

Farmland Changes Affects Our Well Being

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

USDA and Extension reports from various state universities indicate about 70 percent of farm land changes ownership every generation. A familial generation is usually defined as 25 years.

About a million acres goes into housing or other development each year.

The U.S. has 2.3 billion acres of land. The 2007 Census of Agriculture, the latest year for which a USDA census report is available (the 2012 Census report is coming soon), says the major land uses were the following: forest (29 percent), grassland pasture and rangeland (27 percent), cropland (18 percent), parks, wildlife areas and other special uses (14 percent), tundra, swamps and uncategorized uses (9 percent) and urban land (3%).

Agriculture, chiefly farming and ranching and privately-owned forest production, is conducted on just over half of all U.S. land. The 2012 USDA Economic Research Service report, Land Use, Land Value & Tenure, states agricultural real estate was worth \$1.85 trillion (land and agricultural structures), which was 85 percent of the total value of U.S. farming assets in 2010.

Is there enough agricultural land? Several years ago a wealthy Colorado rancher said to me, "God made only so much land. I buy as much of it as I can and wait for the price to go up, because it always does [go up]."

Interest in purchasing farmland has increased in recent years as values of cropland have increased, especially in areas with land well-suited for agriculture such as the Midwest. According to Iowa State University economist, Dr. Michael Duffy, Iowa farmers purchased 82 percent of farmland for sale in 2012.

Investors purchased 18 percent of available farmland in Iowa in 2012, down from 39 percent in 2005. Low interest rates as well as high crop prices have fueled purchases of farmland by owner/operators.

Ownership of farmland brings out the best—and sometimes the worst—in agricultural people. I have witnessed intense competition among neighbors, and even among siblings, at farm land auctions.

Some of the most intense disputes I have attempted to help resolve have been among siblings in family farm transitions. In these cases the parents experience emotional heartaches. Instead of being close and assisting each other, the siblings and their families have difficulty interacting without anger and competition.

Hardly a week goes by that I do not receive an email or telephone call from someone indicating resentment about a family member or neighbor who "stole" land in a purported "sneaky" transaction or when outbid at a land auction.

A July 29, 2013 report by Dr. Duffy, released through



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the Iowa State University Extension, indicates 30 percent of Iowa farmland is owned by persons over 75 years of age, and 56 percent is owned by persons over 65 years of age. This

means the stage is set for possible additional strife, chiefly among family members and neighbors, as the land owned by aging owners becomes available for sale over the next few years.

How do farmers and ranchers temper their competition for land? Dutch anthropologist, Dr. Lizzy van Leeuwen, says farmers' identity is tied closely to the land. "Land represents who farmers are and what they are."

Lizzy stayed at our home for ten days in June this year. In our discussions we wondered, "Is it 'worth it' to build long-term resentments among neighbors and family members over ownership of land?"

We couldn't arrive at an answer, but we pondered starting an international study group that looks at the deep emotional ties to agricultural land and associated repercussions, such as family dissolution and suicide among farmers whose possession of land is threatened.

As a provider of behavioral healthcare to farm and ranch people, I see many negatives from winning unnecessarily ambitious battles for possession of land for agricultural uses, but I could be wrong. On the negative side, I see too much hurt among farm families and neighbors wrangling over land ownership.

They often take their pain with them into their golden years and face death feeling important matters are unresolved. Their physical and emotional well-being suffer from the anger they harbor.

On the other hand, having land to farm assures ownership of the most essential component for producing necessities for life: food, fiber and renewable biofuels. It is possible to own considerable land and still be happy as individuals and well-liked by family members, neighbors and the surrounding community.

Land owners, regardless of the size of their operations, who improve its productivity over time are models whom other farmers emulate. These successful farmers usually also look out for the welfare of their neighbors, helping them in times of need. They regularly protect the air, water and any other resources needed to farm.

Successful landowners who share their good fortune as contributors to worthy causes in their communities, such as buildings, events and projects, are appreciated by everyone. They portray what all society needs to thrive: a willingness to share more because they have more to share.

Dr. Rosmann is a Harlan, IA farmer and psychologist, available at: www.agbehavioralhealth.com.

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Visiting Hours

The Great Egg Debate

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One of the wonderful things about the field of nutrition is that it changes all the time — there is always something new to learn. That's also one of the not-so-wonderful things about the field of nutrition. For example:

As we all know, eggs (or at least egg yolks, the whites are fine) are full of cholesterol and should be avoided to prevent heart disease. Right?

