

Western Iowa Advantage is a collaborative group of economic development officials in Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Ida, and Sac Counties.

WIAD Annual Dinner Held

The WIAD Annual Dinner was hosted in Audubon County at the Audubon Rec Center. There were 50 guests in attendance that enjoyed a prime rib dinner. Evan Blakley, Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County presented the 2020-2021 Annual Report, which highlighted a new video project, updates to the WIAD website, professional marketing photographs, updated targeted industry materials, Size Up tool, and more than \$75 million in area investments. Jason Hutcheson, Develop This Economic & Community Development Podcast, was the evenings keynote speaker touching on economic development in rural communities.



FEATURED PROPERTY: 408 MARKET STREET, AUDUBON

This 0.42 acre lot is available to purchase for development within the City of Audubon. The property is located along U.S. Highway 71 and is listed at \$60,000. It is currently zoned commercial. Contact Audubon County Economic Development for more information. A flyer with information about the property can be found [HERE](#).

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Manufacturing Day Events Held in Audubon County

Audubon & Exira-Elk Horn-Kimballton Industrial Tech students toured Quality Machine and TNT Industries during Manufacturing Day held on October 8, 2021. In total, 55 students participated.



Jacobsen Seed Announces Plans to Add Seed Conditioning & Handling Technologies

Jacobsen Seed recently broke ground on a building addition that will house a new, state-of-the-art seed conditioning and packaging plant. The expansion project will take the company's seed quality to the highest level and fuel the ongoing growth of the independent, family owned and operated seed business.

Jacobsen's investment in this new equipment puts the company in a position to better serve customers by optimizing both corn and soybean seed quality, while further improving operational efficiency and volume. The expanded facility will also allow Jacobsen to engage in custom seed conditioning and bagging operations for other companies, resulting in the addition of employees to their current staff.

Increased demand for Jacobsen's corn hybrids and soybean varieties has driven their recent growth, while the company's product knowledge, performance and service have supported this expansion. Jacobsen also identified a real need for custom seed conditioning and packaging capabilities in the industry and saw an opportunity to bring their high quality standards to the process, while providing a service to fellow seed companies.

Technology in seed conditioning equipment has proven to make a difference when it comes to overall seed quality and results. Dave Nelson, CEO of Jacobsen Seed, says, "When tested, yields from the same variety of corn can vary greatly, showing anywhere from a 30 to 40 bushel difference between companies. One reason for this is that seed can get damaged by stressed conditioning equipment, causing micro fractures that negatively affect seed quality. While Mother Nature and production quality also play a part when it comes to overall yield potential, we are working to eliminate one of the key variables by using advanced technologies that enable us to provide the highest quality of seed possible."

Seed prices won't be affected by the addition of these services, as pricing is determined by the commodity markets, inflation and other variables. Rather, the company sees this as an investment in technologies that will generate high efficiency, high volume and high-quality products. Jacobsen is also working on getting the new plant USDA organic certified.

"We are continually striving to offer the very best products in the industry," says Nelson. "For us to continue to be a leader and stay out front, we have to continue adopting new technologies. Seed conditioning is partially an art, even with the best equipment available, but we feel confident about what our team can achieve with this new service offering."

The building engineer for the new facility is Butler Buildings. Other partners that Jacobsen Seed credits for playing a key role in the process include Wayne Nielsen & First State Bank, Rita Frahm, the City of Lake View, Levi Thies & Spring Lake Construction, Buse Boys Concrete and Jacobson Electric.

Nelson says Jacobsen will continue to place a strong focus on their core retail business, which is centered around growing their existing high performing products, but emphasizes the importance of evolving the company to respond to customer demand. "As we continue to grow, it's important that we have the infrastructure in place to serve our farmers with the best in quality seed, performance and customer service," Nelson said.

Construction on the new facility is expected to be completed in December of this year.

FEATURED BUSINESS/BUILDING: KEITH'S INTERIORS

The Keith's Interiors building and business are for sale in Sac City. The building is two stories and is approximately 4,400 sq. ft. per level. The upper story has the potential to be apartments if it was renovated. For more information, contact Brandy Ripley at the information below.

