

Agronomy, Conservation and Land Leases: A Natural Fit

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2012 Ag Census Data

- ❖ 32,167 women farm operators in Iowa
 - Represent 9,102,738 acres
- ❖ 7,108 women listed as principal operators
 - Represent 868,909 acres

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Farmland Ownership and Tenure in Iowa 2012 Report

- ❖ 56% of farmland was owned by people over 65
- ❖ 77% of leased farmland was under a cash rent arrangement
- ❖ 14% of land is owned by not legal residents and 7% is owned by part time residents
- ❖ 47% of Iowa farmland is owned by those who do not live on the farmland
- ❖ Women represented 49% of owners, and owned 47% of the land
- ❖ Women over the age of 65 represent 24% of farmland owners, and 29% of the land.

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Farmland Ownership and Tenure in Iowa 2012 Report Cont.

- ❖ Being a good steward and someone the landlord knows are the two most important reasons why a landowner chooses a tenant.
- ❖ Knowing the tenant was more important than the tenant being a family member
- ❖ Farmland is owned for 3 primary reasons:
 - 56% is owned for current income
 - 19% is owned for long-term investment
 - 22% is owned for family or sentimental reasons

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Goals for Today's Talk

- ❖ Highlight agronomic practice central to land leases
- ❖ Highlight conservation practices central to land leases
- ❖ Start with the obvious

Agronomic Practices

- ❖ Soil test reports
- ❖ Stover removal
- ❖ Weed/brush management
- ❖ Tile
- ❖ Tillage
- ❖ Manure
- ❖ Pastures/Native Areas/Other Desirable Habitat

Soil Test Reports

- ❖ Require soil tests be conducted and results shared with owner at least every 4 years.
 - Include requirement for
 - Maintenance soil test levels
 - Build soil test levels
 - Should consider level of fertility at start of lease
 - Soil pH
 - Soil sampling info shared
 - Records from previous tenants
 - Soil sampling methods

Stover Removal

- ❖ Clearly state requirements in lease
 - Certain % of residue removed
 - Maintain residue for soil conservation
 - Maintain residue for soil health
 - organic matter, water infiltration, bulk density, aggregate stability
 - Removal of nutrients
 - May need less N
 - Will need more P and K as reflected by soil tests.
 - May need to reduce tillage

Stover Removal, Cont..

- ❖ Used as bedding that will be returned with manure to the acres from which removed
- ❖ Remove from premise as feedstock/bedding
- ❖ Grazed
- ❖ Industrial use: fiber board or ethanol

Weed/Brush Management

- ❖ Clearly state requirements for
 - Fields, fence rows, road ditches, building lots and pastures/native areas
- ❖ If mowing road ditches:
 - After July 15
 - Other provisions such as visibility and pests

Tile

- ❖ Clearly state who is responsible for labor and materials for repairs to broken tiles, tile inlets and outlets

Tillage

- ❖ Maintaining residue for a conservation plan
- ❖ If tillage system other than what tenant is normally doing try to be flexible:
 - Number of acres if new to system
 - Spend time with tenant looking at different systems
 - Discuss how this fits into overall system

Manure

- ❖ Manure is a reliable nutrient source
- ❖ Sometimes nutrients are free if application costs are covered
- ❖ If you don't want manure applied on your land you need to clearly state that in lease

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Pastures/Native Areas/Other Desirable Habitat

- ❖ Clearly state requirements for desirable vegetation: field borders, grassed waterways, wildlife & monarch habitat, shrubs & trees
- ❖ Identify and list expected pasture management practices
 - Mowing
 - Brush/weed control
 - Grazing/Stocking Rates

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Conservation Practices

- ❖ Cover Crops
- ❖ Different Tillage Systems
- ❖ Waterways
- ❖ Residue Management
- ❖ Bioreactors, controlled drainage, saturated buffers, terraces, filter strips
- ❖ Soil Health

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Cover Crops

- ❖ Identify Goals
- ❖ Start Small
- ❖ Talk to Experienced Growers/Field Days
- ❖ Yield Penalty
- ❖ Cost-Share Opportunities
- ❖ Termination Plan
- ❖ Incent Tenant
- ❖ Plan B for Failures
 - Doesn't rain; herbicide carryover; timeliness

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Different Tillage Systems

- ❖ No-till or strip till vs. conventional tillage
- ❖ Incent Tenant

Waterways

- ❖ Who is responsible to:
 - Maintain width
 - Mow
- ❖ Expensive to replace

Residue Management

- ❖ Clearly state requirements for percent residue that must remain
 - At Planting
 - After Planting
- ❖ Spot check

Bioreactors, controlled drainage, saturated buffers, terraces, filter strips

- ❖ Usually paid for by landowner
- ❖ Maintenance expectation of tenant should be identified

Soil Health

- ❖ Increasing Soil Conditioning Index
- ❖ Haney Test
- ❖ Soil Structure
- ❖ Infiltration
- ❖ Water Holding
- ❖ Organic Matter
- ❖ Bulk Density

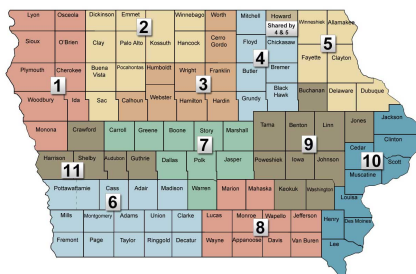
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Start with the Obvious

- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Expectations
- ❖ Who Does the Checking
- ❖ Similar Goals
- ❖ Start Small
- ❖ Seek out experience in others

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Thanks for Coming



3



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