



IOWA NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

NEWS

SAVE THE DATE!

59th Annual ISU - Shade Tree Short Course & INLA Trade Show

Join us for the 59th Annual ISU STSC & INLA Trade Show. Being held on **February 24 - 26, 2015** at the Scheman building on the Iowa State Campus.

Attendee information will be available on the STSC website soon and if you have interest in being an exhibitor or a sponsor you may contact the INLA office at 515-262-8323 or email Joan O'Brien at joano@agribiz.org.

Hope to see you there!



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350 Deer Destroyed; Many Test Positive for Disease

By: Donnelle Eller – DM Register

About 280 deer on a farm in north central Iowa tested positive for chronic wasting disease, a fatal degenerative neurological disease, the Iowa Department of Agriculture said today.

The herd of 356 captive deer was destroyed in late August after it was quarantined more than two years ago. That's when a whitetail deer harvested from a hunting preserve in southeast Iowa tested positive for chronic wasting disease.

An investigation determined the animal had come from the farm in north central Iowa. The animals at the southeast preserve were destroyed two years ago.

Chronic wasting disease is fatal to deer, elk and moose. It does not affect humans.

The owners of the facility qualified for \$1.4 million in federal assistance to help cover part of the costs to depopulate the north Iowa deer farm, the state said.

The owners, Tom and Rhonda Brakke, have

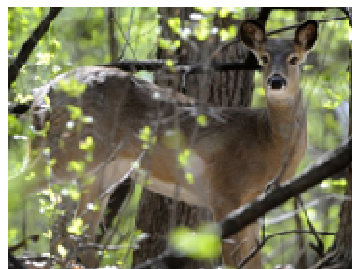
been in litigation with the state over compensation to depopulate the animals. Doug Gross, the couple's attorney, said the federal reimbursement covers about two-thirds of the costs they have experienced.

The state said about \$917,100 would be available to the owners after the deer farm is cleaned and disinfected.

The state agency said the owners also have agreed to maintain an 8-foot fence around the herd farm for five years after the depopulation.

In April, the first wild deer tested positive for chronic wasting disease in Allamakee County in northeast Iowa. The disease is prevalent in southern Wisconsin.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture operates a voluntary chronic wasting disease program for farms that sell live animals. Iowa now has 145 deer farms that participate in the program. All deer harvested in a hunting preserve must be tested for chronic wasting disease.



RELEASE: Ten Iowa Organizations to Receive Grants to Help Promote Specialty Crops

USDA funds will help groups promoting fruits, vegetables, nuts, and flowers

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey today announced that the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship will be awarding grants to ten Iowa organizations to help enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops grown in Iowa. The Department received \$307,610 through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service to support the program.

"Specialty crops are a very important part of Iowa agriculture as they allow farmers to diversify and give

customers access to locally grown products," Northey said. "These federal funds will support food safety, research and marketing efforts that will encourage Iowans to choose fruits, vegetables, nuts and flowers that are produced right here in our state."

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - \$51,541 to identify the causes of mortality for nursery stock held at retail garden centers.

Migrant Worker Wage Rules Challenge Siouxland Ag Businesses

By: DAVE DREESZEN - Sioux City Journal

For the busy harvest season, Ag Partners LLC regularly hires about three dozen seasonal employees.

But finding enough area residents eager to put in long hours unloading semi-trucks and grain wagons and doing other tasks in an often dusty environment has become increasingly difficult in recent years.

"The local, skilled labor pool for full-time, seasonal hiring has been pretty sparse," said Mike Koenecke, an Ag Partners human resources recruiter.

So last year, for the first time, the Albert City, Iowa, cooperative recruited migrant farm workers to supplement its seasonal staffing needs.

The experiment proved so successful that 16 migrant workers were brought in this fall to work at six of the cooperative's highest grain-volume locations in Albert City, Alta, Alton, Hartley, Maurice and Royal, Koenecke said. The migrant workers represent about 65 percent of the coop's seasonal workforce.