Well, as it turns out, the humble egg is a food that nutritionists have gotten wrong for a long time. Much of the concern about the egg has centered on its cholesterol content. High LDL cholesterol (the bad kind) is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease. The American Heart Association recommends eating no more than 300 milligrams of dietary cholesterol per day, and a large egg contains about 185 milligrams, more than half of the recommendation. We might expect that eliminating cholesterol from the diet would prevent it from getting into our blood, but the reality is

that the effect dietary cholesterol has on blood cholesterol levels is relatively small. In fact, studies have shown that people who restricted their intake of carbohydrates and ate more eggs actually had improved cholesterol levels.

In an article recently published in the British Medical Journal, researchers examined eight studies that looked at the relationship between egg consumption and the risk for coronary heart disease and stroke. They found that people who ate one egg per day were not at increased risk for heart disease or stroke. The exception was people with diabetes — diabetics who ate the most eggs were more likely to have heart disease.

On the plus side, eggs are fairly inexpensive and pack a lot of nutrition into a small package. One large egg contains six grams of high quality protein and only 70 calories, along with iron, vitamin A, and other nutrients. Eggs are also fast and easy to prepare, making them a natural addition to breakfast. Recent research suggests that eating a high protein breakfast can increase fullness and decrease feelings of hunger later on in the day, so adding an egg to your

morning could actually help you lose weight.

A registered dietitian's take on the subject:

A guiding principle in dietetics is moderation, and this definitely applies to eggs. Categorizing food as "good" or "bad" is misleading, because almost any food can fit into a healthy diet (including my favorite category of food: dessert). Based on the available evidence, eggs are not as "bad" as we used to think they were: eating an egg a day can be part of a healthy diet. Eating four eggs every morning, on the other hand, is probably too much.

It's also important to remember that everyone is unique. It's possible that certain people may be sensitive to dietary cholesterol, and limiting egg consumption may be helpful for them. Additionally, based on we know now, people with diabetes should be careful. But the majority of Americans don't need to feel guilty for choosing a whole egg omelet instead of the egg white variety — and as a yolk lover myself, I think that is (pardon the pun) "egg"cellent.

Lions Club Helps KAH



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The Yankton Lions Club recently packed over 3,000 meals for children in need of our care. If your service club or organization would like to learn more about how you can make a difference in the lives of children, please visit www.kahyankton.org

Boy Scout Troop No. 133 To Hold Scrap Collection Sat.

Yankton Boy Scout Troop No. 133 will hold its monthly scrap newspaper and aluminum can collection Saturday, Sept. 7. Papers and cans will be picked up at the trailer courts and apartment complexes in Yankton. Also, paper and cans will be picked up at Riverside Acres.

Have newspapers and cans secured in sacks or small cardboard boxes and ready to be picked up by 9 a.m. Saturday.

Paper and cans may also be taken to the Riverview Park Reformed Church Parking Lot, 1700 Burleigh, between 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday.

For more information on the newspaper and aluminum can collection, call 665-0685. The Boy Scouts cannot handle tin or plastic. These need to be placed with the recycling the city picks up or taken directly to the landfill for recycling.

Free Water Screening Offered at Husker Harvest Days

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraskans with private water wells can have their drinking water screened for nitrates during Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island on Sept. 10-12.

To find out the nitrate level in the water they drink, well owners can bring a cup-size sample of water in a clean bottle to the Natural Resources Building, Lot # 1106 on the southeast side of the Husker Harvest grounds, East Avenue and Second Street. Samples can be brought by on Tuesday and Wednesday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., and on Thursday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. There is no charge for the screening, and they can get the results while they wait.

Because drought conditions continue to exist across the state, wells are experiencing declines in their water tables. As a result, nitrate, which tends to concentrate in the upper level of the water table, can be drawn down to the point where water containing high nitrate is drawn into the well. For public health reasons the Department of Health and Human Services recommends that private well owners have their water tested for nitrate concentrations and total coliform on an annual basis.

Nitrates are a concern for

infants under six months of age and pregnant women, as well as anyone who has a compromised immune system. High levels of nitrates interfere with the blood's ability to carry oxygen and can cause "blue baby" syndrome.

Livestock, especially cattle and hogs, are also susceptible to nitrate poisoning. In cattle it results in lower milk production and loss of calves; in hogs it results in loss of piglets.

In addition to nitrate screening, water supply specialists will be on hand to answer questions, and information on water quality will be available.

The screening at Husker Harvest Days is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health. For more information contact the Water Well Standards Program at (402) 471-0546.

The Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the National Ground Water Association, is proud to promote "Protect Your Groundwater Day" on Tuesday, Sept. 10. The focus of "Protect Your Groundwater Day" is to bring awareness to protecting the state's most important drinking water source — groundwater.

