



ACN
Agricultural
Communicators
Network

2024 Design Contest Winners

Cover Page Design: Commercial

1st place



“How to score in '24”,
Farm Futures, November/December 2023
Farm Progress
Lisa Lynd

2nd place



“192 Successful Farming Feb 2024”
Successful Farming
Matt Strelecki

3rd place



“Reimagine retirement”
Farm Progress
Lisa Lynd

Cover Page Design: Custom

1st place



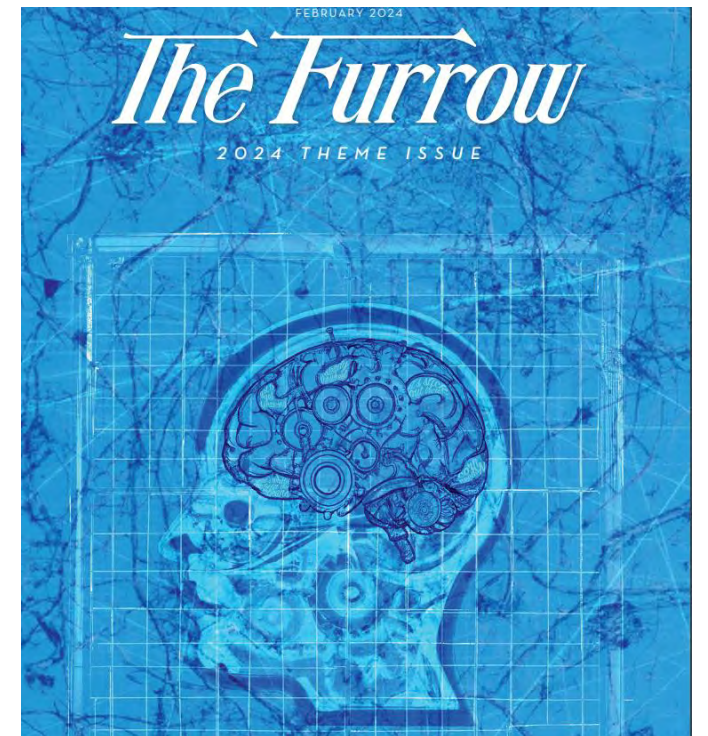
“The Furrow Cover, Summer 2023, Homestead Edition”
Nate Werner
Mod Op

2nd place



“C magazine - Winter 2024”
Amy Gohman
Colle McVoy, CHS

3rd place



“The Furrow Cover, February 2024”
Nate Werner
Mod Op

1st place

GREEN & GROWING

BY CHARLES JOHNSON

Blooms that tie us together. Living with a multi-generational riot of flowers.



Nearly everything changes day by day, year by year. Old houses and barns get new roofs. Old ponds get rehabilitated and restocked with fish. Cows have calves that grow up and have their own offspring. One thing that's just about the same here, year after year, is flowers. There's an abundance of them, some I can't even identify. My mother wanted this property to host a riot of flowers, and she worked hard at making it just that. Years later, I reap the benefits. In Mother's mind, a flower wasn't just a pretty bloom. It was a connection to the past and to the future, to family and to friends. Those foolish daffodils that pop up and bloom in what's still mid-winter originated on the farm where my mother grew up, an hour's drive southeast of here. My grandmother wanted the earliest-blooming ones she could find to brighten what had been a gloomy winter. She planted them early in her marriage to my grandfather, so she couldn't have been much older than 20 then. They're now more than a century old. Decades later, after grandmother passed away, mother went to the old homestead, dug them up and transplanted them here. They still bloom very early, stretching for the sun, eager for good things to happen. That gung-ho attitude sometimes means they get frozen out, always an unfortunate quirk of nature. In mid-summer, multi-colored gladiolus stretch taller than my head, blooming with vigor and enthusiasm. These originated with a lady who lived about a mile away from here. Now long-dead, she was a gladiolus lover and insisted on sharing her blooming bounty with the other ladies of the community. As a young fellow, I wondered after she died, I understand. Those gladiolus thrive. They're tough. I'd like to do something to be kind to them but I'm afraid I'd do more harm than good and hurt them somehow. So, they continue on their own, a living monument to that lady few people remember. Some things here aren't so surprising. There are azaleas because we're supposed to have azaleas here, aren't we? Daylilies dot the landscape. The dogwoods in the yard are wild and predate the house. Their blooms aren't as big as modern store-bought dogwoods, but these old ones have withstood all sorts of weather trauma, and they keep blooming year after year. I've been a big promoter of native plants because they tend to survive better and also benefit pollinators and birds. I haven't changed my thinking about that. Mother, however, liked bright things, wherever they originated, so there are plenty of introduced plants here. There are several hydrangeas with big, showy white, pink, and blue blooms. They're nice and they're not going anywhere. I learned to prune to help them produce better and look attractive in the landscape. Tiger lilies are in clumps all over the place. They're a no-trouble flower and easy to grow, but the pollinators ignore them. I just shrug and let them do their thing. There are also lots of sunflowers, treated the same way, which seemed to appear out of the ether. I've inherited enough characteristics from Mother to love beautiful blooming things, particularly the ones that tie us all together somehow. The world keeps changing