Grain handlers are among a host of U.S. agriculture businesses that use seasonal migrant labor, from vineyards to **sod farmers**, to orchards and vegetable patches.

One of the biggest obstacles is a requirement that employers in the program pay the highest of several pay rates for farm laborers in a designated region.

The H-2A rate for the four-state region that includes Nebraska and South Dakota is \$13.41 an hour, higher than anywhere else in the country, Jackson said. In the region that includes Iowa, it's \$12.22 per hour.

The calculations are a safeguard to keep ag businesses from paying migrant workers below-market wage, said Megan Horn, a policy analyst and attorney for FarmWorker Justice. The national advocacy group works to improve working and living conditions for seasonal ag laborers.

Legislation also would have expanded the program to year-round ag businesses, such as livestock farms. A number of large Northwest Iowa dairies have struggled to find workers to milk and care for their herds.

An estimated 2,500 vegetable, fruit, **sod and dairy farms**, orchards and nurseries in Iowa employ farm workers seasonally, according to Iowa Workforce Development. The agency reaches out to workers through an outreach program.

For the Ag Partners project, Iowa Workforce collaborated with the coop and Limas Farm Labor Services. A one-day training and work readiness screening for the workers was held last month at the Palo Alto County Health System in Emmetsburg.

Koenecke said a number of the workers supplied by Limas spend summer months detasseling seed corn for a grower in Eldora, Iowa.

"It's a nice synergy so they're not having to go back to Texas and turn around and come back to Iowa," he said. Koenecke said the coop offers the workers competitive pay -- well above the federal minimum wage -- and also helps find them rental housing during the temporary assignments, which usually last about six weeks.

The guest workers, he said, relish the 50- to 90-hour weeks that coop staff typically put in during the harvest season.

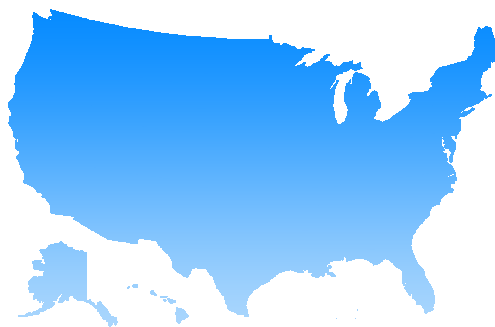
"They're here to work," he said. "They love it because it's more income that they can send back to their families." Jackson said the H2-A program has supplied Daniels Produce with a loyal group of 60 to 70 guest workers, who have returned year after year to operate specialized picking equipment and pluck vegetables from the ground. "They learn how to do everything," she said. "You get to know them. You get to know their families. I don't want them to lose their jobs over a political game that's being played."

Grant Program Authorized by 2014 Farm Bill to benefit all 50 States, Help Grow Agricultural Economy

By: Ben Becker - United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry

Chairwoman Stabenow Announces Major Investment to Strengthen Markets for Fruits and Vegetables.

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will invest more than \$119 million in grants to help strengthen markets for fruits and vegetables in all 50 states, DC and the territories. The grants will be provided through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program and the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, both authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.



Specialty crops – which include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, horticulture, and nursery crops – were first included in the 2008 Farm Bill when Sen. Stabenow authored the first-ever specialty crops title. Under Stabenow's leadership, the 2014 Farm Bill expanded on the advances made in the 2008 Farm Bill, significantly increasing support for specialty crops to ensure farmers of fruit, vegetable and nursery crops have access to research, pest and disease prevention and marketing resources they need.

Dr. Michael Dirr Returns to the 2015 Western

By: Sarah Woody Bibens - The Western

Dr. Michael Dirr will return for the 2015 Western in Kansas City. Dr. Dirr and Bonnie Dirr have been dear friends of the Western for many years and will join friends & colleagues at the Western's 125th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday evening January 3.

On Sunday January 4 Dr. Dirr will present "The Sun Never Sets on New Plant Introductions: Searching the Globe for the Best of the New." Don't miss it – this could be Dr. Dirr's "last hurrah" at the Western.

