

Farmland Leasing Arrangements Workshop for 2025 focuses on better leases for better relationships

Farm tenants and landowners are encouraged to attend Thursday, August 14 in Fort Dodge

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Webster County is hosting a farmland leasing meeting on Thursday, August 14 at 1:30 pm AT Webster County Extension Office, 822 Central Ave. in Fort Dodge. The annual meeting is offered to address questions that landowners, tenants or other interested individuals have about leasing farmland. The 2025 annual survey of cash rental rates for Iowa farmland shows that rates decreased, on average, by 2.9% in 2025 to \$271 per acre. This is the first decline in cash rents since 2019, after a peak of \$279 per acre the previous two years of the survey.

Topics will include land values, market outlook, and cash rent trends, cost of production, methods for determining a fair rental rate, legal updates regarding leases and communicating with tenants or landowners. Farm Management Field Specialists will also address common questions when a lease is impacted by a farm estate or succession plan.

“More than half of Iowa’s

farmland is rented, and strong landlord/tenant relationships are important for the long-term viability of Iowa’s valuable farmland,” said Ann Johanns, program specialist at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. “While the trend in rental rates is fairly steady, individual agreements vary and attending a workshop is a great way to learn more or ask questions on specific aspects of farm lease arrangements.”

The two- and one-half-hour workshop is designed to assist landowners, farm tenants and other agri-business professionals with current issues re-

lated to farmland ownership, management and leasing arrangements. Attendees will gain a better understanding of current cash rental rate surveys and factors driving next year’s rents such as market trends and input costs.

Each registrant will receive a 100-page workbook with resources regarding land leasing agreements such as surveys, sample written lease agreements and termination forms, along with many other publications. The workbook may be included in the registration fee in some county meetings and available for purchase in others.

**Attend a local meeting**

Registration is \$25 per individual and includes materials. Pre-registration is encouraged as an additional \$5 fee may be added if registering less than two calendar days before the meeting date. To register contact the ISU Extension and Outreach Webster County office at 515-576-2119, by email to Linda Cline @ [lcline@iastate.edu](mailto:lcline@iastate.edu) or register online at: <https://go.iastate.edu/PPSUF5>.

The leasing meetings being held across Iowa are facilitated by farm management specialists with ISU Extension and Outreach, for other loca-

tions, visit the [Ag Decision Maker events page](#).

The [Ag Decision Maker](#) website provides useful materials for negotiating leases, information on various types of leases, lease forms and newly updated [Decision Tools](#).



Food Hubs Sell over \$4 Million of Local Food in 2024

July 1, 2025, 1:26 pm | Teresa Wiemerslage

AMES, Iowa – A new report highlights the critical role food hubs are filling in Iowa’s local food system. These hubs bridge the distribution gap in the food system between direct marketing and larger, anonymous distribution systems.

Food hubs are businesses that provide aggregation, distribution and marketing for source-identified food products from regional food producers, according to the United States Department of Agriculture. By enhancing food security and supporting local agriculture, food hubs work to foster a sense of community and a future where ev-

everyone has access to healthy food. Through collaboration with food hubs, local farmers and communities thrive.

The “2024 Food Hub Impact Report,” prepared for the Iowa Food Hub Managers Working Group by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, noted that food hubs worked with over 450 farms and food businesses in 2024. While most of the producers were from Iowa, hubs also worked with producers in Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois and Wisconsin.

“2024 was a fantastic year of growth for Iowa’s local food system,” said Teresa Wiemerslage, author of the report and field specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach’s Farm, Food and Enter-

prise Development program.

“Food Hubs sold over \$4.3 million in local foods to grocery stores, households, restaurants, school districts, food access organizations and other customers all across the state,” said Wiemerslage. This was an 11% increase from 2023.

Food hubs also reported customers in 68 of Iowa’s 99 counties.

Seven food hubs contributed to the 2024 Food Hub Impact report. The hubs are part of the Food Hub Managers Working Group, which has met since 2015 to facilitate the growth of this essential component of the food system infrastructure.

