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FDA Responds to Thousands of Comments on Proposed Food Safety Rules

As a result of a groundswell response to proposed rules for produce farmers and processors, this summer the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will seek additional public comment on revised portions of its new rules implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

More than 18,000 comments were submitted to the FDA in response to its proposed produce safety standards, and more than 7,000 comments were received on the draft preventative controls rule—food safety measures aimed at facilities that process food for human consumption.

Some of the most significant issues identified in the public comments will be revised, including the rules dealing with water quality standards and testing, standards for using raw manure and compost, provisions affecting “mixed-use facilities” (farms that engage in value-added processing), as well as due process considerations for farms that are eligible for qualified exemptions under the new regulations.

Further, the FDA had indicated that additional issues in need of revision may be added to the list as they complete the public comment review process.

This is the first major overhaul of national food safety rules in more than 75 years. In January 2013, the FDA released the draft rules for the Food Safety Modernization Act, which was passed by Congress in 2010.

OEFFA’s analysis finds that redrafting the four areas is a good start, but additional revisions are needed to make FSMA workable and fair. Other areas that need to be addressed include: the co-management of conservation and food safety practices, which includes wildlife habitat protection; counting only gross income on regulated food, instead of on all farm products, when determining whether a farm is exempt; and, clarifying that direct marketing operations (such as CSAs) are not subject to food facility registration as Congress has directed.

As this process goes forward, careful economic and environmental analysis is needed to understand the impact of these rules. For example, the original cost-benefit analysis that accompanied the proposed rules was deeply flawed.

To all those who submitted comments, we thank you! The work, however, is not over. Your input will be critical to ensuring that the FDA recognize the needs of local, organic, and diversified farms and processing facilities, and the need for flexible rules that won’t force small farming businesses to close their doors.

We’d also like to give special thanks to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) for their incredible leadership during this process.

As rulemaking progresses, we will keep you informed and engaged. The FDA expects to have revised rules available for public comment by early summer.

To see the online docket for the produce rule, go to <http://1.usa.gov/1jbtwPm>. To view the preventive controls rule docket, go to <http://1.usa.gov/18QYV2U>. To read OEFFA’s comments to the FDA, visit <http://bit.ly/1fgWOGw>. For additional information, contact Mackenzie Bailey at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208 or mackenzie@oeffa.org.

Published by the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association

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The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association news is published quarterly as part of the educational mission of OEFFA, a nonprofit organization for farmers, gardeners, and citizens interested in ecological agriculture and creating a sustainable alternative food system.

Members receive the newsletter as part of annual dues of \$10 (student), \$35 (individual), \$50 (family), \$50 (family farm), \$50 (nonprofit), \$100 (business), or \$1,000 (individual lifetime). Newsletter subscription only is \$20/year. Membership information is available on the OEFFA website at www.oeffa.org or from the OEFFA office.

Editorial and advertising correspondence may be sent directly to the OEFFA office or newsletter@oeffa.org. Unsolicited manuscripts welcome.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of the membership, officers, or directors.

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OEFFA is recognized as a nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service, and donations to OEFFA are deductible as a charitable contribution to the fullest extent of the law.

OEFFA shall be a democratic association of chartered grassroots chapters, existing within state bylaws, working together to create and promote a healthful, ecological, accountable, and sustainable system of agriculture in Ohio and elsewhere.

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Next deadline: March 15, 2014



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Farm and Business Nominations Wanted for 2014 Farm Tour Series

For more than 30 years, OEFFA has organized a summer farm tour series to highlight great examples of sustainable and organic agriculture in Ohio. Planning is underway for the 2014 farm tours and we need your help. Please consider hosting a tour of your farm this summer, or let us know what farms you'd like to visit. To suggest tour locations, please contact Eric at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 209 or eric@oeffa.org.

Coming Soon: A New Benefit of OEFFA Membership

OEFFA is happy to announce its partnership with the Frank Gates Company to bring a new benefit to our members. Through our association with Frank Gates, OEFFA members who pay into the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation on behalf of themselves and/or employees will now be able to reduce this cost by participating in a group ratings program. Learn more at our annual conference, where the Frank Gates Company will have a booth in the Exhibit Hall and watch for more information coming soon at www.oeffa.org.

Scaling Up the Food Chain Workshop Recordings Available

Audio recordings from OEFFA's November *Scaling Up the Food Chain* intensive workshops are now available through Dove Recording Services. The workshops, led by Linda Halley and Chris Blanchard, were designed to help produce growers scale up and take advantage of wholesale marketing opportunities. Topics included growing transplants efficiently; meeting demands of distributors, institutions, stores, restaurants, and cooperatives; picking, washing, packing, cooling, storing, and delivering products; equipment and infrastructure; hiring and managing employees; financing options; and bookkeeping and recordkeeping. To purchase the recordings, go to www.dovecds.com/oeffa. Look for the options listed as "SUFCC 2013."



Director's Letter

Carol Golland Executive Director

Isn't it ironic—and also sad—that a recent report by the Hartman Group finds that consumers “distrust the purity of organic food now that it is widely available?” Is this a monstrous example of how we should have been more careful about what we wished for? For years, the organic food movement demanded that the major players in the food industry act with greater environmental responsibility. Yet, as more companies offer an organic line of products, consumer trust in the organic label erodes. Is this distrust warranted?