In addition to networking with Dr. Dirr there will be abundant opportunities to network and learn via the Western's signature Learning Centers and Roundtable Discussions led by peers. Discover 25 new plants on the

Fashion Show runway and catch 10 Great Business Ideas - 10 minutes each.

Enjoy complimentary drinks with friends both Saturday evening at the 125th Anniversary Celebration Reception and Sunday afternoon at the Western Pub. Follow up with a night on the town in the Crown Center District, Downtown Power & Light District, Crossroads Arts District, 18th & Vine, Westport or the Country Club Plaza. In the last 10 years \$6.5 billion has been invested in Downtown Kansas City. Forbes's magazine, Frommer's, Travel + Leisure and Lonely Planet are just a few who have been raving about KC!

City Council Approves Tree Inventory of Des Moines

By: Staff Writer - WHO TV

The threat of the Emerald Ash Borer is forcing cities across Iowa to start taking inventory of its trees, and for a city the size of Des Moines, that's a big job.

It will come with multiple benefits though. The inventory would identify hazardous trees, along with healthy trees in need of simple pruning.

Monday night, the city council voted to send tree crews out next spring to identify and assess all trees located along streets and in the mowed areas of city parks. It will be an "active inventory" that can be continuously updated, and Councilman Skip Moore, who is an arborist himself, says it will save the city money in the long run.

"A good example would be when the Emerald Ash Borer

became a reality for the city of Des Moines. About 7-8 years ago, we had no idea how many ash trees we had or where they were located on the parking and we put out the entire forestry division for a week to identify the locations of all these ash trees throughout the city, whereas if we had an active inventory that's computerized, we could have queried that and had it in a matter of minutes," says Moore.

The city has voted to spend about \$350,000 on the inventory, though most of that will be paid for by the non-profit group Tree Des Moines.

To view the news clip, go to:

<http://whotv.com/2014/10/07/city-council-approves-tree-inventory-of-des-moines/>

Midwest Beekeepers to Focus on Public Awareness

By: The Associated Press - Iowa Farmer Today

Beekeepers in Iowa and Nebraska are joining a national movement to encourage farmers and gardeners to avoid new pesticides which kill bees and to promote the health of bees as integral to food production.

They hope to capitalize on the trend of consumers becoming more interested in buying food from local producers and desiring more information about how food is grown.

Bee enthusiasts said honeybees need help as they face two big threats to their survival: pesticides and disease.

Chris Ruhaak, who lives in Council Bluffs, is one of about 1,500 beekeepers in Iowa.

"Through our efforts, we could help them, but if we don't, they all could die," Ruhaak said. "As beekeepers, we do what we can to nurture them and keep them as healthy as possible."

Keeping bees healthy is something that should matter to everyone, beekeepers say, because soybeans, strawberries,

asparagus, carrots, apples, almonds and olives, to name a few, rely on pollination by bees.

Beekeepers encourage farmers, gardeners and other plant growers to avoid using a fairly new family of pesticides called neonicotinoids, which kill bees along with the nuisance insects for which they were designed.

The other mysterious problem killing off bee colonies is something called Colony Collapse Disorder, which by some estimates has decimated one-third of honeybee colonies in the country.

We wouldn't have so many foods without them," said Clarence Seale, president of the Loess Hills Beekeepers Association. "People don't realize how important that chain of life really is."

A retired Air Force meteorologist, he has about 30 beehives on his property and on farms near his home in Glenwood, Iowa.

AmericanHort Updates

A couple of STARS Act updates. First, as you may have heard, the Senate version of the bill was recently introduced by Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH). While it is premature to push the grassroots button, we'll be doing that post-election but shortly before Congress returns in November. We have updated the advocacy campaign on the Voter Voice site. A link is here: <http://americanhort.org/votervoice?vvsrc=%2fcampaigns%2f36867%2frespond>

Secondly, an article about Senate introduction will appear in next week's Washington Impact. I'm pasting the copy below,

all the way at the bottom. Feel welcome to use as you see fit.

