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News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Melissa O'Rourke, Attorney, Farm & Agribusiness Management Specialist, morourke@iastate.edu, 712-395-0006

Farmland Leasing and Land Value Workshops

More than half of Iowa farmland is rented. In some Iowa locations, as much as 70 percent of the land is farmed by farmers who don’t own the land.

In Northeast Iowa, the result is many conversations and negotiations between farmland owners and producer-tenants to determine what makes sense for farmland leases and cash rental rates.

These are just a few reasons why Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offers workshops designed to answer questions that land owners and tenants have about farmland leasing and land values.

These workshops will be held across northeast Iowa counties starting August 10 through August 20. Melissa O'Rourke, ISU Extension Farm & Agribusiness Management Specialist will present a wide range of topics related to farmland values and leasing. O'Rourke is a licensed attorney with extensive experience in working with farm, ranch and agribusiness interests.

“Year after year, I receive numerous contacts from persons who have questions about farmland values and rental rates,” says O'Rourke.

“The interest in and conversations about farm leasing arrangements continues to grow, and 2015 is no different,” O'Rourke noted. “We always have good attendance and discussion at these meetings.”

“Due to the volatility of land and commodity markets, we have seen had increased inquiries regarding flexible cash lease methodologies,” says O'Rourke. “There are dozens of methods for putting together flexible cash lease arrangements, and we will work through several examples.”

O'Rourke has also had calls from landowners about filing landlord liens to help assure the rent is paid, so she will be present some information on that topic.”
O’Rourke has also seen that farmland owners and producer-tenants need to have more conversation about the cost of inputs to put in the crop and reasonable expectations on profit margins.

“ISU Extension and Outreach has good resources for people to use to gain an understanding of how crop input costs can be considered in setting cash lease rates, and I’ll show how those can be used.”

O’Rourke also noted is the increasing age of farmland owners. “ISU Extension research indicates that the average age of farmland owners continues to rise,” stated O’Rourke. “Fifty-five percent of Iowa's farmland is owned by people over the age of 65, while 28 percent of the land is owned by individuals over age 75. We find that children and surviving spouses may be less likely to continue operating the farm themselves. That’s a major reason why farmland leasing continues to increase.”

O’Rourke encourages anyone with an interest in farmland rental rates to attend these meetings. “Both farmland owners and producer-tenants should attend. In fact, the ideal situation is for these folks to attend together and then sit down at the kitchen table to discuss their farm lease arrangements for the coming year.”

Workshop attendees will receive a comprehensive workbook packed with information about land values, leasing and different types of farm lease arrangements. “Everyone should leave with a heightened understanding of farmland leasing.”

A registration fee of $20 per person is charged to cover costs and includes a 90-page workbook. Pre-registration is preferred by calling the local County Extension hosting the meeting. Walk-ins may attend for a $25 fee at the door. More information about this and other farmland leasing meetings in Iowa can be found at ISU Extension’s Ag Decision Maker website: www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm

Area meeting locations, dates, times and contact phone numbers include the following: SEE COMPLETE LIST BELOW →

FARMLAND LEASING AND LAND VALUE MEETINGS: Dates, Locations, Phone #s:
Monday, August 10
▶ Fayette—Fayette County
  Call 563-425-3331
  9:00am: ISU Extension – 201 E Clark St
▶ Independence—Buchanan County
  Call 319-334-7161
  1:30pm: Heartland Acres Center, 2600 Swan Lake Blvd *Sponsored by BankIowa—no fee

Tuesday, August 11
▶ Osage—Mitchell County
  Call 641-732-5574
  9:00am: VFW—3693 Hwy 218
▶ Waukon—Allamakee County
  Call 563-568-6345
  1:30pm: ISU Extension—21 Allamakee St

Wednesday, August 12
▶ Cresco—Howard County
  Call 563-547-3001
  1:30pm: ISU Extension—132 1st Ave W
▶ New Hampton—Chickasaw County
  Call 641-394-2174
  6:30pm: ISU Extension—104 E Main St

Thursday, August 13
▶ Calmar—Winnebago County
  Call 563-382-2949
  9:00am: NICC—1527 Hwy 150 S, Room 115

Monday, August 17
▶ Charles City—Floyd County
  Call 641-228-1453
  9:00am: ISU Extension—112 N Main St
▶ Waterloo—Black Hawk County
  Call 319-234-6811
  1:30pm: Hawkeye Community College, 1501 E Orange Rd, Tama Hall—Room 102

Thursday, August 20
NEWS RELEASE

Contacts: Jennifer Bentley, ISU Extension Dairy Specialist, 563-382-2949, jbentley@iastate.edu

Farmers Learn Science of Interpreting Soil and Manure Tests
Summer is the best time to apply livestock manure for crop fertilization, but getting the right level is a science. To aid farmers in nutrient management, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach dairy specialists are offering a workshop to fine-tune manure applications with soil management practices and testing.