I would argue that it is not. The time has come to push back against the perception that the purity of organics has been diluted in the process of becoming more mainstream. In earlier days, organic food was almost exclusively synonymous with fresh and unprocessed foods. Not so anymore, where canned, frozen, snack, and prepared foods sections of the store are lined with certified organic products. It is undeniable that some of the earlier associations of organic foods with wholesomeness may no longer hold true (to paraphrase Joan Dye Gussow, an “organic Twinkie” does not make a healthy food), but this is not due to weakening of the organic standards.

The certified organic label remains the gold standard for food produced following the highest principles for environmental stewardship, and the organic certification process was designed with transparency in mind, an admirable goal. But this may be another case of being careful what you wish for. The transparency built into the organic certification process means public debate about allowing this or that material for use in organic products sometimes gives the wrong impression that the organic industry is in disarray and that the standards are consistently being watered down. It's easy to understand why consumers are as confused as they are distrustful of what the organic label means.

Nowhere is this clearer than when it comes to non-GMO (genetically modified organism) claims. Organic producers are frustrated when consumers opt for a label that explicitly states “non-GMO” rather than the less specific “organic” claim. When the National Organic Program standards were first proposed, the U.S. Department of Agriculture heard loud and clear from the public that GMOs had no place in organic production systems, and thus GMO feed and seed are prohibited in organics. Are there occasional trace amounts due to environmental contamination? Without doubt there are, and thus even the non-GMO project and European countries have acknowledged this by adopting a tolerance level for GMOs of 0.9 percent in “non-GMO” labeled products.

Perhaps more importantly, if the organic label loses ground with consumers in favor of a one dimensional “non-GMO” label or some other alternative, we risk losing much more. Organic farming brings a host of other benefits with it, including safeguarding water quality, building soil organic matter and nutrients, preventive health care for herds and flocks, and protecting biodiversity. The next time you chose, please remember that organics means not only non-GMO but so much more.

- State Legislation to Track Fertilizer Application -

To address nutrient runoff problems that have caused extensive toxic algal blooms in Ohio's waterways, Sen. Cliff Hite (R) and Sen. Bob Peterson (R) introduced and held hearings this past fall on Senate Bill 150, which would require annual state certification of commercial fertilizer applicators that operate on 50 or more acres of land.

This legislation is expected to come up for debate again in January.

Although registering and tracking the use of commercial fertilizers is a necessary step to address nutrient pollution, the bill does not provide substantiated and regulated methods for reducing nutrient runoff. In order to effectively tackle Ohio's algal blooms, other solutions that currently exist to help mitigate nutrient pollution—including strong conservation practices and soil testing as a basis for nutrient management—need to be part of the solution.

Further, SB 150 does not require manure distributors and applicators to register with the state, nor does it promote strong manure management practices. Requiring manure applicators of large-scale operations to obtain a fertilizer applicator license will help identify problem areas and potentially reduce nutrient runoff from over-application of manure. Establishing management standards, such as fencing livestock out of streams, will reduce water pollution in a meaningful way.

According to the *Columbus Dispatch*, Mercer County, home to Grand Lake St. Mary's, produces more than 1.6 million tons of manure each year. The algal blooms in the lake can be traced to the cows, hogs, and chickens in Mercer County, which have more than doubled in the past 20 years.

Certified organic growers applying pelletized fertilizer, fish emulsion, commercial compost, or other approved natural fertilizers to their land may be subject to licensing requirements under SB 150. Because the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program's rigorous standards already require organic farmers to maintain or improve their farm's natural resources, certified organic farms should have the option to provide a valid certificate to the Ohio Department of Agriculture in lieu of the fertilizer applicator license. Regulating organic growers is burdensome and an unnecessary use of state resources.

Certified organic farmers are required to complete Organic System Plans (OSP) and annually undergo on-site inspections and submit records for review. Every OSP must demonstrate that a farmer has taken steps to meet soil fertility and crop nutrient management standards that maintain or improve the condition of the soil, minimize soil erosion, and prevent water contamination.

OSPs include detailed information regarding the dates and rates of application of commercial soil amendments, compost, and manure. Other requirements under the organic standards include maintaining or improving soil integrity using crop rotation and cover crops.

OEFFA will stay engaged in the conversation surrounding nutrient management legislation. For more information, or if you are a farmer that is likely to be regulated under SB 150 and would be willing to meet with your legislator, contact MacKenzie Bailey at mackenzie@oeffa.org or call (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208. To read SB 150, go to <http://bit.ly/18TsfWv>, or contact the OEFFA office for a copy.

OEFFA'S 35TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 15-16

AFFIRMING OUR ROOTS. BREAKING NEW GROUND

GRANVILLE, OH

OEFFA's 35th annual conference, *Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground*, February 15-16, 2014 in Granville is right around the corner! The state's largest sustainable food and farm conference, the event draws more than 1,200 attendees from across Ohio and the Midwest. This year's conference will feature keynote speakers Kathleen Merrigan and Atina Diffley, more than 100 educational workshops, two featured pre-conference events on Friday, February 14, a trade show, fun and educational activities for children and teens, locally-sourced and organic homemade meals, and Saturday evening entertainment.



ATINA DIFFLEY
Presented by Northstar Cafe

Atina Diffley is an organic farmer, consultant, activist, and author. She and her husband, Martin, operated Gardens of Eagan in Minnesota, one of the Midwest's first certified organic produce farms. Join Atina for her Saturday keynote address, "Farmers as Role Models and Leaders: Protecting Nature and Creating Social Change." She will also lead a Saturday morning workshop, "Engaging in Policy to Protect Organic Farms," and a Friday pre-conference workshop, "Wholesale Marketing for Fresh Produce Growers."