2nd place

Bits & Pieces

BY STEVE WERBLOW

Plan now for spring color.

Bulbs and other underground energy storage structures like corns and rhizomes can provide an early start to adding color to your spring landscape—and add a little optimism to a season that can include a lot of cleanup and wrap-up.

In 1999, Karen Russ and Robert Polonski of Clemson University published fact sheet HGIC 125, which recommends selecting firm bulbs without mold and bruising, and storing them in a cool spot. Keep bulbs away from stored fruit, the horticulturists wrote—fruit releases ethylene, which can prevent bulbs from blooming.

Cool soil. When soil temperatures stay below 60 degrees Fahrenheit, it's time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. Bulbs need good drainage—the Clemson sheet recommends adding 2 to 3 inches of shredded pine bark or compost into soil dug 10 to 12 inches deep. A couple of inches of mulch provides insulation and moisture retention, and prevents rain from splattering mud on the foliage. ❖

Spot your "danger trees."

Danger trees aren't gathered in some sort of dark, scary enchanted forest—they could be threatening your house or poised to cause trouble when windstorms, snow, or ice blast through.

A key step in assessing dangers posed by a tree is noting the hazard—what could break and the damage it could cause—and the risk it poses in terms of the likelihood the damage could happen.

Examine. The U.S. Forest Service recommends examining trees from different distances and vantage points to spot the wide range of possible damage, from the leaf loss or dead wood that can result from root disease or insect damage to broken tops or limbs, or even conks—shelf-like fungal growth on tree boles that can indicate decay beneath the bark. Leaning trees, cracked bark, cavities in the trunk, or weak limbs that form a V shape

No rooms for rodents.

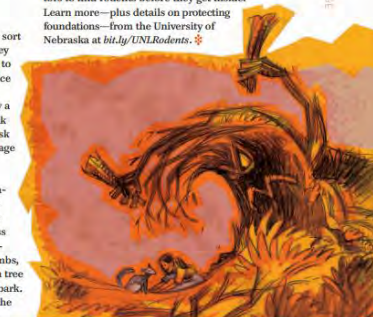
Autumn is the time to get snug and ready for winter...not just for homesteaders, but for mice, rats, and other little fuzzies that live on the homestead, too. That's why we can expect an influx of rodents heading into basements, barns, and other structures to prepare for winter. In addition to consuming stored food and feed and potentially spreading disease, rodents can damage structures by gnawing on wires and pipes, or raise heating and cooling bills by wrecking insulation.

To minimize rodent damage, it pays to stay a few steps ahead of those tiny feet.

Access denied. A rat can enter a hole just 1/2-inch in diameter. A mouse needs an opening just half that size. Deny entry by building up doorway thresholds, caulking cracks and voids, and installing angle iron or heavy-duty flashing under siding. Stuff gaps with stainless steel wool, copper wool, or expanding foam, then cover with sheet metal or hardware fabric.

Maintain a weed-free barrier 3 feet wide around buildings to make it easier for predators to find rodents before they get inside. Learn more—plus details on protecting foundations—from the University of Nebraska at bit.ly/UNLRodents. ❖

ILLUSTRATION BY RAHIL JANGRA



“Green & Growing, Furrow, Summer 2023” The Furrow
Nate Werner
Mod Op

“Bits & Pieces, Furrow, Sep/Oct 2023” Homestead
Nate Werner
Mod Op



Opening Page or Spread Design: Commercial

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“Weather Chaos spreads Oct 23”
Successful Farming
Matt Strellecki

“How to score in ‘24”
Farm Futures, November/December 2023
Farm Progress
Lisa Lynd

“Grain marketing opener 8-23”
Successful Farming
Matt Strellecki

Opening Page or Spread Design: Custom

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“Rodeo Silence”
Colle McVoy
Amy Gohman



“Step by Step”
Colle McVoy
Amy Gohman



“Crop Cadet”
Colle McVoy
Amy Gohman



Two-Page Plus Design: Commercial

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“Through a self-described ‘accidental conservatism,’ Wayne Fredericks’ legacy of leadership within the Iowa soybean industry is anything but a coincidence. Fredericks was recently recognized as the recipient of the Iowa Soybean Association’s (ISA) Legacy of Leadership Award.”