In addition to food sales, the food hubs provided almost \$90,000 in services to farms and food businesses in the form of delivery services, storage space and online market access.

The largest customer group was farm-to-cafeteria. Food hubs provided expertise to connect farms with lunch trays in over 200 school districts, childcare sites and colleges in the 2023–24 school year. This number was down 26% from the previous year. The Local Food for Schools program concluded in 2024, which provided funds to schools to purchase local foods.

Food hubs also supported over 120 food access organizations, such as food banks, food pantries and hunger or-

ganizations, by connecting them to local farms and delivering fresh foods to their locations. The Iowa Local Food Purchasing Assistance program contributed a majority of the funding for these efforts.

In addition to selling products to customers across the state, the hubs are also selling products to each other through the Iowa Hub to Hub Network.

“The network connects the hubs to each other so that products can be found in more areas,” said Wiemerslage. Seven food hubs are selling products to each other to fill supply gaps in their regions and create more robust offerings for customers. The hubs reported selling over \$330,000 of product to each other in 2024.

In other milestones, the report mentions that six of the food hubs received USDA Resilient Food System Infrastructure grants to support their aggregation and distribution activities in the middle of the supply chain. Funds were used to expand cold storage and replace delivery trucks.

The outlook for 2025 appears less promising with the USDA’s decision to cancel upcoming rounds of LFS and LFPA funding, and hubs are eager to explore new outlets for 2025 crops, said Wiemerslage.

Weed Identification Contest Returns to the Iowa State Fair

Fairgoers can put their Iowa weed knowledge to the test, win a ribbon and prizes

June 30, 2025, 10:11 am | Meaghan Anderson

AMES, Iowa – The annual Iowa State Fair Weed Identification Contest will return on Friday, Aug. 8, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. in front of the John Deere Agriculture Building. This contest is supported by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the ISU Department of Agronomy.

Participants of all ages can test their knowledge of common Iowa weeds by attempting to identify real weed samples, potted on a tabletop display. The contest requires contestants to understand commonly accepted names of weeds, but they do not need to know scientific names.

“We have a great variety



of species planted this year, including common lawn and garden species that are easy for kids to identify and rarer weed species that are more difficult to identify,” said

Meaghan Anderson, ISU Extension and Outreach field agronomist and contest organizer. “We invite all weed identification enthusiasts to see how their ID skills stack up against the best.”

This fun opportunity is open to all who would like to participate, with three distinguishing levels: future agronomists (youth under age 19), general participants and professionals. Future agronomists will identify 20 common weeds in Iowa. Those at the general level will identify 30 weeds, while professionals will identify all 30, plus five additional challenging weeds found in Iowa.

Following the contest, winners will be announced at 3 p.m. during the awards ceremony held in the John Deere Agriculture Building. The top five winners in each division will walk away with a

cash prize and a coveted Iowa State Fair ribbon. Weeds from the contest will also remain on display for the duration of the fair in the lower level of the same building.

“We encourage the whole family to compete and see who is the best at weed identification,” shared Anderson.

For more information about the contest, contact Meaghan Anderson at [mjanders@iastate.edu](mailto:mjanders@iastate.edu).

Help Children Avoid Learning Loss This Summer

Sign up today! Space is limited!

→ **Current 4-H families or past 4-H families with a 4-H online account.**  
<https://www.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in>  
Log in to your family's 4-H Online account. Click on Events in the navigation pane, and then click Register for the event.

→ **Not in 4-H? No problem!**  
Please follow this link or scan the QR code to create a free 4-H online account.  
<https://www.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in>  
Enroll as a participant. Be sure to accept permissions. After you are enrolled as a participant, select event registration. Register for what you are interested in. Remember what email you used to save time when signing up for future youth programs!

→ **No computer? No problem!**  
Visit or call your local Webster County Extension office in Fort Dodge for in-person registration. 515-576-2119

**Discover Yourself in 4-H**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/legal](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/legal). The fees for service will be used to offset direct expenses and to support the 4-H Youth Development Hamilton County Extension Program.

