Disclaimer: This web page is designed to aid farmers with their marketing and risk management decisions. The risk of loss in trading futures, options, forward contracts, and hedge-to-arrive can be substantial and no warranty is given or implied by the author or any other party. Each farmer must consider whether such marketing strategies are appropriate for his or her situation. This web page does not represent the views of Kansas State University.

Excel Based Farm Program Decision Aid is Publicly Released[1]

Oklahoma State University and Kansas State University have released a computer decision aid to help farmers decide on the best option for participation in the 2014 Farm Bill commodity program. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has not announced when they will start to take enrollment, but this computer aid will allow farmers to evaluate the program and to start thinking about the option that best fits their farm.

The program is written in Excel and requires Excel to run. It may not run on some old versions of Excel, so in a few cases users may need to update their version of Excel first. The program covers all states and counties. One needs to click on the link below to download the decision aid. Once downloaded to your computer, there is no further need to be online. Therefore, other than the wait time to download, a slow internet connection will not be a problem.

Users will enter their own crop acres and yields into the Excel program. The program will calculate your new crop base acre allocation and program yield. Results will be presented using both current and updated base acres, to help users determine if updating their base acres with FSA is to their advantage. The model estimates the future yields based on trend yields, but the user can override any of these values. In fact, once you run the model you will likely want to re-run it with a different set of assumptions about the Marketing Year Average (MYA) prices and your yields.

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If you access the OSU-KSU decision aid from KSU's AgManager site (www.Agmanager.info/fb.htm), you will be asked for your email address before going to the link to download the Excel file. It is not required for you to leave an email address to receive a free copy of the OSU-KSU decision aid, but if you do, we will send you an email letting you know if the model has been updated. We will not keep your email address or provide it to anyone else or use it for any other purpose than to inform you of updates. If you don't leave us an email, then you need to check back often for new updates. This is a beta release so please expect some updates. If you download an updated decision aid you will have to re-enter your data.

The decision aid contains help messages for users and we will continue to provide additional documentation for the program at www.AgManager.info. The OSU-KSU decision aid received funding support through a grant from the Southern Risk Management Center, allowing the program to be provided free of charge to farmers and other users.

We also have plans to offer a webinar that will update the information on the Farm Bill and a discussion on how to use the decision aid. The Webinar is subject to a minimum enrollment. Watch for more details on the webinar to be posted soon. The webinar will carry a $25 registration fee per line to cover the costs of providing this educational content. Extension educators and others wanting to share this webinar with clientele may register for a single line and show it to their audience without additional fees beyond the $25 registration charge.

The link to the OSU-KSU program decision aid is: www.agmanager.info/fb.htm.

The link for the webinar is: www.agmanager.info/events/webinars/