Over the years, these changes would include a flurry of conservation efforts, including no-till, strip-till, cover crops, pollinator habitats, waterways, riparian buffers, and a nutrient innovation. Wayne and Ruth earned the American Soybean Association’s (ASA) National

PENCIL OUT A PREHARVEST ADVANTAGE

ANALYSIS BY ED USSET

Learn how different marketing strategies performed over the past 35 years

COULD YOU MAKE more money this year by pricing grain before harvest?
 In Farm Futures columns over the past two years, I shared pre-harvest marketing strategies from eight “celebrity producers” to show how these moves might boost a grain farmer’s bottom line. While the characters are a product of my imagination, their marketing practices should look familiar to many readers. Some focus on price objectives, others concentrate on timing sales, still others use options to preharvest pricing.
 Retrieving the celebrities’ strategies and comparing their performance over the past 35 years might help when considering preharvest pricing opportunities for the 2024 crop. What are the strengths and weaknesses in each approach?
 The answer for the data comes from Iowa average prices for cash, crop and soybeans, as gathered by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service’s Livestock, Poultry and Grain Market News, and reported by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.
 All preharvest sales involve the use of futures or options contracts based on closing prices from the Chicago Board of Trade. Futures prices are converted to cash prices using the basis at harvest.
 This analysis generates a lot of numbers. When writing a producer

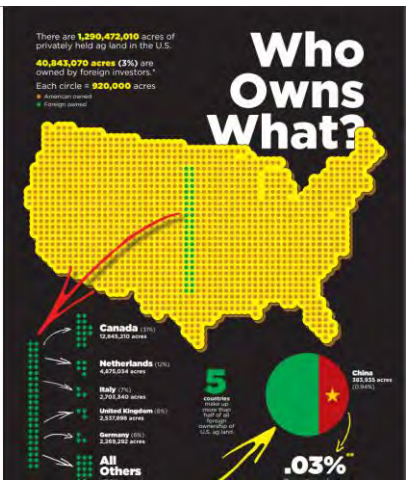
consider these best questions:
1. Should I have a preharvest marketing plan? This question is the easiest to answer. Look at the results for Barry Blom, the only producer without a marketing plan. His harvest price was the lowest price in twelve years than any other plan. His average price was also the lowest among the celebrities. No, everyone should have a preharvest marketing plan.
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Year	Barry	Toby	Terry	Justin	Dustin	Paul	Mark	Carl
20-year average	\$3.10	\$3.29	\$3.21	\$3.12	\$3.21	\$3.23	\$3.21	\$3.21
Best price	5	14	9	7	11	7	7	9
Worst price	22	5	6	7	6	1	7	5
% Soybean	0	9	5	6	8	8	8	8
% Soybean	27	22	22	21	19	17	17	25
% Soybean	8	5	8	8	8	10	10	4
% Soybean	17	14	9	12	8	6	7	2
% Soybean	8	3	8	6	7	8	7	2
20-year average	\$2.65	\$2.82	\$2.81	\$2.85	\$2.75	\$2.82	\$2.82	\$2.75
Best price	6	13	15	10	11	4	3	7
Worst price	17	7	7	4	4	8	6	2
% Soybean	6	3	4	5	7	7	7	7
% Soybean	24	19	21	19	20	17	24	24
% Soybean	14	9	12	11	8	13	4	4
% Soybean	10	11	6	8	6	5	2	2
% Soybean	6	4	4	5	3	6	7	7

From a Foreign Land

Concern over foreign ownership of American land dates back to the nation's founding.

