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Farmdocdaily Delivers Farm Economics Using Today's Technology

URBANA – A new website called farmdocdaily will add new technology to the already popular farmdoc website, said University of Illinois agricultural economist Scott Irwin. “We created the new farmdocdaily site with an eye toward the technology people are increasingly using to access information and the desired format of that information.

“Information needs to be easily accessible across a variety of platforms, such as desktops, laptops, and mobile devices,” he said. “It needs to be delivered in a condensed format that fits the needs of busy people with hectic schedules who experience more than a little information overload.”

At the new site, www.farmdocdaily.illinois.edu visitors can register to automatically receive posts by signing up as an email or RSS subscriber.

Irwin said although the new site will incorporate blog technology, it is not going to be a blog in the conventional sense of the term. “We think a daily newspaper is a better metaphor, hence, the name ‘farmdoc daily.’ There will be daily posts on the site with links to newsletters, podcasts, summaries of research reports, and announcements about new farmdoc tools and data updates.”

One significant feature on the new website is that users will be able to provide feedback. This will allow users to make comments that will provide other users with additional perspectives.

Irwin reinforced that the farmdoc site is not being changed or eliminated.

“The goal remains the same: to provide crop and livestock producers in the U.S. Corn Belt with round-the-clock access to integrated information and expertise so they can better manage their farm businesses,” Irwin said. “But, while the goal has remained constant, the technology to meet that goal has undergone enormous changes during the last dozen years. Smart phones, iPads, blogs, and social networks are now commonplace but were scarcely imagined when farmdoc was first developed.”

Irwin said that the subject-matter posts will focus on “Corn Belt farm economics” with an emphasis on management, marketing, finance, policy, law and taxation issues. “This new site will allow the farmdoc team to respond much more quickly and flexibly to these issues as they arise, particularly for those who like to receive information via mobile devices,” he said.

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