Contact:

Brandy Ripley, Executive Director, Sac Economic & Tourism Development

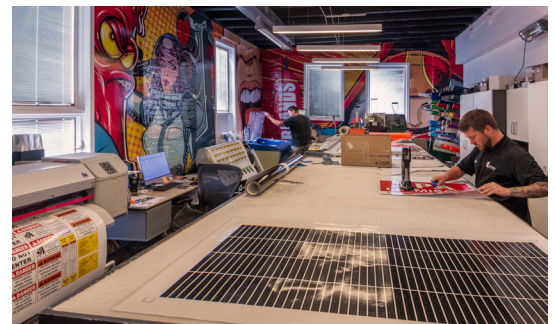
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WIAD Photo Project Wraps Up

Photos can help tell the story when marketing to potential businesses or persons looking to relocate to western Iowa, but the story they tell may not be as flattering as hoped if they are not well done. After years of relying on stock photos or the photography talents of WIAD partners, Mott Shots was retained to take photos of industry, people, and daily life in the region. Mott Shots had previously completed a similar project for Audubon County so was already familiar with our region. As a result of the project, each member county received the rights to photos taken in their county, a total of 100 for the region. These photos will be used on the website and in marketing materials completed for WIAD. Each county development corporation will also be able to freely use the photos as they see fit. We are grateful to all of the companies who allowed access to their buildings to complete the project.



Both the WIAD Region & the State of Iowa See Unemployment Rate Decreases in October

The Western Iowa Advantage Region's monthly unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) was 2.6 percent in October 2021 the same percent as October 2020, according to figures released from Iowa Workforce Development. Iowa's unemployment rate was 2.9 percent in October 2021 down from 3.4 percent in October 2020. The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.6 percent in October 2021. Total employment in the region rose from 38,260 in October 2020 to 38,650 in October 2021.

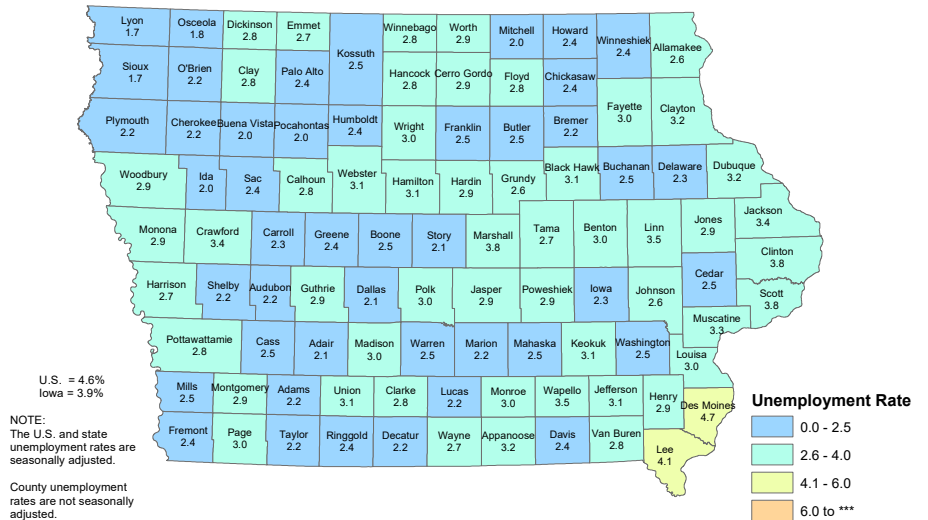
Western Iowa Advantage tracks various economic indicators in Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Ida, and Sac Counties in Iowa, including employment trends.

County unemployment rates in the region for October 2021:

- Audubon 2.2%
- Calhoun 2.8%
- Carroll 2.3%
- Crawford 3.4%
- Greene 2.4%
- Ida 2.0%
- Sac 2.4%

Iowa Unemployment Rates by County

October 2021



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