By Cassidy Walter



“A Legacy of Leadership: The Wayne Fredericks Feature, Iowa Soybean Review February 2024”
 Iowa Soybean Association
 Susan Langman

“Pencil out a preharvest advantage”
 Farm Futures/January 2024
 Farm Progress
 Lisa Lynd

“SF Foreign land spreads 1-24”,
 Successful Farming
 Matt Strelecki

Two-Page Plus Design: Custom

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“From Pasture to Plate”
Rachael Davis
Noble Research Institute



“Delivering Results”
Amy Gohman
Colle McVoy, CHS



“Fertilizer's Efficient Future”
Amy Gohman
Colle McVoy, CHS

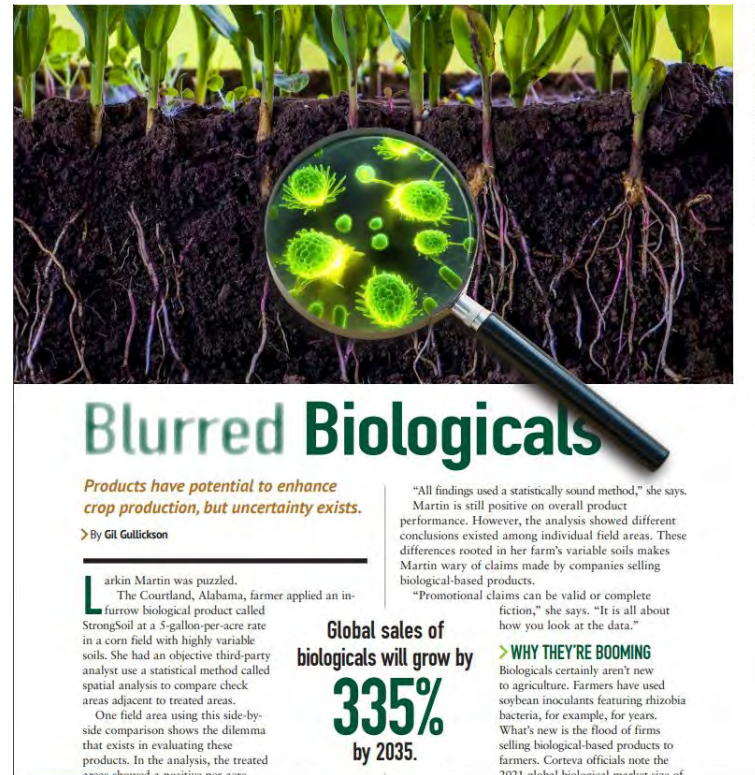
Special Editorial Section Design

1st place



“Legacy Magazine DIY, Spring 2023”
Noble Research Institute
Rachael Davis

2nd place



“Blurred Biologicals”
DTN/Progressive Farmer
Brent Warren / Art Director, Barry Falkner / Photo Illustration and Color



Overall Magazine Design: Commercial

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“The Cattleman, October 2023”
Heather Heater, Grant Company
The Cattleman, Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers
Association

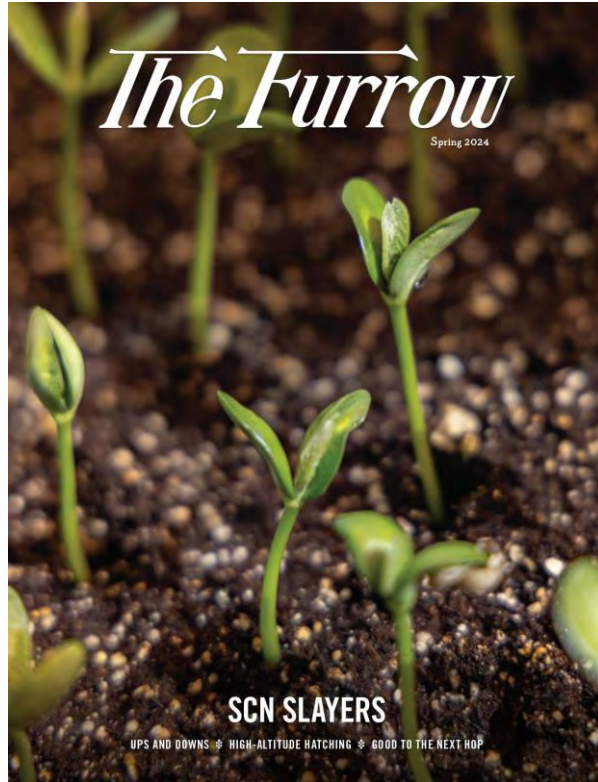
“Mental Health is Health, Iowa Soybean Review May 2023”
Iowa Soybean Association
Susan Langman

