubs back to within 3 to 4 inches of the ground in March or early April. This type of pruning induces shrubs to produce a large number of new shoots. The new shoots grow rapidly and may be several feet tall by the end of summer. In late winter of the following year, select and retain several strong, healthy shoots and remove all others at ground level. Head (cut) back the retained shoots to encourage branching. (Lilacs rejuvenated by this method will likely not bloom for two to three years.)

EMERALD ASH BORER PROGRAM APRIL 29

You will learn: How to identify EAB, EAB History, How to identify an ash tree, Signs of EAB infestation, Quarantines, Other Regulatory Information, Is it a candidate for treatment?, EAB treatment Options, Bark Peeling—how to find EAB in Tree (Green Industry), Ash Tree replacement options (Public meeting)

Presented by a panel of Experts:

Mark Shour Iowa State University Extension & Outreach Entomologist

Mike Kintner EAB Outreach and Regulatory Coordinator with Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Mark Vitosh Department of Natural Resources Forester

At the Johnson County Extension Office, 3109 Old HWY 218 S, Iowa City (afternoon session) & Montgomery Hall (evening session). These sites are located next to each other.

1:30-3:30 pm Green Industry Meeting For people working in the Green Industry (arborists, urban foresters, public works and parks personnel, horticulturists, Master Gardeners, tree trimmers, landscapers, nursery centers, commercial pesticide applicators...)

6:30-8 pm Public Meeting For Homeowners and Other Concerned Citizens

Meetings are FREE and no registration is required. If you have questions, call ISU Extension and Outreach Johnson County at 319-337-2145 or email Gene Mohling mohling@iastate.edu



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 in SE Iowa.

Other nearby auctions may exist. No endorsement of the listed auctions is intended.

Keosauqua (SE IA) in that 11:30A Alfalfa & Mixed Lg/Gr: SmSq \$3.00-6.50/b; LgSq \$85-90/bale Grass: SmSq \$3.00-5.00/bale; LgRd \$30-55/bal Straw \$2.50-3.50/bale; LgRd \$30-35/b Cornstalks: LgRd \$15-30/B

Kalona Auction (SE IA) Thursdays 11:00 AM Alfalfa: (SmSq \$5.00/b Dec) ; LgSq \$70-85 /B; LgRd \$42.50-87.50/bale Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq \$3.75-6.50/bale; LgSq \$ 40-85/bale; LgRd \$60-105/bale Grass: SmSq \$3.50-6.50/b; LgSq \$17.50-62.50/b; LgRd \$27.50-85/bale Baleage: type not stated LgRd \$20-37.50/bale CRP: LgSq \$16/b Straw: SmSq \$3.25-5.75/b; LgSq \$21-40/bale;LgRd \$25/bale Cornstalks:LgSq \$20-25/bale;LgRd \$28/bale Soybean 'Straw':LgRd \$12.50-20/bale

Yoder Auction (Frytown) Alfalfa: SmSq \$4.75-8.00/b; (LgSq \$80-110/b Dec); LgRd \$77.50-195/b Mixed Leg/Gr: (LgRd \$80-125/b Dec) Grass: SmSq \$4.10-4.50/b ; LgRd \$47.50-75/bale CRP: LgRd \$42.50/b Straw: (SmSq \$2.75-4.40/bale Dec) Cornstalks: LgRd \$26-32.50/bale



PLANT SOME SHADE TREE PROGRAM ~ JOHNSON COUNTY

Johnson County Extension & Outreach in partnership with DNR and MidAmerican Energy are working together to sponsor the "Plant Some Shade Tree Program". MidAmerican customers are eligible to purchase trees for \$30.00 each (*average retail cost per tree is \$65.00 with the remaining cost funded through a grant from MidAmerican Energy*). Tree purchase is initially limited to two (2) trees per household to ensure all customers have an opportunity to purchase trees. Advanced purchase is required as the quantity is limited and are sold on a first come first served basis. In the event that additional trees are available on distribution day, they will be released for purchase at 4:00 p.m. on a first come/first served basis, or until all trees are sold. **Trees must be picked up on Thursday, May 15, 2014, between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. at the Johnson County Extension Office, 3109 Old HWY 218 S, Iowa City.** Any trees not picked up by 5:30 p.m. on distribution day will be considered a donation to Johnson County Extension. **Trees are non-refundable, exchanges will not be accepted, a plant material is under no warranty and/or guarantee. Checks payable to Johnson County Extension. Contact the Johnson County Extension & Outreach Office at 319-337-2145 or go to www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson to obtain an order form. TREES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE (190 total available) Please consider the size at maturity when selecting the right tree for your site. This information is on the order form. TREES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE (190 total) Red Oak, White Oak, Service Berry, Crabapple, London Plane Tree, Spruce, Freedom & Liberty Apple. Email Elley Neuzil at eneuzil@iastate.edu with questions**

OPERATION RELEAF WILL BE HELD IN IOWA COUNTY THIS SPRING!