Kathleen Merrigan wrote the legislation that created the National Organic Program and later, as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, she created the *Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food* initiative. Join her for her Sunday keynote address, "Dysfunctional DC Matters: Ten Reasons to Stay Engaged in Federal Agricultural Policy," as well as her Sunday morning workshop, "Show Me the Money: Farming Federal Programs."



KATHLEEN MERRIGAN
Presented by Chipotle Mexican Grill

FEATURED • PRE • CONFERENCE • EVENTS

Wholesale Marketing for Fresh Produce Growers



Friday, February 14—10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Granville Inn, 314 E. Broadway, Granville, OH

Marketing opportunities continue to grow for local and organic foods. Join marketing and organic farming expert Atina Diffley to learn how to take your farm to the next level by selling to retailers, wholesalers, and institutions.

FEATURED • CONFERENCE • PRESENTERS



Jim Adkins—For the past 30 years, Jim Adkins has raised more than 50 breeds and varieties of chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys. A licensed poultry judge, he established the International Center for Poultry in 1992. Join Jim on Saturday to learn about selecting heritage breeds, and on Sunday for an extended workshop on creating a sustainable homestead flock.



Norm Conrad—Norm Conrad is an agriculture specialist and northeast regional director for the National Center for Appropriate Technology. Join him on Sunday for a workshop on livestock fly management.



Alfonso Contrisciani—Certified Master Chef Alfonso Contrisciani owns Plate, a farm to table restaurant in New Albany, and oversees The Hocking College Inn and Rhapsody, the college's training restaurant in Nelsonville. Join him on Saturday for a workshop on connecting farmers and chefs, complete with a cooking demonstration.



Debra Knapke—Known as "The Garden Sage," author Debra Knapke teaches horticulture courses at Columbus State Community College and provides garden design consulting. Her workshops will explore edible ornamentals and the concept of biophilia, or our affinity for nature.



Mark Shepard—Mark Shepard has created one of the country's largest perennial permaculture farms and is the author of *Restoration Agriculture: Real-World Permaculture for Farmers*. Join him on Saturday for an introduction to restoration agriculture and on Sunday for an in-depth look at his approach to alleycropped and silvopasture.

ECO-FARMING, BIODIVERSITY, AND SOIL HEALTH: A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY

Friday, February 14—10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Cherry Valley Lodge, 2299 Cherry Valley Rd. SE, Newark, OH

Join Rafiq Islam of OSU's South Centers along with extension educators Randall Reeder, Jim Hoorman, Brad Bergefurd, Harit Kaur Bal, Alan Sundermeier, and Vinayak Shedekar to learn how to enhance your use of natural soil amendments, cover crops, plasticulture, and other methods, combined with regular testing for soil health and organic matter, to improve your farm's productivity and profits.



Both pre-conference events will take place on Friday, February 14 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Please note that the pre-conferences are being held at different locations from the OEFFA conference. Pre-registration is required. Check-in opens at 9:30 a.m.

WORKSHOPS

The conference will feature more than 100 educational workshops on sustainable farming, gardening, green living, livestock, business management, farm policy, and more. Whether you're a full-time farmer, backyard gardener, or local food enthusiast, there are plenty of workshops to choose from. For a complete list of workshops, including times, speakers, and descriptions, go to www.oeffa.org/conference2014.

SARE FARMERS FORUM

The OEFFA conference is the first location chosen by the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) program as it seeks to rotate its annual Farmers Forum around the region. This gives OEFFA conference attendees direct access to the good research and education work this program has funded. The Farmers Forum will be offered as a special conference workshop track, with additional projects featured in other workshop tracks. For a list of workshops, including Farmers Forum sessions, go to www.oeffa.org/conference2014.

EXHIBIT HALL

The Exhibit Hall will feature dozens of businesses, non-profits, and government agencies offering an array of food, books, farm and garden products, tools, information, and services. The Exhibit Hall will also include a raffle, book table, book signings by Gene Logsdon, Atina Diffley, and Mark Shepard, and OEFFA merchandise. OEFFA Certification staff will be on hand to provide one-on-one assistance to organic and transitioning farmers.

SATURDAY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

On the evening of Saturday, February 15, enjoy music and dancing with The Back Porch Swing Band and a screening and discussion of the movie, *Network Theory*, with filmmaker Brad Masi.

DONATE TO OEFFA'S CONFERENCE RAFFLE

Support OEFFA and introduce our members to your products and services by donating to the OEFFA conference raffle. To donate, please contact Kristen at (330) 527-3647 or blackdogacres@gmail.com.

GENTLY USED BOOKS NEEDED

Donate your gently used food and farming books to OEFFA. Drop off your books at OEFFA's book table at the annual conference. All proceeds from used book sales benefit OEFFA. For more information, contact Renee Hunt at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205 or renee@oeffa.org.

REGISTRATION UPDATE: EARLY BIRD RATES END JANUARY 31!

At the time of this writing, a limited number of Saturday and Sunday registrations and meals are still available. Pre-conference registration remains open. For the latest news or to register, go to www.oeffa.org/conference2014 or call (614) 421-2022 for a mail-in registration form.

LEARN MORE For more information about the conference, including maps, directions, workshop descriptions, speakers, hotel options, meal menus, a schedule, and more, go to www.oeffa.org/conference2014. For additional questions, call (614) 421-2022.