“Angus Journal January 2024”
Angus Journal
Jaime Albers



Overall Magazine Design: Custom

1st place



“The Furrow, Spring, 2024”
The Furrow
Nate Werner, Mod Op

2nd place



“C magazine - Summer 2023”
Colle McVoy CHS
Amy Gohman

3rd place



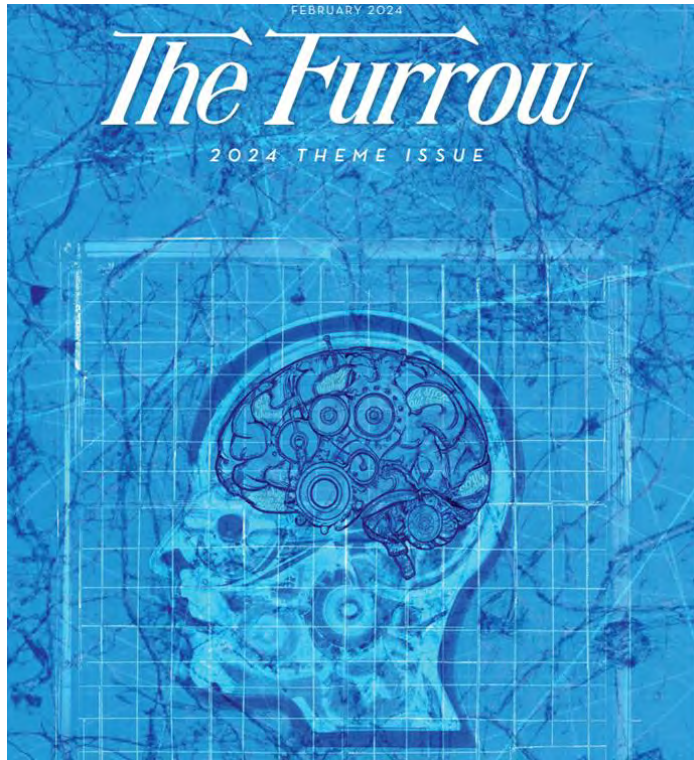
“Legacy, Fall 2023”
Noble Research Institute
Rachael Davis



