



Ag Decision Maker



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ISU Extension presenting an overview of the 2014 Farm Bill

By Chad Hart, extension economist, chart@iastate.edu; Ann Johanns, extension program specialist, aholste@iastate.edu; Willy Klein, organizational advancement specialist, wklein@iastate.edu

Iowa farmers and landowners will learn about the new programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (commonly referred to as the Farm Bill) at informational meetings conducted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and local USDA Farm Service

Agency staff members. Meetings will be held across the state to explain options available under the new Farm Bill.

Farm Bill – Program Overview meetings will focus on the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) that will be administered by USDA Farm Service Agency, and the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) administered by USDA Risk Management Agency through federal crop insurance providers.

“Extension farm management specialists are prepared to discuss decisions farmers and landowners need to make in the coming months regarding Price Loss Coverage, and Agricultural Risk Coverage Individual and County options,” said Chad Hart, ISU Extension and Outreach economist and pro-

gram coordinator. “Local FSA staff members who administer the programs will be available to answer questions.”

The timeline for when decisions need to be made along with information about online Farm Bill decision tools will also be shared at the meetings. Topics that will be covered during the meetings include:

- Base reallocation
- Yield updating
- Price Loss Coverage (PLC)
- Ag Risk Coverage (ARC)

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Handbook updates

For those of you subscribing to the handbook, the following new updates are included.

Table of Contents - Crops - Costs and Returns - A1-00 (1 page)

New Safety Net: PLC, ARC-CO, ARC-IC - A1-32 (3 pages)

New Safety Net: SCO - A1-44 (2 pages)

Deductible Livestock Costs - B1-15 (1 page)

Please add these files to your handbook and remove the out-of-date material.

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ARC/PLC decisions: a three-step process Page 5

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- Implications of PLC and ARC on participation in the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO)
- Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP)
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

Locate a Farm Bill meeting

Farm Bill meetings for upcoming months continue to be added to the ISU Extension and Outreach Statewide Calendar. For the most current listing of meeting locations and dates visit the Ag Decision Maker Farm Bill website at www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/info/farmbill.html or contact your county extension office.

The Ag Decision Maker Farm Bill website also contains useful links and resources related to Farm Bill decision making. Contact a county extension office for additional details about upcoming local meetings.



Steve Johnson, farm management specialist, and Chad Hard, extension economist, visited with 2014 Farm Progress Show visitors about the farm bill.



Help farmers cope with stress

By Margaret Van Ginkel, family finance specialist, vangin@iastate.edu; Ann Johanns, extension program specialist, aholste@iastate.edu; Willy Klein, organizational advancement specialist, wklein@iastate.edu

Farm life with its country setting often is idealized, but as the complications and pace of agriculture have increased, so have the physical and mental demands on farmers. Safety and stress during harvest season cannot be ignored, says Margaret Van Ginkel, an Iowa State University Extension and Outreach human sciences program specialist and Iowa Concern Hotline coordinator.

“Farmers deal with everyday tasks of money management, decision-making and equipment maintenance,” Van Ginkel said. “Worry over large debt loads, government regulations, pest outbreaks, animal disease, negative publicity, rapid change within the industry and lack of control over the weather add stress and safety risks.”

Van Ginkel noted that farmers work long hours in isolation near their home environment, leaving them no place to escape the stressors, which makes it easy to see why farming ranks as one of the most stressful occupations in the United States.

“The physical and mental stress of farming can take a toll on a person’s health,” Van Ginkel said. “Ignoring those signs of stress can lead to fatigue and depression, increasing the risk for accidental injuries, poor decision-making, physical illness and more.”

The long days and late nights of harvest can lead farmers to push their limits to get crops out of fields, but research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirms that breaks can