Iowa County Extension in partnership with DNR, Alliant Energy and the Iowa County Conservation Board are working together to sponsor the "Operation ReLeaf Residential Tree Program". Alliant Energy customers are eligible to purchase trees for \$25.00 each. Tree purchase is initially limited to two (2) trees per household to ensure all customers have an opportunity to purchase trees. Advanced purchase is required as the quantity is limited and are sold on a first come first served basis.

In the event that additional trees are available on distribution day, they will be released for purchase at 6:00 p.m. on a first come/first served basis, or until all trees are sold. **Trees must be picked up on Thursday, May 22, between 4:00 and 5:30p.m. at the USDA Office, 435 N Highland ST. Williamsburg** Any trees not picked up by 5:30 p.m. on distribution day will be considered a donation to Iowa County Extension. **Trees are non-refundable, exchanges will not be accepted, and plant material is under no warranty and/or guarantee. Checks payable to Iowa County Extension. Contact the Iowa County Extension Office at 319-6668-1052 or go to www.extension.iastate.edu/iowa to obtain an order form. Email Pam Henry prhenry@iastate.edu with questions. TREES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE (200 total available) – (Spruce, Sugar Maple, Gingko, Plane Tree, White and Red Oaks, Redbud, Crabapple**



IS THERE STILL TIME TO FROST SEED PASTURES?

Frost-seeding is the broadcasting of forage seed on existing pasture in late winter, with the goal of freeze-thaw cycles shallowly covering the seed. Early spring rains also helps with seed coverage on bare areas. It is okay if it snows on a frost seeding, but not to frost-seed on snow. Frost seeding is usually done in late February to early March in northeast Iowa. Whether or not there is still time to frost seed with this late winter depends on future weather conditions. Can you get the seeding done soon? Will we still have multiple freeze-thaw cycles? Will we have some good spring rains to help the stand get started?

Red and white clover have been the most consistently successful forage species to establish using frost-seeding. In general, frost-seeding grass is often not very successful, but ryegrass has showed promise. Success of frost seeding has been improved where the previous grass stand was heavily grazed, thus, exposing more areas of bare soil. Successful frost-seeding also requires adequate soil moisture, and average or better rainfall and growing conditions. While frost-seeding is the easiest and likely the least expensive pasture seeding approach, using a drill (inter-seeding) for more precise seed placement and seeding when soil conditions are more supportive of quick germination usually provides better, more uniform stands. Other suggestions about fertility and grazing management as part of the frost-seeding effort are provided in an Iowa State University Extension publication on frost-seeding available at: www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM856.pdf And the University of Wisconsin also has a nice short article about frost seeding at: www.uwex.edu/ces/forage/pubs/frostd.htm

PQA PLUS AND TQA CERTIFICATION FOR PORK PRODUCERS

Pork producers' desire for continuous improvement in production practices and exceeding customers' demands for quality assurance measures spurred changes to the voluntary Pork Quality Assurance® Plus (PQA Plus®) program. Revisions to PQA Plus were announced during World Pork Expo 2013. A part of the pork industry's We CareSM initiative, PQA Plus provides a framework for significant, relevant food safety standards and improved animal well-being. PQA Plus has evolved since its introduction in 1989 with regular revisions and updates to increase its effectiveness, incorporate new research information, and ensure the program's validity with customers. PQA Plus incorporates 10 Good Production Practices to align more closely with the We Care initiative principles. Revisions to PQA Plus were effective June 7, 2013. Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Plus certification training will be offered on Tuesday April 1st, 2014 from 9:30 to 11:30 am. at the Iowa County Extension Office in Williamsburg for any adult (18 years and older) wishing to be certified. A fee of \$25.00 per participant will be assessed for the PQA Plus certification training. The PQA Plus certification status is for three years.

Transport Quality Assurance (TQA) certification training will occur from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm also on April 1. A fee of \$25 per participant will be assessed for the TQA certification training. Both the PQA Plus and TQA require an open book test at the end of the presentation. The Iowa County Extension Office is located at 223 West Welsh Street, Williamsburg, southwest corner of the square. For more information on the PQA Plus certification program please call the Iowa County Extension office (319) 668-1052 or Terry Steinhart at the Keokuk County Extension Office in Sigourney at (515) 622-2680, or email at tsteinha@iastate.edu.