Thirdly, there was a House staff briefing on the bill earlier today. Good crowd, about 50 staffers (from interns to chiefs of staff, of course more interns). Presenters included Troy Lucht, an SAF and AmericanHort member grower/garden center owner from Minnesota, a restaurant owner from Virginia Beach, and a berry and vegetable grower from New York. Our staff alum Corey Connors moderated and did a nice job.

Oak Wilt Threatening Trees Across Iowa

By: By Orlan Love - The Gazette

Unlike the tree affliction caused by the emerald ash borer, oak wilt does not threaten to wipe out every oak in the state. But that's little consolation to Clayton Ohrt, whose picturesque, predominantly red oak timber overlooking the Wapsipinicon River has already lost scores of mature trees to the disease. State Forester Paul Tauke considers "Iowa's most persistent long-term oak ailment."

More will likely succumb before the disease is controlled, said Department of Natural Resources forester Jeff Seago, who is helping Ohrt redefine his timber management plan.

"I hate to see it happen. That timber is one of my prized possessions," said Ohrt, who has been planting trees, shrubs and native grasses on his farm for several decades. Ohrt said he noticed last year that many of his trees had withered leaves and thought it might have been an after effect of the 2012 drought.

After inspection tours this summer, Seago said he found scores of dead and dying mature red oaks, as well as ample signs of classic oak wilt symptoms — withered, discolored leaves that lead rapidly to defoliation and darkened patches

of fungus, called mycelium mats, that crack the bark and emit a sweet smell that attracts insects that further spread the disease.

Although Seago said he is confident that oak wilt is killing Ohrt's trees, he said the disease has not yet been confirmed by laboratory tests. Landowners who suspect oak wilt should not harvest trees or undertake other management steps until the disease has been confirmed, he said.

If the trees are large enough — typically, with trunk diameters of at least 20 inches — and not decayed, they may be suitable for lumber, according to Seago. Smaller trees and those already decaying can be used as firewood, he said.

Oak wilt can spread from infected trees to healthy trees through root grafts connecting nearby oaks and by insects that carry the fungus from one tree to another.

Red oaks have an open vascular system that allows the fungus to spread quickly within the tree, Seago said.

White oaks are also susceptible to the disease, but they can sometimes survive it, he said.

Dear INLA Members,

As we are well into our 2015 Dues Year we'd like to remind you that the participation for this year will require an update of your membership. The third mailing-reminder for update went out mid October.

If you have not yet updated your membership for this year and/or have not been receiving your dues packet you may call the office at 515-262-8323 and inquire. You may also update your membership info and your dues over the phone by calling the same number.

Hope you'll join us for a fun and promising year!

If you have questions please contact Joan O'Brien at



Thank you to Members Who Have Renewed Their Commitment to INLA!

INLA strives to promote certified Garden Center and Landscaping professionals, so thank you to the following INLA members who have already renewed their membership and paid 2014 - 2015 dues!

We appreciate your support of the Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association!

If you have not yet renewed your membership please keep your eye out for the second round of dues invoices which will be sent shortly. The following renewals have been received **through 10-23-14**

** Indicates an ICNP dues paying member.*

Todd Brockshus*
Del's Garden Center
Spencer, IA

Ron Eike
Wood Duck Tree Farms
Panora, IA

Jeff Engel
Foster's, Inc.
Waterloo, IA

Barbara Fuelberth*
Ferguson's Garden Center
Spirit Lake, IA

Robert Fullhart*
Del's Garden Center
Spencer, IA

Monty Mitchell
Suburban Landscape Assn
Davenport, IA

Chris/Renee Quance
Ferguson's Garden Center
Spirit Lake, IA

Nicole Riordan*
Del's Garden Center
Spencer, IA

Jodie Theobald*
Iowa City, IA

Craig Westfield*
Iowa Outdoor Products
Urbandale, IA