July 1, 2025, 10:58 am | Barbara Dunn Swanson

AMES, Iowa – Iowa children are mid-way through their summer break from school, and for some, even the memory of the previous school year may be long gone. However, learning and academic growth don’t have to stop when school is not in session, says Barbara Dunn Swanson, a health and human sciences educator with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

“In education, we often hear about the ‘summer slide.’ It’s the learning loss that students experience during the long break from school,” Dunn Swanson said.

Research suggests that students can lose up to one month of academic progress over the summer, particularly in reading and math. However, families can take steps to keep their children engaged and learning throughout the summer months.

Promote reading

Reading is one of the most effective ways to prevent learning loss. Dunn Swanson offers parents the following tips:

Set aside time each day for your child to read, whether independently or together with you.

Choose books that match your child’s interests to make reading enjoyable.

Check out your local library. Many offer summer reading programs and challenges.

Little free libraries have popped up in many towns. Explore their offerings for a fun summer adventure.

Reading can happen everywhere. Take your favorite books with you in the car to share on shopping trips, picnics, stops at local parks or wherever your family travels.

summer months.

Add math to your menu

Getting the kids into the kitchen to cook this summer can reinforce many math concepts they learned during the school year, Dunn Swanson said. Reading recipes, measuring ingredients and learning cooking skills can be fun, as well as something families can do together.

Math can also be strengthened when planning a family meal within a budget, Dunn Swanson said. “Take the shopping list and head to the grocery store to see whether you can buy the items on the list and stay within your budget. It’s OK if you need to change the menu to stay within budget.”

Encourage writing

Another way to reduce the summer slide in academics is to encourage children to write about their summer experiences, Dunn Swanson continued. Writing helps children retain literacy skills. Encourage them to write about their camping experiences or their trips to the library or other fun summer experiences.

While summer is a time for relaxation, maintaining a regular routine can help children stay mentally active, Dunn Swanson said.

“Don’t let the summer slide impact your family this summer! Set aside time for reading, learning activities and creative play to ensure that your children continue to develop their skills without feeling overwhelmed. Then they’ll be able to return to school with a greater sense of confidence,” Dunn Swanson said.

For more parenting tips, visit the [Science of Parenting Podcast](#) from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Health and human sciences educators share real-life solutions based on scientific research to help you make informed decisions for your family.

The Webster County Conservation Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the River’s Edge Discovery Center on Tuesday, July 8, 2025 for their regular meeting.

Included in the agenda:  
Call meeting to order  
Minutes of past meeting to be approved  
Financial report  
Review special event requests  
Consider partnership project with IDNR Water Trail Program  
Discuss 160<sup>th</sup> Street Trail Connection  
2025 Project updates  
Quality of Life project updates  
Additional business  
Bills to be approved  
Adjourn  
Matt Cosgrove, Director  
Webster County Conservation Board

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**DNR**

DNR seeks public input on proposed State Preserves Advisory Board administrative rule revisions

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking informal comments on administrative rules for the State Preserves Advisory Board.

Executive Order 10 (EO10), signed by the Governor on January 10, 2023, requires all state agencies to identify which administrative rule chapters will be retained or rescinded. The EO10 process includes public engagement with the opportunity for meaningful input.

The Iowa Legislature dissolved the State Preserves Advisory Board effective on July 1, 2024. Full responsibility for the State Preserves program is now assigned to the Iowa DNR.

The Iowa DNR has reviewed 575 Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) Chapters

1-3 titled State Preserves Advisory Board. This chapter has been revised as 571 Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) Chapter 60 to reflect dissolution of the State Preserves Advisory Board and its associated provisions. The revision also simplifies the remaining content into a single chapter under the Natural Resource Commission.

The public are invited to provide informal comments on the proposed rule changes.

**Extended Forecast for Dayton IA** From the National Weather Service

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1am. Partly cloudy, with a low around 65. East wind 3 to 6 mph.	A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 84. South wind 6 to 10 mph.	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly after 1pm. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 82.	Partly sunny, with a high near 79.	Sunny, with a high near 83.	Sunny, with a high near 87.
<b>Night</b>					