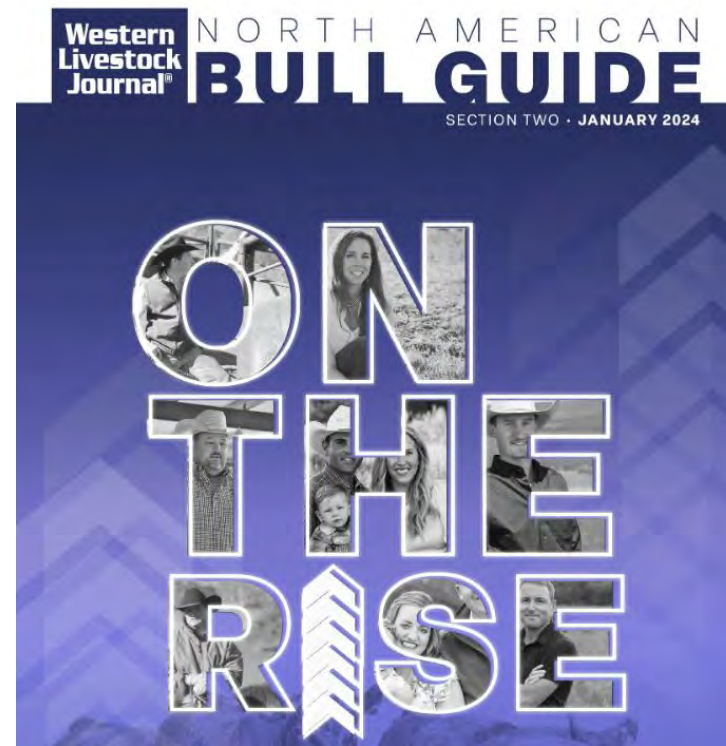
Overall Magazine Design: Special Issues

1st place

2nd place



“The Furrow, February, 2024”
The Furrow
Nate Werner, Mod Op

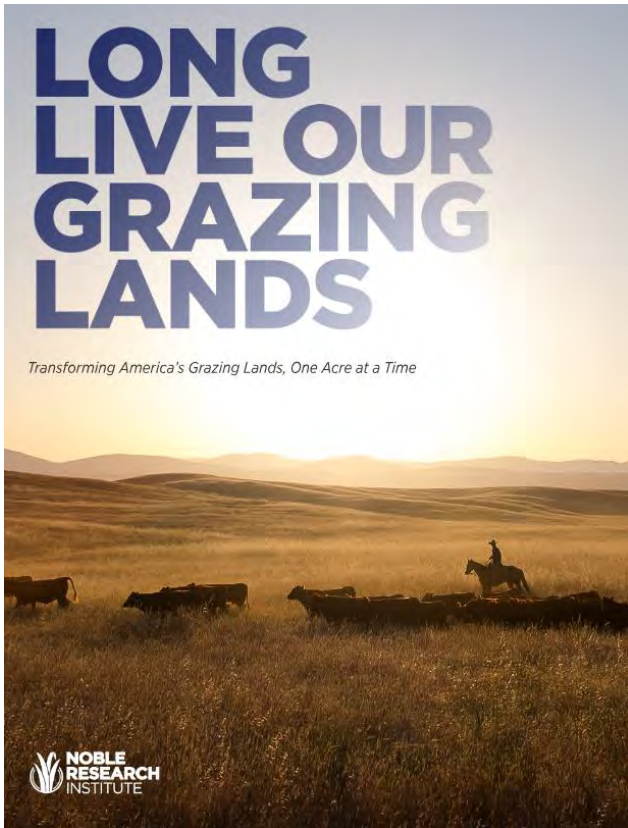


“North American Bull Guide”
Western Livestock Journal
Anna Miller



Special Publication Design: Annual Reports

1st place



“Long Live Our Grazing Lands”
Noble Research Institute
Rachael Davis

2nd place



“Friona ESG report”
Broadhead
Wyatt Bechtel

3rd place



“Iowa Soybean Production 2022 in Review Handout”
Iowa Soybean Association
Susan Langman



Web Design: Electronic Newsletter/Magazine

1st place



AGCO FarmLife, Jamie Cole, Red Barn Media Group



Best Use of Typography

1st place



“Rolling Out the Red Carpet”
Angus Journal
Jaime Albers

2nd place



“Fishing, Iowa Soybean Review
November 2023”
Iowa Soybean Association
Susan Langman

3rd place



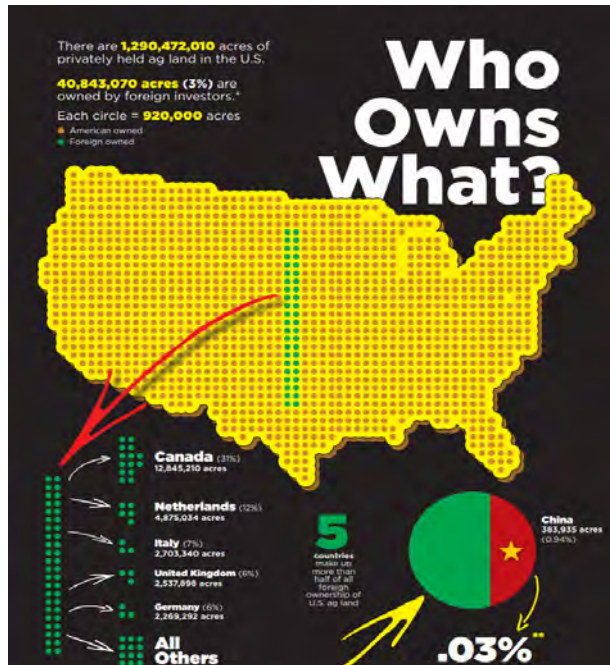
“Egypt, Iowa Soybean Review May 2023”
Iowa Soybean Association
Susan Langman