O U R S P O N S O R S



Granville Exempted Village Schools
Mustard Seed Market
Northridge Organic Farm

Albert Lea Seed Company
Around the World Gourmet
Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese
Casa Nueva
Earth Tools
Eban's Bakehouse
Edible Cleveland

Andelain Fields
Curly Tail Organic Farm
C-TEC of Licking County
DNO Produce
Eden Foods
Glass Rooster Cannery

Bad Dog Acres
Bexley Natural Market
Bluebird Farm
Carriage House Farm
Charlie's Apples at Windy Hill Farm
Fedco Seeds
Flying J Farm
Green Field Farms
Hartzler Dairy Farm
The Hills Market

Organic Valley
Snowville Creamery
Whole Foods Market Columbus

Green BEAN Delivery
Lucky Cat Bakery
OSU School of Environment and Natural Resources
Raisin Rack Natural Food Market
Stauf's Coffee Roasters
Swainway Urban Farm

King Family Farm
Law Office of David G. Cox
Metro Cuisine
Two Caterers Contemporary Cuisine
Whole Hog BBQ

Lucky's Market
Marshy Meadows Farm
Middlefield Original Cheese
Nourse Farms
Pâtisserie Lallier
Schmidt Family Farms
Stonyfield Farm
Sunsprout Farms of Central Ohio
Wayward Seed Farm

Soil Versus Oil, Kale Versus Koch

By Atina Diffley

Our world spun that late afternoon in April 2006—just in from planting two acres of kale—when I opened the letter from the MinnCan Pipeline (MPL), owned by Koch Industries, informing us they had filed an application to build a crude oil pipeline. Their preferred route corridor map drew a bold red line through our seven most productive fields, including the one just planted in kale. My finger, tinted brown from soil, stained the paper as I traced the brash red line. I knew what installing a crude oil pipeline would look like.

Suburban Development

Sixteen years earlier we had lost my husband Martin's fifth generation family farm to suburban development. Bulldozers came and removed every tree, every bush, every blade of grass. We experienced an ecological and spiritual collapse as we unsuccessfully attempted to continue farming on land adjacent to land that had no life.

After years of searching, we found new land with rich black prairie loam. It had been chemically farmed and was badly compacted, but our years of soil building had transformed it to loose, moist, and living soil. I never guessed it too could be threatened.

Twelve Inches of Top Soil Erosion

I started reading a document filed by the pipeline company called an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Plan, and came to, "MPL will not knowingly allow the amount of top cover to erode more than 12 inches from its original level."

As if twelve inches of soil loss wasn't enough! They increased their right to abuse by adding the disclaimer "not knowingly!" That was the moment; I switched from feeling like a helpless victim to understanding my role as guardian of the soil. After a week of calling lawyers, I reached Paula Maccabee.

Organic Farms are Valuable Natural Resources

I started to see our legal strategy when Paula explained to me, "We can provide evidence that organic farms are valuable natural resources that should be protected as such."

Under National Organic Program standards, the "physical, hydrological, and biological features of an organic production operation, including soil, water, wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife" are defined as natural resources of the operation. Our goal was to create an Organic Mitigation Plan that specifically protected the soils and certification of organic farms from public utilities.

Through that spring and summer I planted and cultivated during daylight hours, and most of the night I was up working with Paula, writing affidavits and an Organic Mitigation Plan, strategizing "discovery" questions, and working with our expert witnesses as we intervened as parties to the case.

Citizen Educators

I soon came to realize that the Public Utilities Commission, that makes permitting and routing decisions, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, that manages the Agricultural Impact Mitigation Plan, didn't know how organic systems work. That's when I started to understand how citizens could impact policy decisions as educators. I am not an expert on crude oil and public utilities, but I am an expert in organic farming, and that would be the source of my influence.

Paula told me that citizen input would be crucial—citizen-educators speaking from their place of experience. Letters poured in from university scientists, produce managers, doctors, and customers. By the time the crops were harvested and the soil was secure under its winter cover, 4,600 letters had been sent to the judge!

An Organic Mitigation Plan

As a result of this campaign, organic agricultural land in Minnesota is now recognized as a unique feature of the landscape and the pipeline was moved to the road right-of-way instead of crossing the farm. The Organic Mitigation Appendix to the Agricultural Impact Mitigation Plan provides protection for organic farms, and allows for no topsoil erosion! Wisconsin has since adopted a similar organic mitigation plan and activists in others states are working to protect organic soil too. Koch Industries had the money to fight, but the soil and the farm had the people.

Atina Diffley is an organic farmer, educator, activist, and author of Turn Here Sweet Corn: Organic Farming Works—a memoir based on Atina's life running Gardens of Eagan Farm. She successfully led a legal and citizen campaign against the notorious polluter, Koch Industries, to create an Organic Mitigation Plan for organic farms in Minnesota. To contact Atina, visit www.atinadiffley.com.

Editor's Note: Look for Atina at OEFFA's 2014 conference where she'll be providing a Saturday keynote address, "Farmers as Role Models and Leaders: Protecting Nature and Creating Social Change." She'll also be presenting a Saturday morning workshop on advocacy and a full day Friday pre-conference workshop on wholesale marketing. For more information, see pg. 4.

In Remembrance

Bill Quick of West Virginia died in a vehicle crash in May 2013. Quick was the manager and long-time associate of Phoenix Organics, producers of certified organic tofu, formerly Spring Creek Natural Foods. Bill was a long-time member of OEFFA and purchased soybeans from the same OEFFA certified organic family farm for more than 26 years.

Teresa Peters of Granville passed away on December 16. She was the co-owner of The Going Green Store, an eco-general store that hosts food and farm classes for the central Ohio community. Teresa, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009, had been living with metastasis in her brain, bones, and lungs. Donations can be made in Teresa's honor to Luke Bauer at www.Luke2China.com or to Breast Cancer Action at www.bcaction.org.



