Common Swine Industry Audit Training Offered in Fayette County

The Iowa Pork Industry Center (IPIC) and Iowa State University (ISUEO) Extension and Outreach are teaming up to offer a free session to assist Iowa pork producers prepare for a Common Swine Industry Audit (CSIA).

The program is set for Thursday, August 17, 1:00 to 3:30 pm at the Fayette County Extension office, 218 S. Main Street in Fayette, according to ISUEO swine specialist Mark Storlie.

“Session attendees will walk through the steps of the audit, evaluate areas for improvement and customize Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be prepared for the audit process,” Storlie said. “Attendees will be provided a binder and flash drive, including customizable audit materials for their farms, from support by IPPA, IPIC and the Pork Checkoff.”

To preregister, contact the Fayette County Extension office at 563-425-3331. Questions may be directed to Mark Storlie by phone at 563-425-3331 or mstorlie@iastate.edu.

Farmland Leasing And Land Values Informational Workshops Offered Across Northeast Iowa

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—both fixed rent and flexible arrangements. Strong landlord/tenant relationships are important for the long-term viability of Iowa’s farming communities.

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 7 through August 17.

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 2017 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 increased inquiries regarding both fixed and 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 also noted that ISU research indicates that on average, cash rent values across the state have declined for three consecutive years.

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 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.”

More information about this and other farmland leasing meetings in Iowa can be found at ISU Extension’s Ag Decision Maker website: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/

Locations in northeast Iowa include:

- August 9, Fayette, 9:00 am: ISU Extension – 218 S Main St. RSVP to 563-425-3331
- August 10, Elkader, 1:30 pm, Freedom Bank, 210 S Main St. RSVP to 563-245-1451
- August 14, Waukon, 1:30 pm, ISU Extension—218 7th Ave SE, Suite 102. RSVP to 563-568-6345
- August 15, New Hampton, 1:30 pm, ISU Extension, 104 E Main St. RSVP to 641-394-2174
- August 17, Cresco, 1:30 pm, ISU Extension, 132 1st Ave W. RSVP to 563-547-3001
For registration information, contact your ISU Extension and Outreach county office. Pre-registration is encouraged as an additional $5 fee may be added if registering less than two calendar days before the meeting date. The registration fee is used to cover costs and includes a 100-page workbook.

The Ag Decision Maker leasing section also provides useful materials for negotiating leases, information on various types of leases, lease forms and newly updated Decision Tools.

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