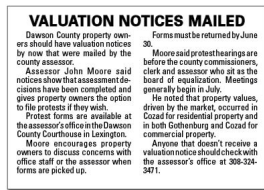


Agricultural valuation continues to rise in area

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 05 June 2014 14:31 -



The value of agricultural land, in Dawson and surrounding counties, is still on the upward swing.

According to the Property Tax Division of the Nebraska Department of Revenue, Dawson County's increase in valuation—from 2013 to 2014—is 38%.

That compares to the following other counties:

Gosper—45.6%

Phelps—36%

Frontier—35.7%

Buffalo—34%

Custer—29%

Lincoln—23.8%

Dawson County assessor John Moore said Dawson County has been on an unprecedented ride for agricultural property for several years, noting that the figures are unusually high this year for

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Dawson and farm ground in abutting counties.

“I’ve never seen anything like this,” Moore said.

However since the sales studied are as old as three years, the figures don’t necessarily reflect current circumstances.

In fact, he said comparing the figures can be misleading without considerable qualification in terms of what acres are used for what purpose and knowing where the raw numbers started a year ago.

“Phelps County, for example, was already higher than Dawson a year ago on 1A irrigated ground,” he said.

Moore explained that there are three subclasses of agricultural ground—irrigated, dry and grass.

“The weight of each of these groups of uses needs to be considered in any comparison as well,” he said, adding each of the subclasses is further broken down into quality of soil and slope so the weight of each level of quality can skew the numbers further.

When agricultural statistics are combined with residential and commercial valuations, Moore said the averages drop significantly compared to the farm sector alone.

“Half of the property tax revenue in this county rests in the farm sector so it has a significant influence on the overall picture,” he said.

Sales in the irrigated market continue to be somewhere in the \$8,000 per acre average level

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and upwards to more than \$10,000 an acre, he said. Yet the proposed tax value for 1A (the highest producing) irrigated ground this year is \$4,200 an acre.

Moore said there were updates in values in commercial records for Cozad and Gothenburg and in the residential records for Cozad.

For more information, contact Moore at 308-324-3471. The assessor office is on the first floor of the county courthouse.

A GIS Workshop site, with extensive information and satellite shots of property, is available at www.dawson.gisworkshop.com.