

One of the more common questions I receive is about rental agreements. I receive questions about what is a fair rental price, different rental agreements, and what is the best way to manage risk. There really is not a black and white answer to any of these questions because every piece of land is different, every relationship between the landlord and tenant is different, and the risk management needs of a landlord and tenant are different in every situation. Not to mention the rising land values, strong commodity prices and high production costs have made it more difficult for operators and landowners to successfully determine appropriate farmland lease arrangements. The good news is there is information available to help when making rental agreement decisions. Some of the resources that are available are:

- County Rents and Values publication which is a survey of landowners and tenants published every year by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). You can find a copy online on the NASS website (www.nass.usda.gov) or ask the Extension office for a copy.
- The Ag Lease 101 website (www.aglease101.org) which provides information about different rental arrangements such as crop share and fixed and flexible cash rent arrangements. The website is maintained by the North Central Farm Management Extension Committee which is made up of farm economic specialists from several mid-west states.
- The web soil survey website (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>) which provides all of the NRSC soil maps in a digital form. Just about any information about a field can be found on this website including the crop productivity index which is important information when discussing land values.

In addition to these resources, the NDSU Extension service is sponsoring a **Farmland Leasing Workshop** in Finley at the American Legion on **Wednesday, February 13th at 1:00 pm**. The topics of the workshop will include historical perspective on farmland values and rents, concepts and practical examples of how to determine equitable rents, information about different rental arrangements, such as cash rent, share rent and flexible cash rent, and how producers can improve their land rental negotiations by enhancing the communication process with landowners by the use of resumes, portfolios and frequent communications to keep landowners informed and educated about their operation. Dwight Aakre and Andy Swenson, Extension farm management specialists, and Willie Huot, Grand Forks County Extension agent, will be the main presenters. Any landowners, renters and other agribusiness professionals with an interest in farmland ownership, management and leasing should consider attending the Farmland Leasing Workshop.

Immediately after the Farmland Leasing Workshop, the **Steele County Barley Council and Wheat Commission representative elections will take place at 4:00 pm** at the Finley American Legion on Wednesday, February 13th. Each person, landlord, tenant, husband and/or wife, who planted barley in 2012 or intends to plant barley in 2013 and who has not claimed any barley tax refund within the past year (except for duplicate payments), if present in person, is entitled to vote and is eligible to be a candidate for the Steele County Barley Council Representative position. Barley Council County representatives from District II will assemble March 8, 2013, 12:00 pm (noon) at the Chieftain Conference Center located on 60 4th Avenue South in Carrington, ND to elect the district's member of the Barley Council. Any farmer who is a resident of Steele County, and is actively involved in the production of wheat, is eligible to vote and be elected as the Steele County Wheat Commission representative. A wheat farmer must be present to vote but need not be present to be elected for the Wheat Commission. County representatives elected within each district will meet at a later date to elect one commissioner to serve on the governing board of the North Dakota Wheat Commission.

For more information about the Farmland Leasing Workshop in Finley or rental agreements, contact the Steele County Extension office at 701-524-2253. For more information about the Barely

Council election, contact the North Dakota Barley Council at 701-239-7200 and for more information about the Wheat Commission election, contact the North Dakota Wheat Commission at 701-328-5111. NDSU is an equal opportunity institution.