“We will take a step-by-step approach on how to read a soil test and determine fertilizer needs,” said Jennifer Bentley, dairy specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach.

“Instructions will be offered for reading a manure test and determining how much of the crop nutrient needs can be met with manure applications. This knowledge will optimize on-farm resources, and likely reduce commercial fertilizer costs while increasing producer income.”

The 2-hour workshop is from 10:00 a.m. to noon, with the first hour training on manure management ‘how-to’ with examples and a step-by-step guide. The second hour will be question and answer time with Extension specialists. Leading the sessions are Brian Lang and Joel DeJong, both field agronomists with ISU Extension and Outreach. Participants may bring along recent soil and manure tests from their farm operations for interpretation.

The workshop dates and locations available in August:
- Wednesday, August 12 – Winneshiek County ISU Extension office, Decorah, 563-382-2949
- Thursday, August 13 – Fayette County ISU Extension office, Fayette, 563-425-3331
- Tuesday, August 18 – Allamakee County ISU Extension office, Waukon, 563-568-6345
- Thursday, August 20 – Howard County ISU Extension office, Cresco, 563-547-3001
- Tuesday, August 25 – Delaware County ISU Extension office, Manchester, 563-927-4201
- Wednesday, August 26 – Dubuque County ISU Extension office, Dubuque, 563-583-6496
- Thursday, August 27 – Clayton County ISU Extension office, Elkader, 563-245-1451

The program is free, but seating is limited so please call ahead to make your reservation. For more information or to make reservations, contact the local Extension County office or visit www.extension.iastate.edu/content/county-offices.

This informational meeting is sponsored by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and North Central Risk Management Education Center.

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NEWS RELEASE

Contacts: Brian Lang, ISU Extension Agronomist, bjiang@iastate.edu, 563-387-7058
Ken Pecinovsky, Farm Superintendent, kennethp@iastate.edu, 641-435-4864

Grain Market Trends and Forecast Highlighted at the ISU Field Day on Aug. 19

The annual Summer Field Day at the ISU Northeast Research and Demonstration Farm is from 1:00 to 4:15 PM. The program will start with Chad Hart, ISU Extension Grain Market Specialist, discussing grain market trends and providing a market forecast; followed by Ram Shrestha, ISU Entomologist, to cover the latest research on corn
rootworm resistance; then Mahdi Al-Kaisi, ISU Extension Soil Management Specialist, will address soil health issues in crop production; and Mark Licht, ISU Agronomist, will discuss corn and soybean growth and development along with other crop production issues.

The field day is free and open to the public. It starts at the Borlaug Learning Center Headquarters on the ISU Northeast Research and Demonstration Farm. Directions: From Nashua at the Jct. of Hwy 218 (Exit 220) and Co. Rd. B60, go west on B60 1.1 miles to Windfall Ave., then south 1 mile to 290th St., then east 0.2 miles to the farm. CCA credits are available (1 SW, 1 PM, 1CM, 1 PD). For more information about the event, call Brian Lang at 563-387-7058.

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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, Program Coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563.794.5099

Local Food Directories Available
The Northeast Iowa Food and Farm Coalition has released the 2015 Local Food Directory. The directory has been connecting consumers with direct marketing farmers for nine years. Buying local products from farmers is good for you, your family, your community and the environment.

This year’s directories were printed in partnership with Inspire(d) magazine, a local publication based out of Decorah, Iowa. Inspire(d) covers positive news in the Driftless Region – Northeast Iowa, Southeast Minnesota, and Western Wisconsin and can be picked up for free at more than 100 locations across the region, including county ISU Extension and Outreach offices.

Directories are also available online at 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.

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