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For Immediate Release

New Farm Journal Media Survey Says Many Farmers Prepared to Walk Away From 2016 Land Leases

Cedar Falls, Iowa (Oct. 12, 2015) — A new survey of commercial-scale farmers found 40% may be willing to walk away from their land leases as sinking commodity prices squeeze margins. Some 12% of respondents said they “absolutely will” walk away from a cropland lease “if the rental rate is not lowered,” and another 28% said they “probably will” walk away if they do not receive rent relief.

In the survey of more than 500 commercial-scale farmers, 50% of respondents said they will probably renew leases even if rent stays the same. Ten percent said they “absolutely will not” walk away from a lease.

Respondents are among Farm Journal Media’s *Pro Farmer* and *LandOwner* newsletter subscribers from across the U.S. and are representative of individuals who consider farming their primary occupation. The survey was conducted in late September and early October.

“We were somewhat surprised by the number who might terminate a lease. Larger farmers tend to rent a lot of the land they farm, and they work very hard to obtain and protect those landlord relationships over the years,” said *LandOwner* editor Mike Walsten. “This is the first time we have measured the number who are willing to walk away from leases if the owner will not negotiate lower rent. The results clearly show there are strong expectations for lower cash rents. “

Nearly 73% of survey respondents expect lower cash rents in 2016, with 42% expecting rent to decline by less than 10%. Only 6% expect cropland rent to decline by 20% or more, and 2% of respondents expect rent to increase.

When it comes to buying and selling farmland, 42% of respondents are interested buyers and only 7% are interested sellers. About 75% expect land sale prices to decline in 2016, with 27% expecting the decline to be 10% or higher.

“The number of quality farm properties available for purchase remains quite low with estate settlement the dominant reason for selling a farm parcel. This speaks to the financial stability in the ag community despite tougher cash flows and farm operator longer-term optimism,” Walsten said. “While demand is somewhat weaker, this lack of forced selling provides some stability for land prices.”

About Farm Journal Media

Farm Journal Media is the nation’s prominent agricultural media company. Its magazines include the 138-year-old flagship *Farm Journal*, as well as *Top Producer*, *Beef Today* and *Dairy Today*. The broadcast division produces and distributes national television programs “AgDay,” “U.S. Farm Report,” “Farm Journal College TV” and “Machinery Pete TV” and daily radio programs “AgriTalk,” “American Countryside” and “Market Rally.” The company recently introduced *My Farm Radio*, a 24/7 digital mobile radio channel. The digital division includes web portal *AgWeb.com*, e-newsletters, online marketplace *Cattle-Exchange.com* and Farm Journal Mobile, which includes the *Commodity Update* markets service. Farm Journal hosts a national peer-to-peer advisory program, the *Top Producer Executive Network*. Insider news, policy and market advisory content are offered through the Professional Farmers of America subscription portfolio, which acquired *The Kiplinger Agriculture Letter* in 2014. Machinery Pete, LLC was launched in 2014 to provide industry analysis and price

data for the used farm equipment sector. Farm Journal Media also compiles and licenses detailed producer and industry data through its FarmReach database, hosts more than 70 live events each year and offers custom multimedia integrated marketing services for its clients. In 2011, the company established The Farm Journal Foundation along with its Farmers Feeding the World initiative dedicated to sustaining agriculture's ability to meet the vital needs of a growing population through education and empowerment.