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March 2, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Iowa Agricultural Assessments Increasing

The 2009 agricultural land and building assessments for property tax purposes will increase an average of 48 percent in Iowa due to increasing crop yields and prices. However, an assessment law limits the annual change of the statewide taxable value of agricultural land and buildings to 4 percent.

The impact varies by county. Three-fourths of the counties will have an increase in productivity value of 40 to 60 percent. A few counties will increase more than 60 percent, and a few less than 30 percent.

Iowa agricultural land and buildings are assessed on productivity and not market value. Commodity yields, prices, and expenses from the 2003 through 2007 crop years are used in the productivity formula to arrive at the assessed value. Productivity numbers are affected by flood, drought, and local demand for commodities.

An administrative rule for assessing farm buildings is being fully implemented with this reassessment. In the past, farm buildings were assessed at varying percentages of replacement cost. The administrative rule creates more uniform farm building assessments statewide.

Assessment Notices and Equalization Orders

The assessor will notify property owners of an assessment change in agricultural land and buildings by mailing an assessment roll if the revaluation is done prior to April 15 or through publication in the local newspaper if the revaluation is applied utilizing the equalization process in the fall of the year. If the assessor does not implement the change, the Iowa Department of Revenue is required to issue an equalization order in the fall to bring both land and building assessments into compliance.

The assessments for land per acre and buildings for each county are available online at www.state.ia.us/tax/locgov/propagricultural.html .