Take Action: Provide Feedback on Genetic Engineering and Agricultural Coexistence before March 4

Farmers and others concerned about genetic engineering (GE) contamination can weigh in on how agricultural coexistence—defined as “the concurrent cultivation of crops produced through diverse agricultural systems including traditionally produced, organic, identity preserved, and genetically engineered crops”—can be strengthened in the United States.

The public comment period on a recommendation from the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Advisory Community on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture (AC 21) has been extended to March 4. The USDA specifically seeks comments on identifying ways to foster communication and collaboration among those involved in diverse agricultural production systems.

To better understand stakeholders' needs and challenges in communicating and collaborating about coexistence, the USDA would like to know:

- » What information do farmers and the public need on coexistence and what are the best ways to communicate it;
- » What educational efforts currently exist and would the creation of “outreach toolkits” that encourage communication, planning, and crop-specific practices to facilitate successful coexistence be useful;
- » What collaborative practices and activities are available now within farm, food, and feed production networks, and how can the USDA help make collaboration and coexistence work for everyone involved; and
- » How best to structure the post-comment period public forum to ensure that coexistence issues are frankly and fully explored.

This is also an opportunity for farmers to share their experiences of trying to prevent GE contamination. For certified organic farmers, GE contamination poses both an economic threat and a management concern. Farmers and other concerned citizens can encourage the USDA to adopt contamination prevention and compensation policies that protect the injured party when there is contamination.

During the first draft of these recommendations, which came out in 2012, organizations including the National Organic Coalition (NOC), Center for Food Safety, and Food and Water Watch commented on the threat that GE seed poses to the integrity of organic and non-GE farming systems, as well as the need to protect seed purity.

“Not only do farmers risk market losses, but they also risk losses of livelihood, reputation, standing in their community, partnerships, consumer trust, and so much more—all of which they built around their desire to grow the most ecological and healthy food possible,” commented NOC. “This is compromised when they are GE contaminated, due to no fault of their own.”

“Like other types of pollution, transgenic contamination cannot be recalled,” stated the Center for Food Safety. “GE plants also continue to reproduce in farm fields where GE seeds are sown or blown and where plants are pollinated. Their traits are passed on to subsequent generations of crops. They also reproduce in nature where GE

varieties can forever alter wild relatives, native plants, and ecosystems.” Last year, transgenic contamination temporarily halted U.S. wheat exports to Japan because GE wheat contaminated a field in Oregon. This contamination was the result of a field test conducted nearly a decade earlier and the GE crop was never brought into commercial production. The incident demonstrates the pervasiveness of GE seed and the difficulties associated with controlling GE crops once released into the environment.

To read AC21’s full set of final recommendations, go to <http://www.oeffa.org/q/coexist>. To see a summary of the recommendations, go to <http://www.oeffa.org/q/factsheet>.

To see the Federal Register notice announcing the extension of the comment period to March 4, along with additional information about submitting comments, visit <http://www.oeffa.org/q/APHISCO>.

Comments may be submitted online at <http://www.oeffa.org/q/APHIS>, or by mail: Docket No. APHIS-2013-0047, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Rd. Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

For more information, contact Meghan Klingel at (301) 851-4055 or meghan.k.klingel@aphis.usda.gov. Mailed correspondence may be sent to Meghan Klingel, Acting Advisor for State and Stakeholder Relations, Office of the Deputy Administrator, LPA, APHIS, at 4700 River Rd. Unit 51, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231.

To get involved in OEFFA’s GE working group and promote GE labeling, contact MacKenzie Bailey at mackenzie@oeffa.org or (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208.

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USDA Releases Results of Nationwide Census on Farm to School Activities

According to the USDA's first-ever Farm to School Census, in school year 2011-2012, more than 38,000 schools participated in Farm to School activities. As a result 21 million students were served more than \$350 million in local food.

Monsanto Superweeds Overrun U.S. Farm Landscape

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), "superweeds," or weeds that have developed herbicide resistance, now affect more than 60 million acres of U.S. cropland. Fifty percent of U.S. farmers surveyed reported glyphosate-resistant weed infestations. In the southeast, more than 90 percent of cotton and soybean farmers are affected. Today, there are 24 species of superweeds and overall herbicide use is far higher than before Roundup Ready crops.



Washington Voters Reject GE Labeling Ballot Measure

On November 5, Washington voters rejected Initiative 522, a ballot measure which would have required GE labeling on food packages, with a vote of 51 percent to 49 percent. Out-of-state corporations spent more than \$20 million defeating the ballot measure; the anti-labeling campaign received only \$600 in in-state contributions. Labeling proponents raised \$7 million.



USDA Terminates Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

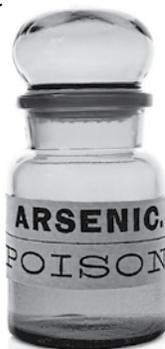
In December, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) terminated the development of a national leafy greens marketing agreement in light of new food safety regulations being developed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In 2009, some members of the produce industry petitioned the USDA to establish a controversial national marketing agreement that would require farmers follow certain food safety standards in order to sell to handlers participating in the agreement. OEFFA and others opposed the agreement.

