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

Wetland Conservation Field Day Set for June 27

Women who own or manage farmland in northeast Iowa are invited to a free conservation field day on Thursday, June 27 called Navigating the Waters. This meeting is one of five to be held in Iowa this spring and will help female landowners identify, establish, protect or further enjoy wetlands on their property. Restoration, conservation, and/or reconstruction of wetlands on the landscape provide one mechanism to filter pollutants from water and reduce Iowa’s contribution to the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

Participants will take part in activities including water quality assessment and sampling, wildlife and plant identification. Dress for a day outdoors: wear boots or other shoes that can get muddy, a hat, sunscreen and bug spray; you may want to bring binoculars and a camera as well.

The workshop will be held on the property of landowner Sherry Gribble, 3109 155th St., Ft. Atkinson, IA. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the field day will end at 1 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Space is limited to 20 participants. If you feel they would benefit, you may also register your tenant and/or farming partner. Please RSVP by noon Tuesday, June 25, Iowa State University Extension - Winneshiek County, 563-382-2949, or email Kirkebyb@iastate.edu.

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News Release
Contact: Kristen Schulte, Farm & Ag Business Management Specialist, kschulte@iastate.edu

Iowa State University Updates Method for Rating Soil Productivity

Advances in soil science have necessitated an update in the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR), a system for rating the crop-growing productivity of Iowa soil, according to Iowa State University agronomist Lee Burras.
“Advances in soil-mapping techniques and the adoption of the national soil classification system during the past 50 years provides improved methods for calculating the CSR when compared to its original formula,” Burras said.

The Corn Suitability Rating was published in 1971 by Thomas Fenton and several colleagues at Iowa State. It reflected their expertise and a multi-year detailed analysis on the productivity of Iowa’s 30 million acres of farmland, making it the most sophisticated and complete quantitative soil productivity rating available.

The CSR was originally established in response to county assessors who needed a measure to help assess the productivity of farmland. In the mid-1970’s the State of Iowa established legislation that requires agricultural land be assessed on the basis of productivity and the net earning capacity to ensure equitable assessment. Today, the CSR is used in many additional ways, including to develop land use plans, determine land values, predict yields and negotiate cash rents.

“The goal of CSR2 is to provide a transparent system for calculating CSR such that a county assessor, farmer, realtor and any other interested person readily understands the mathematics underlying CSR,” Burras said.

CSR2 values are meant to be proportional to the existing CSR values, he said, although it is not always possible given the responsibility for transparency and consistency.

The CSR2 values of any given soil map unit (SMU) is a function of five parameters:

(a) the soil properties captured within a soil series classification,
(b) the specific field conditions captured by each SMU,
(c) the soil depth,
(d) local climate and environment,
(e) expert judgment.

A secondary goal is the creation of a framework for CSR2 evolution, which is necessary to ensure rapid and transparent updates of CSR2 as new soil series and new classifications are created.

Burras presented the updated CSR2 at the Soil Management and Land Valuation Conference at Scheman Center. A recording of his presentation will soon be available at the Iowa State Land Use web page (http://www.extension.iastate.edu/soils/), which also includes frequently asked questions about the change.

He said the new CSR2 values would be added to the Iowa State Land Use web page by July 1.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service will make CSR2 available Oct. 1 through the USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey (http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm), which is the nation’s official source of soil survey information.

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News Release
Contact: Kristen Schulte, Farm & Ag Business Management Specialist, kschulte@iastate.edu

Producers Have Options under Crop Insurance Coverage

The frequent rains that have soaked Iowa this year have left many corn and soybean fields unplanted or with flooded areas. Many producers are wondering what options they have under their multiple peril crop insurance policies.

Agricultural economist Williams Edwards and farm management specialist Steve Johnson with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offer the following update.

In Iowa, the crop insurance “late planting period” for corn begins on June 1. Corn can still be planted after this date, but the insurance guarantee on those acres is reduced by 1 percent per day until they are planted. Corn
acres planted after June 25 will receive insurance coverage equal to 60 percent of their original guarantee. Producers should keep accurate records of planting dates on all remaining acres. The late planting period for soybeans is from June 16 through July 10 in Iowa.

**Corn Producer Choices**
Beginning June 1, corn producers with unplanted acres have three choices.
- Plant corn as soon as possible with a reduced guarantee.
- Shift to soybeans with full insurance coverage.
- Apply for prevented planting. Prevented planting acres are insured at 60 percent of their original guarantee, and must have a cover crop established on them.

Acres that have been planted, but need to be replanted, may qualify for a special replanting insurance payment. Payments are based on the value of 8 bushels of corn or 3 bushels of soybeans per acre, times their respective projected insurance prices. In 2013, that is about $45 per acre for corn and $38 per acre for soybeans. To qualify for an indemnity payment under the replanted or prevented planting provisions, a minimum area of 20 acres or 20 percent of the insured unit, whichever is smaller, must be affected.

**ISU Extension Resources**
More details can be found in the publication "*Delayed and Prevented Planting Provisions*,” file A1-57 on the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Ag Decision Maker website, at [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a1-57.html](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/html/a1-57.html). An electronic decision spreadsheet is also available to help analyze alternative actions. Producers should communicate with their crop insurance agent before making decisions about replanting or abandoning acres.

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