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Shane Ellis

Iowa State University, shanee@iastate.edu

John Lawrence

Iowa State University, jdlaw@iastate.edu

Nancy Foster

Iowa State University, nfoster@iastate.edu

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Grazing survey indicates which counties have highest, lowest rental rates per acre

by Shane Ellis, Iowa Beef Center, (515) 294-8030, shanee@iastate.edu, John Lawrence, Iowa Beef Center, (515) 294-6290, jdlaw@iastate.edu, Nancy Foster, Iowa Beef Center, (515) 294-9124, nfoster@iastate.edu

An Iowa cattle grazing survey conducted among agricultural producers and landowners indicates several trends among grazing rental rates and management practices in the state.

The 2006 survey, conducted by the Iowa Beef Center, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Iowa Forage and Grassland Council, surveyed 448 agricultural producers in Iowa. Results were released this past month.

Some of the key findings include: Kossuth, Pocahontas, Humboldt, Wright, Webster, Hamilton and Calhoun counties had the lowest annual average rent per acre at \$24.50. Delaware, Dubuque, Jones, Jackson, Clinton, Cedar, Scott and Muscaline counties had the highest annual average rent per acre at about \$45. The average rent per acre statewide was nearly \$38.

The rent per acre was highest on lands that had the greatest productivity, which were lands with alfalfa and tall cool season grasses. Rates for lands with alfalfa were as much as \$64 per acre and lands with tall cool season grasses were as much as \$59 per acre.

Custom grazing fees on average per day were highest in the summer for a cow-calf pair, at 91 cents, and lowest for yearling cattle, at 78 cents. During the winter months, the highest daily fees were for developing heifers, at \$1.14, and lowest for yearling cattle, at 65 cents.

The majority of custom grazers provided labor during both winter and summer months as part of their agreements with the cattle owners, but most owners still covered the cost of animal healthcare. Shane Ellis, Iowa State University Extension program specialist with the Iowa Beef Center, said the survey focused on a key group of producers affiliated with cattle grazing, and it provides additional details not found in the Cash Rental Rates for Iowa Survey published annually by Iowa State University Extension.

“Results from this survey will help landowners and tenants gauge the rental rate they are charging or paying,” Ellis said. “People can use it as a source for what is going on in their area.”

For the complete survey results, visit www.iowa-beefcenter.org.

Insuring Iowa’s agriculture workshop offered

Are you wondering how the farm bill debate will affect the crop insurance industry and how it serves farmers? Would you like to know more about managing risk when marketing grain? Will climate change affect crop production in Iowa? These and other topics will be explored in “Insuring Iowa’s Agriculture,” a workshop to be held

at Iowa State University on Tuesday, November 6. This event has been approved for 6 hours of continuing education credit by the Iowa Insurance Division. For more program details and online registration, visit <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/insuringiowasag/home.html>

Updates, continued from page 1

Internet Updates

The following updates have been added to www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm.

Risk Management Tool for Sheep Producers – B1-52

Organic Dairy Production Planning Concepts – B1-24

Decision Tools

The following decision tool has been added to www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm.

Organic Dairy Production – Use this Decision Tool to project the profitability of organic dairy production.

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