Supreme Court Refuses to Reinstate Farmers' Case Against Monsanto

In January, the U.S. Supreme Court decided to deny a group of 73 organic and conventional family farmers, seed businesses, and agricultural organizations, including OEFFA, from having their case challenging Monsanto's patents on genetically engineered (GE) seed heard in court. The case, *Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA) et al v. Monsanto*, sought protection for farmers whose fields can become contaminated by Monsanto's GE seed and then be sued by the company for patent infringement. Plaintiffs filed their petition to the Supreme Court after the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit upheld a decision to dismiss the lawsuit in June.

FDA to Prohibit Arsenic in Animal Feed

In September, the FDA agreed to withdraw 98 of 101 approvals for arsenic-based animal drugs used as feed additives for chickens, turkeys, and hogs. Arsenic is added to feed to hasten weight gain and to improve the color of the meat. According to the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, more than 70 percent of all U.S. chickens raised for meat are fed arsenic.



FDA Begins Voluntary Program to Decrease Antibiotic Use in Livestock

In December, the FDA announced a voluntary labeling program intended to reduce the use of antibiotics for promoting growth or improving feed efficiency in livestock. The FDA is asking drug manufacturers to change antibiotic labels to feature language that deters producers from using the medicines to make animals grow. A new proposed rule would also require a veterinary prescription to administer antibiotics to animals. Statistics released by the FDA show that animal production uses more than 29 million pounds of antibiotics annually. The practice has been widely recognized by scientists to breed antibiotic-resistant bacteria. A new report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that at least 23,000 Americans die each year from drug-resistant infections and that antibiotic resistance is implicated in at least 2 million infections annually.

Research Shows Genetically Engineered Crops Pass Herbicide Resistance to Weeds

A study published in *New Phytologist* shows that glyphosate resistance in genetically cultivated rice can be transferred to a weedy, wild rice plant through cross-pollination. The transgenic hybrids had higher rates of photosynthesis, grew more shoots and flowers, and produced more seeds per plant than wild weeds, even in areas where glyphosate was not used. This study shows that if local weed populations are contaminated by glyphosate-resistant genes, the weeds may be more difficult for farmers to control and able to out-compete native plants.



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Steps for Building a Successful Farm Business

By Floyd Davis

As a specialty crop grower, I have always found the easy part of the business has been the growing. The harder part is figuring out what to do with the produce once you grow it. In the early years it seemed normal to have more product than customers, but it didn't take long to figure out what was selling well, what the trends were, and which customers were looking for locally-sourced foods on a consistent basis.

Marketing 101

One of the first things I learned in a marketing class in college was the 4 P's of marketing: *Product, Placement, Price, and Promotion*. While this concept, as it was taught, applied to the building, selling, and marketing of widgets, the same can be applied to vegetable production. The *Product* is simple – it's what you grow. *Placement* – where do you want to sell your produce? A roadside farm stand, farmers' markets, produce auctions, restaurants, a community supported agriculture (CSA) program? *Price* – do you want to sell retail or wholesale, or a combination of the two? *Promotion* – how are you going to utilize social media, print media, word of mouth, and branding to promote your farm and products? The concept of the 4 P's is meant to show that if you have the right product(s), in the right place, priced appropriately, and with the right promotional strategy, you maximize your chance of success.

Diversification

At the beginning of my farming venture, I sold the vast majority of my produce at farmers' markets. The farmers' markets were a great way to move product as long as it was reasonably warm, sunny, and otherwise a nice day, but the weather in northeast Ohio didn't always cooperate. Expanding into a small CSA program and then adding a few restaurant accounts presented an outlet for product that could not always be sold at farmers' markets. Our farm now supplies eight to ten restaurant accounts on a weekly basis, two school districts, our CSA program, and a farmers' market. We also supplement other CSA programs if the farms are short on product. This diversification helps to spread our risk. We diversify not only where we sell our produce but also what we grow. As a result, a bad pepper year will not devastate the farm because we grow many vegetable crop varieties.

Wholesale

The biggest growth area for the farm over the last two years has been supplying restaurants. The initial restaurant accounts were established by developing relationships with local chefs while attending farmers' markets and taking excess produce to the restaurants once the markets were done for the day. This eventually led to weekly ordering and delivery and even growing a few items just for specific chefs. Our success with the restaurant accounts started with establishing a relationship with the chef and the person who does the ordering, if that duty has been delegated. Communication is also a key to establishing good working relationships. We follow up with all of the accounts on a weekly basis to place orders, keep them apprised of what is going to be available, and to let them know when we are out of an item. Year round production has also been a critical factor in building success with our restaurant accounts.

Success

Nothing is ever guaranteed but there are a few things that you can do to help achieve success. Market the farm, be a shameless promoter of your product. You're good at what you do, so let everyone know it. Spread your risk with a diversity of products and outlets. Keep the communication lines open. Don't be afraid to take on new challenges. There are lots of opportunities if you're willing to take them on.

Floyd Davis is the owner of The Red Basket Farm, a specialty crop farm located in northeast Ohio. The Red Basket Farm specializes in year-round production using high tunnel greenhouses to supply restaurants, schools, and other wholesale outlets. Floyd may be reached at redbasketfarm@aol.com.

Editor's Note: Look for Floyd at OEFFA's 2014 conference where he'll be presenting a Sunday workshop on wholesale marketing. Want to dig deeper? Join Atina Diffley for a full day pre-conference workshop on wholesale marketing designed for produce growers. For more information, see pg. 4.

Coming Soon...

OEFFA Receives SARE PDP Grant

This fall OEFFA received a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program (PDP) grant. The funding will allow OEFFA to provide education to veterinarians, Extension educators, and other professionals who work with livestock herds and flocks. Watch for announcements about upcoming webinars and workshops on organic livestock standards, preventive management, health practices, and treatments for organic livestock, and the formation of an active network of organic livestock health professionals.