SPRING PREVIEW CATTLE SHOW APRIL 19

Washington County 4-H County Council will be sponsoring an IJBBA sanctioned open cattle show on Saturday, April 19 at the Washington County Fairgrounds. This event is open to youth of all ages up to 21. To exhibit at this show, there are no requirements be a member of the IJBBA or a member of 4-H. However, members of the IJBBA will receive points. This is a great opportunity for youth to compete against youth from other counties, work more with their cattle, gain experience and have fun. Check-in will be from 8:00-9:30 a.m. The show will begin at 11:00 a.m. Entry fee is \$35.00. Pre-registration is \$30.00 if registered by April 1st. Entry fee includes a t-shirt per exhibitor. Make checks payable to Washington County Extension Office, 2223 250th St. Washington, IA 52353. Supreme Champion will receive \$250.00 and Reserve Champion will receive \$150.00 for both market and breeding animals. All 1st-3rd place in the class will have cash awards. Health papers are required on all animals. If intending to show in a breed division registration papers are required. Generators are recommended, but not required. In conjunction with this event will be a Pancake Breakfast from 7:00-10:30 a.m. in the basement at the Extension Office. If you would like to register, donate to the event or have any additional questions please contact, Harry Walker, 319/461-1458 or Amy Green 319/653-4811. Registration forms are available at www.extension.iastate.edu/washington/news.

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WHAT IS A BULL WORTH? *By Patrick Gunn.*

I often get the question "How much should I pay for a bull?" My first answer is "Whatever the market will bear." Admittedly, that answer really gives no insight into return on investment for the producer relative to traits of emphasis for their particular marketing goals. With the record prices currently being observed in all markets of the beef industry, it is no secret that this translates to increased prices of replacement breeding stock. While to my knowledge, no calculator exists to determine the exact price a producer should spend on a bull, there are multiple factors that can be considered to establish a base price. Typical thumb rules that I have heard over the years for the value of an average purebred or composite bull include 2 times the value of a fed steer, 5 times the value of a feeder calf at weaning, or 25 times the cwt price of feeder calves. In the current market, using these thumb rules, we get an approximate range of \$3975 to \$4650, which is very representative of early sale reports from 2014. While spending less does not insinuate you have purchased an inferior bull, it should be expected that an above average bull for traits such as calving ease, weaning weight, docility, stayability, marbling, etc., will likely garner a premium. Assuming an average bull in today's market will be utilized for 4 years and mated to 100 cows, the mating fee over the life of the bull will be \$43 per cow. Regardless of base price, for every \$500 more spent on a herd sire, it raises the service fee only \$5 per cow over the life of the bull. Given today's feeder prices, for every \$500 more spent on a herd sire, only 3 more pounds of weaning weight per calf would need to be obtained to offset the added investment on a sire improved growth EPDs. Similarly, only 0.5 more calves would need to be born to a sire with an improved calving ease (CE/CED/CEM) EPD profile. Given the fluctuations in grid premiums and discounts, return on investment needed for bulls with improved carcass traits is harder to pinpoint, and will be specific to your operation. The initial investment of a bull in today's market may seem staggering, but it is an investment that adds immediate value to the herd working forward.

JOHNSON COUNTY 4-H HOSTING IJBBA OPEN CATTLE SHOW

Please join us for the first annual Johnson County Classic, Open Beef Show. Johnson County 4-H'ers will be hosting an Iowa Junior Beef Breeds Association (IJBBA) sanctioned open beef show on Sunday, April 27, 2014 at the Johnson County Fairgrounds. This event is open for all youth up to age 21. To exhibit at this show, there are no requirements to be a member of the IJBBA or a member of 4-H. However, members of the IJBBA will receive points. This is a great opportunity for youth to compete against youth from other counties, work more with their cattle, gain experience and most of all have fun! Check-in will be from 8:00-9:30 a.m. The show will begin at 11:00 a.m. Entry fee is \$35.00 per head. Pre-registration is \$30.00 per head if registered by April 11th. Make checks payable to Johnson County Extension Office, 3109 Old Highway 218 South, Iowa City, IA 52246. Prizes will be awarded to Supreme Breeding and Reserve Breeding Champions as well as Supreme Market and Reserve Market Champion animals.



Health papers are required on all animals. If intending to show in a breed division registration papers are required. Generators are recommended, but not required. If you would like to register, donate to the event or have any additional questions please contact Camie Marshek. 319-337-2145. Registration forms are available at www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension and Outreach

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AG DECISION MAKER www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/

County Crop Yields for 2013

The National Ag Statistics Service (NASS) release these estimates on February 20, 2014. Find the data

at: www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/pdf/a1-12.pdf

The original NASS report is at: www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Iowa/Publications/County_Estimates/index.asp

2014 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey

The annual survey report is updated every March. You can find the latest version at: www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a3-10.html

Updates on Leasing as of February 2014 include:

Computing a Cropland Cash Rental Rate www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c2-20.html

Flexible Farm Lease Agreements www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c2-21.html

Bookmark Ag Decision Maker

As always, there are many resources posted at the Ag Decision Maker website. FYI, the home page is at: www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/

East Central Iowa Crop Updates

Updates are posted at www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/eccrops/cu140225.html by Virgil Schmitt, ISU Extension & Outreach Agronomist.