March Of Dimes Needs Your Help To Honor Nurses

SIOUX FALLS — Dating back to the polio era, nurses have played a critical role in advancing the mission of the March of Dimes. 40,000 nurses volunteered for the Salk polio vaccine field trials in 1954, the largest medical investigation of its kind ever conducted.

Today, nurses serve as volunteers, fundraisers and advisors to the March of Dimes. Nurses are critical to its mission of improving the health of babies — and are key in comforting families.

March of Dimes is hosting the first Nurse of the Year Awards in South Dakota on Nov. 16. This is a way to celebrate nursing excellence and recognize leaders in nursing from across the state.

From the very youngest of patients in newborn intensive care units to the elderly in hospice, nurses

protect our health, work to prevent injury, alleviate suffering and advocate for our care. Nurse of the Year Awards are a way to say thank you and honor selflessness, dedication and passion for the profession of nursing.

Patients, families and colleagues are encouraged to nominate nurses in 20 categories this year. The purpose of the event is to raise the public's awareness of and interest in the diverse and rewarding careers available to registered nurses.

Say thank you to the thousands of South Dakota nurses who make all of our lives a little easier. Nominations are due by Sept. 15. Complete details and nomination forms can be found by visiting <http://marchofdimesnoty.wufoo.com/forms/nurse-of-the-year-nomination-south-dakota-2013/>.

'Hike The Wilsons' Prairie With Us' Set For Sept. 8

The event "Hike the Wilsons' Prairie With Us" will be held Sunday, Sept. 8, at the Prairie Bluffs Conservation Easement, 30998 Bluff Road, Vermillion. The event runs from 3-7 p.m.

Jerry and Norma Wilson have spent years rehabilitating land that has suffered from erosion and infertility from overgrazing and poor stewardship. They have planted more than 800 trees and shrubs on the top of the bluff as a wind break for their home, using a combination of maple, pine, Russian olive, ash, lilac and honeysuckle. In addition, they have restored 30 acres to native prairie, replacing invasive brome grass with a mixture of 16 native grasses and wildflowers. They also conduct prescribed burns to integrate the natural cycle. The difference between the burned and unburned acreages is startling, with

the burned area being lush and thick with growth.

"The natural prairie must have fire to keep healthy," Jerry says.

To participate in the hike, meet at the log cabin on the Prairie Bluffs Conservation Easement. The public is welcome. It is suggested you wear long pants and sturdy shoes, and bring water, bug spray and sunscreen.

If you would like to join Vermillion's Living River Group, part of the South Dakota Chapter of the Sierra Club, or if you are already a member, stay for a potluck at the Wilsons' home at 30959 Frog Creek Road, 5-7 p.m. RSVP for the potluck at 624-9279.

To get to the site, from the intersection of Highway 19 and Highway 50 Bypass, go north 1.8 miles. Turn left onto Bluff Road and continue for 8 miles until you reach the log cabin at 30998 Bluff Road on the right.



Petersen-Rezac

Cassandra Petersen of Sioux Falls, SD, and Charles Rezac of Edwards, CO, announce their engagement and upcoming marriage.

Parents of the couple are Tony and Brenda Petersen of Lindy, NE, and Robert and Pamela Rezac of Yankton, SD.

The couple is planning a September 14, 2013 wedding at St. Benedicts Catholic Church in Yankton, SD.

Comm. Garden Training Sept. 10

BROOKINGS — Is your community interested in providing a space for residents to grow food? SDSU Extension is hosting a Community Garden Start-up online training Sept. 9 from noon-1 p.m. (CDT) and Sept. 10 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. (CDT).

Community Gardens are a place to grow food, reconnect with nature and get physical exercise. Community Gardens provide a place to grow food for renters without access to land or for homeowners with yards that are too small or too shady.

If your community wants to learn more about developing a community garden, join SDSU Extension Community Development Field Specialist, Chris Zdorovtsov, for an introductory webinar on getting started. Community staff, neighborhood associations,

apartment managers, and community members interested in establishing a shared garden space in their town are encouraged to attend.

Zdorovtsov will discuss action steps on starting a Community Garden — various models, site assessment, resources needed and more. During the webinar, she will also discuss successful community gardens which have started as a result of the SDSU Extension Horizons Community Development Programs.

To participate in the Sept. 9 or Sept. 10 webinar, visit the event posting within <http://igrow.org/events/>. Open the event and click on the participant link. For more information contact Chris Zdorovtsov, SDSU Extension Community Development Field Specialist at 605-782-3290 or Christina.Zdorovtsov@sd-state.edu.

It's the first of the month...

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