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- Higher land prices are good news, to some

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THOUGHTS FROM 109 KILDEE
Higher land prices are good news, to some
The numbers just keep rising. In the latest farmland values survey conducted earlier this month by the Iowa Farm and Land Chapter #2 Realtors Land Institute (RLI), Iowa's best farmland rose in price by an average 12 percent during the previous six months to $5,223 an acre. According to the same survey, on a statewide basis Iowa farmland has risen 21 percent in the year ended March 1, 2008. In an article on the Des Moines Register Web site, RLI survey chair Troy Louwagie said those survey results show continuing strength in Iowa's farmland market. "This was the highest dollar per acre number we've ever had, the second highest six-month gain and the third highest annual increase over the last 30 years since the survey began," he said. The RLI results nearly parallel the most recent ISU Extension farmland survey results from December 2007, which showed farmland prices rose 22 percent during the year ended November 2007. ISU Extension farm economist Mike Duffy said then that he expects land values to remain strong through at least 2012. Lower interest rates, higher cash rents, a weakening dollar and uncertainty over a new Farm Bill all contribute to the rising values. It's not just Iowa farmland values that are rising. Agriculture.com also shows Nebraska with a 23 percent increase in the past year. Of course, rising grain prices and feed costs are helping contribute to much lower income for livestock producers, but ISU ag economist John Lawrence says Iowa is well-positioned to ride out those challenges. An article on the Web site of the Waterloo Courier (http://snipr.com/22hwh) has more info from Lawrence's talk at the Northeast Iowa Agricultural Experimental Association's annual meeting. Lawrence said several years of profitable livestock prices, if not record income for some, will help producers weather this economic storm. Read more on the Des Moines Register Web site http://snipr.com/22hnq; the ISU Extension news Web site http://snipr.com/22htp; Agriculture.com Web site has info, charts, etc. http://snipr.com/22hr7 and the Waterloo Courier Web site http://snipr.com/22hwh

NEWS
Webcast to focus on antibiotics and hormones in manure
The next regularly scheduled Webcast in the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center series is set for this coming Friday, March 28. This session will focus on antibiotics and hormones in animal manure, and will be presented by Paul Ebner of Purdue University, Dave Norris of the University of Colorado, and Amy Pruden of Colorado State University. The program begins at 1:30 p.m. Central time. You can read more about this session on the LPE Web site in pdf format here http://snipr.com/22hfm The official session title is, “Pharmaceuticals in Animal Manure: Potential Environmental Impacts.” Want to
know more about the LPE, including how to access the free Webcast? Check out the LPE Web site http://snipr.com/22hfy

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AASV president-elect is from ISU
At its annual meeting earlier this month, members of the American Association of Swine Veterinarians approved Butch Baker of ISU as the group’s president-elect. Baker has been senior clinician in the Food Supply Veterinary Services Unit in the College of Veterinary Medicine since 2006, and has spoken at a variety of programs for IPIC including the Iowa Pork Regional Conferences in 2007, and the PorkBridge Grow-Finish distance education series in February. Our congratulations to Butch!

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ISU Vet Med students earn scholarships
Four ISU Vet Med students were awarded scholarships at the American Association of Swine Veterinarians annual meeting in California earlier this month. These three ISU students each received a $2,500 scholarship: Jennifer Arnold, Jess Waddell and Gavin Yager; and Tyson Dinslage received a $1,500 scholarship, all courtesy of Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, on behalf of Elanco Animal Health. Thirty-three veterinary students representing 15 universities submitted abstracts for consideration and 15 were selected to present during the annual meeting. The presentations were evaluated on the basis of communications skills in the writing of the abstract and the presentation of the case report, and on applicability of the research to swine medicine. Sponsor Alpharma Animal Health also provided a $750 travel stipend to each student selected to participate. You can read the news release about all student scholarship winners on the AASV Web site here http://snipr.com/227sp

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IT’S A DATE

Continuing. PQA Plus™ certification sessions. A two-hour training session for pork producers or individuals who need PQA Plus™ certification. Cost is $25 and preregistration is encouraged. See IPIC Web site for locations, times and specific contact information http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPlus.html

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Continuing. Food Safety Quality Assurance Training and Testing sessions. See IPIC Web site for locations, times and specific contact information http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/FSQA08.html

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April 1. Exploring Opportunities: A Conference for Aspiring Pork Producers. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Quality Inn and Suites, East 13th St., Ames. Cosponsored by IPIC, IPPA, Farm Credit Services and the Beginning Farmer Center. Attend for free when you’re registered by this coming Friday. Otherwise, it’s $20 per person. Preregister by calling IPIC at 800-808-7675. On the IPIC web site, see the program agenda here www.ipic.iastate.edu/events/ExploringOpportunities.408.pdf and read about the speakers here www.ipic.iastate.edu/events/Presenter.Information.408.pdf.

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DID YOU KNOW?
Heart-healthy pork courtesy of mice and worms
Ordinarily, you wouldn’t think of seeing worms and healthy pork in the same sentence, let alone a laboratory. Recent research from the University of Missouri makes that combination not only possible, but possibly preferable. Here’s the background: A few years ago, scientists created mice that transformed unhealthy omega-6 fatty acids into beneficial omega-3 fatty acids by transplanting a gene from the roundworm C. elegans into mice. This theoretically raised the possibility of creating genetically
engineered livestock with higher levels of the good fat. A team from the University of Pittsburgh first transferred the roundworm gene --fat-1-- to pig fetal cells. Then, a team from the University of Missouri cloned those cells and transferred them into 14 pig mothers. Twelve pigs were born and six of them tested positive for the gene and its ability to synthesize omega-3 fatty acids. You can read more about this topic in an article published in Nature Biotechnology (available on that Web site here http://snipr.com/22hlo) However, opinions on the results and conclusions drawn from the results are not without question. Do we really need pork with omega-3 fatty acids when it’s available already in other foods? You can see some of the discourse between the researchers and others, also on the Nature Biotechnology Web site at this URL http://snipr.com/22hme

FOR THE RECORD
Danish Pork Production -- An Environmental Assessment
A report on the environmental impact of pork production in Denmark shows that feed production, manure handling and storage, and slurry handling are the most polluting links in the Danish pork production chain. However, animal transportation pollutes only slightly. Written by faculty of the college of agriculture from the department of Agroecology and Environment at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, the report is based on data from 2005. Perhaps the best news from the report: the environmental effect per kilogram of pork has decreased since 1995. You can download and read the entire 38-page report (released in November 2007) at this URL on the web site of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries http://snipr.com/221xi

NEWS NOW from the Iowa Pork Industry Center www.ipic.iastate.edu
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