OEFFA Investment Fund Available to Grow Opportunities in Sustainable Agriculture



OEFFA has partnered with a group of socially-motivated local investors who have made \$500,000 available to provide flexible and affordable capital to OEFFA members.

By helping to mobilize additional sources of capital, OEFFA hopes to build the supply and availability of local, sustainably grown fresh food in Ohio, enhance farm and farm-related business viability, and encourage expansion of ecological agricultural practices.

The fund is only open to Ohio-based OEFFA members in good standing, who will be required to submit an application package and commit to support sustainable agricultural practices throughout the life of the investment. Applications will be reviewed by the Fund's investment committee on a continuing basis.

For more information, or to apply, go to www.oeffa.org/invest or contact Carol Goland at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 202 or oifinfo@oeffa.org.

U.S. and Japan Announce Organic Equivalency Agreement

In September, officials from the United States and Japan announced that beginning January 1, 2014, organic products certified in Japan or the U.S. may be sold as organic in either country without restriction. Previously, U.S. organic farmers and businesses wanting to sell products in Japan had to obtain separate certifications to meet each country's organic standards.

In June 2009, the U.S. and Canada signed the first ever organic equivalency agreement. This agreement detailed "critical variances," or additional requirements that U.S. organic products must meet in order to be sold in Canada. These include, but are not limited to, prohibitions on the use of sodium nitrate and hydroponic production, and different labeling requirements. Since June 2012, the U.S. and Europe have also recognized each other's organic standards as equivalent, although fruit treated with streptomycin, an antibiotic used to control fire blight in apples and pears, may not be sold as organic in the EU, for example. For more detailed information about organic equivalency agreements, go to <http://1.usa.gov/1b2kPE> or call the OEFFA office at (614) 262-2022.

NOSB Meeting Update

Due to the government shutdown, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) cancelled its October meeting. The National Organic Program (NOP) has confirmed the meeting will not be rescheduled. Instead, the NOSB will meet as scheduled April 29-May 1 in San Antonio, TX.

USDA Announces Changes to Sunset Rule

This fall, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NOP announced a change in the process for exempting synthetic substances in organic production. Under the Sunset Provision of the Organic Foods Production Act, exemptions were authorized for only a five year period. The exemption expired automatically unless the product was reinstated by a two-thirds vote of the NOSB. This sunset provision was designed to encourage the development of natural or organic alternatives, and provide a transparent process which included public review and comment. Under the USDA's new policy, an exemption is automatically renewed unless a two-thirds majority of the NOSB votes to remove an exempted synthetic substance from the list.

Certified Organic U.S. Cropland Grows to 5 Million Acres

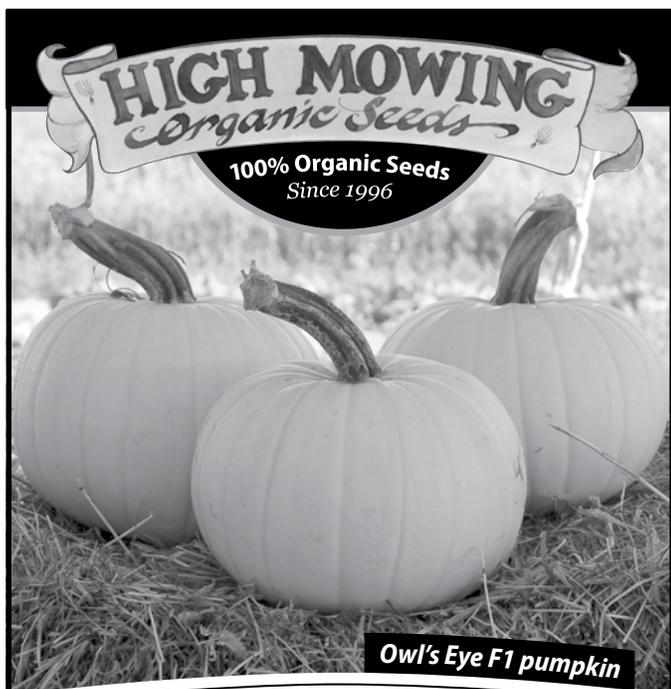
The USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) has released updated data on organic cropland. According to the new estimates, the U.S. had 3.1 million acres of certified organic cropland and 2.3 million acres of certified organic pasture and rangeland in 2011. ERS has been tracking organic acreage since 1997.

OEFFA Joins the National Organic Coalition

In December, OEFFA joined the National Organic Coalition (NOC) and became its 15th member. NOC is a national alliance of farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, consumers, and progressive industry members who work to advance organic agriculture and food issues. NOC is committed to organic integrity and advocates for strong, enforceable, and continuously improved standards to maximize the multiple health, environmental, and economic benefits that only organic agriculture provides. Learn more about NOC, including their visionary National Organic Action Plan, at www.nationalorganiccoalition.org.

New Study Finds Health Benefits for Organic Milk

Researchers at Washington State University have found that grass-fed, whole organic milk contains higher levels of heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids than milk from cows raised conventionally. They tested nearly 400 milk samples from across the country over 18 months.



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MAKING SENSE OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM

A series where OEFFA staff answers frequently asked questions and offers suggestions for working within the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations.

WAIT! Check the List Before You Reach for that Input!

