

Written by Laurie Johns
Friday, 09 August 2013 13:42

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'Take Root' Focuses on Farm Business and Succession Planning

WEST DES MOINES, IOWA – August 8, 2013 – Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF), the state's largest grassroots farm organization, launched a new program today to help farmers develop business and succession plans. The program, called Take Root, was established to help farm families work through a step-by-step process of developing a vision for their operation and a managed approach to the obstacles they face in farm growth and transition.

"Over 97 percent of farms in Iowa are family-owned and operated, according to the 2007 Ag Census, and we'd like to see that continue," said IFBF Farm Business Development Manager Nathan Katzer. "Our aim is to provide resources to help farm families build their own vision for the future, because creating a vision that's bigger than you could grow by yourself is at the root of business and succession planning."

A series of four "Take Root" business continuation and succession planning sessions will be offered around the state starting this month, free of charge for Farm Bureau members and \$45 for non-members.

"Many Farm Bureau members told us that succession planning is one of their biggest ongoing concerns," Katzer said. "We want to help multi-generation farm families develop plans to bring the younger members into the ownership structure of the operation and will help families develop flexible contingencies for the uncertain times ahead."

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Katzer said surveys of Iowa farms highlight a clear need for a program like Take Root. “History shows us that only 30 percent of the farms successfully make the transition from the first to the second generation and only 10 percent of those make it to the third generation. Keeping Iowa farming legacies intact and ongoing is essential to the continued success of our state’s agriculture industry,” he said.

Katzer said each plan will be different because they will build on the strengths of each farm and be customized to their needs.

The Take Root program will connect farmers with expert resources including lenders, attorneys, Iowa State University and others who have been successful in helping farm families manage their farm transitions.

“The program is a comprehensive approach to planning for a family farm’s continuation and growth from the roots up,” said Katzer.

The four pilot sites for the Take Root sessions are:

August 29 in Eldora at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire House Grill.

September 9 in Fort Dodge at 6:00 p.m. at the Webster County Farm Bureau office.

September 10 in Nashua at the Iowa State University Borlaug Center at 6:30 p.m.

September 12 in Creston at 6:30 p.m. at Southwestern Community College.

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For more information on Take Root, go to www.iowafarmbureau.com or contact Katzer at [515-225-5494](tel:515-225-5494)

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