Best Use of Chart and Graph Material

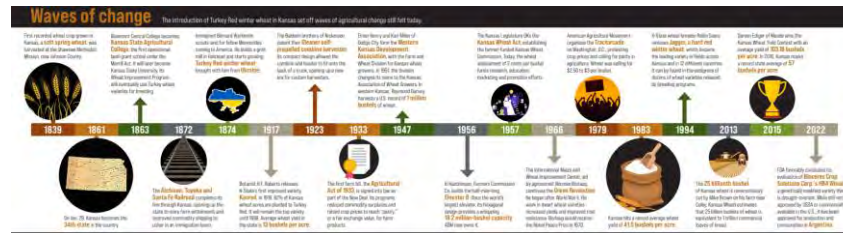
1st place

2nd place

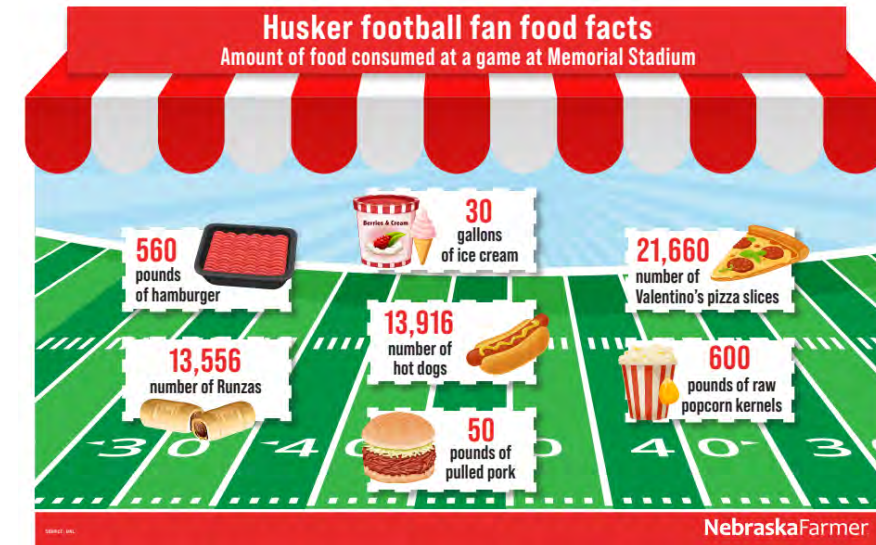
3rd place



“Successful Farming Foreign land ownership Jan 24”
Successful Farming
Matt Strelecki



“Waves of change”
Farm Progress
Shelly Jarka



“Husker football fan food facts”
Farm Progress
Shelly Jarka



Best Use Best Use of Photography in a Print Periodical

1st place



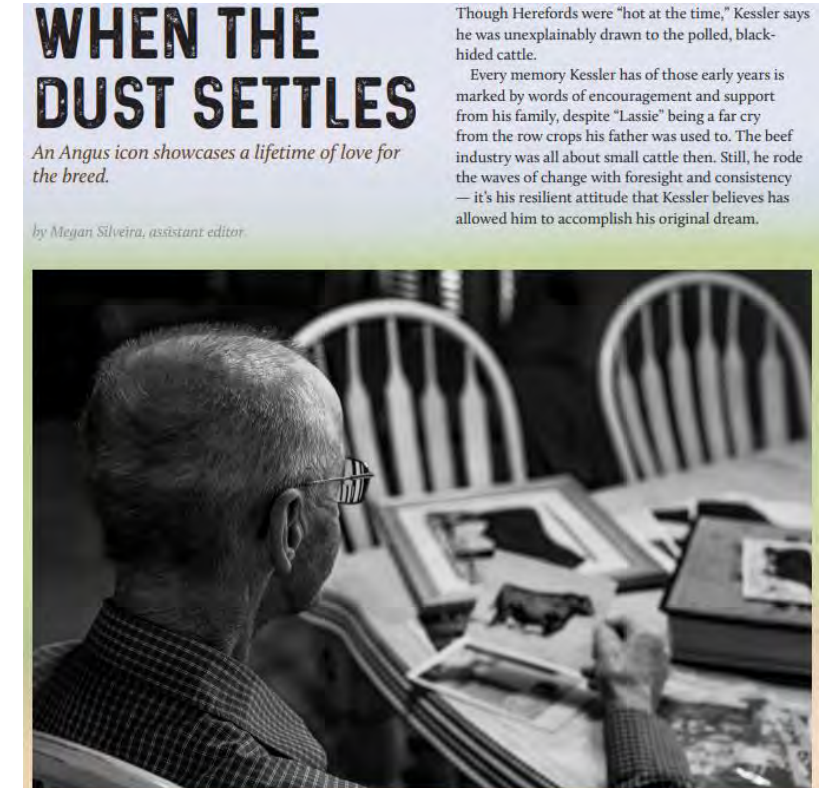
“C magazine”
CHS
Amy Gohman

2nd place



“The Furrow, Dec 2023, Jan, Feb, Mar 2024”,
The Furrow
Nate Werner, Mod Op

3rd place



“Angus Journal”
Angus Journal
Megan Silveira and Jaime Albers