Each January when we send certification application forms, the packet includes OEFFA's Approved Products List. This year, there will be some big changes to the list, and here's why:

In response to our audit by the National Organic Program (NOP) in the summer of 2012, OEFFA Certification is re-reviewing all inputs approved more than three years ago. Regular reviews are important because NOP rules and manufacturers' product formulations change from time to time. The re-review will also help to ensure that our clients stay in compliance with the NOP standards. However, it means that **certified growers may see some changes to the 2014 Approved Products List.**

Re-reviewing the more than 1,300 products that we approved prior to January 1, 2011 is a big job, but we're working our way through the list as quickly as we can. We started with the most common products that our clients use. Every time we review or re-review a product, we must request information from the manufacturer. Some reply faster than others, so the amount of time to review each product varies greatly.

When OEFFA publishes its list of approved inputs for 2014, all of the products that have successfully completed their updated review will be on that list. However, if we have not been able to complete the new review of a product that was previously approved prior to January 1, 2011, **it will be removed from OEFFA's list of approved inputs.** In other words, inputs organic growers may have previously used could lose their approved status and therefore will not be allowed for use until a new review is completed.

As renewal applications arrive for 2014, we will continue to re-review inputs that clients list on their Organic System Plans. Once we receive updated information from the manufacturer, an input can be re-listed, as appropriate, for another three years. If we are unable to obtain this information or if we find that it cannot be approved, we will notify affected clients promptly.

The bottom line is that **it is always important to check the list of approved inputs, or contact the office, before using a product.** This year it will be especially important to do so. As always, please call the office at (614) 262-2022 with any questions.

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FARM-SCALE NUT PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

By Kurt Belser

I believe that nuts are critically important to local food systems. Why, you ask? In our modern culture, we consume predominantly annual crops, but a food system where we get all our essential vitamins, minerals, and carbohydrates from annual crops is simply not environmentally or culturally sustainable. There is also something very unique about tending to a plant that under good growing conditions will outlive the people growing it.

I began to focus on nuts after taking an interest in the management and development of perennial crops in my professional and academic life. After a few years in the industry, I realized that there was a major gap in the scale of those growing nut crops compared to other perennials, such as apples or peaches. Why is this? Both crops take about the same amount of time to produce and management is similar. The difference is that nuts require mechanical processing in order to be commercially marketable.

To help address this market obstacle, I received funding from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program to research nut processing machinery and the economics of a regional-scale nut processing facility, which would allow nut growers to bring their products to market. The nuts I based my research on were nuts favorable for commercial production in the Midwest such as hazelnuts, chestnuts, hickory nuts, and black walnuts.

If you are a farmer wanting to break into the nut market, you might get some trees planted, buy a few machines, and then think you're in business, right? Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

The part of the nut we consume is, of course, the nut meat—a product that is clean and free of any shell or other contaminants. In order to take nuts from the field to a finished value-added product, like nut meat separated from shell, there are many variables unique to nut production. The processes include handling, curing, de-hulling/husking, floating, sterilizing, sizing, cracking, re-sizing, separating meat from shell, and finally storage.

After identifying the numerous processes a farmer would have to take in order to market his or her local nut crop, I thought, great! Now I just need to find the machines that are built for this and simply test them. However, the nut processing industry caters almost exclusively to very large-scale aggregation of nuts. It took four years for me to find, test, and develop machinery that could be considered affordable and appropriately sized for a farmer supporting him/herself with nut crops (at least 10 acres in production).

After four years of developing relationships with farmers, tinkerers, engineers, philanthropists, and economic development agencies I can honestly say, we have the means to create farm- and regional-scale nut processing facilities. In addition to the machinery, much of this research involved exploring markets for what could be considered waste products from the processing of these crops, including evaluating their value as feed, oil, and even in beer brewing. What comes next will take a new generation of nut growers, the support of their communities, and bold new models

for farm management. Hopefully, the research we performed gives these new nut farmers a stepping stone into the industry and a vision for how they can create prosperity on their land.

After graduating with a degree in Integrated EcoSocial Science, Kurt Belser farmed on the West coast and throughout the Midwest. Kurt continues his research through The Wingnuttery, his start up nut processing facility and 38 acre farm. He may be reached at thewingnuttery@gmail.com.

This project was developed with support from the SARE program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA). Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed within do not necessarily reflect the view of the SARE program or the USDA. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Editor's Note: Look for Kurt at OEFFA's 2014 conference where he'll be providing a SARE Farmers Forum Saturday morning workshop on nut production and processing and sharing more details on his research. For more information, see pg. 4.



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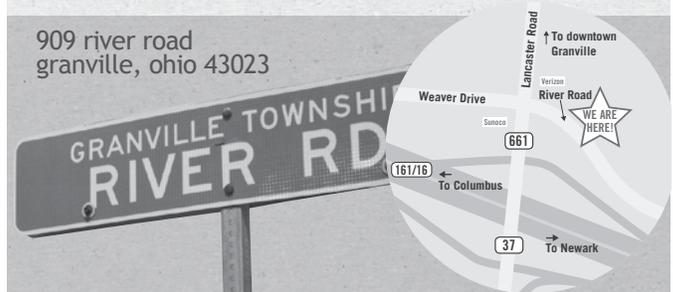
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RESEARCH IN FOCUS: ORGANIC PASTURED POULTRY PRODUCTION

By Michael Lilburn and John Anderson

Ingredient sourcing and feed cost have always been major challenges for organic poultry meat producers. In fact, some certified organic producers sell pasture raised broilers but do not market them as organic because of the high cost of organic feed.

Over the past two summers, we have raised organic broilers at the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center (OARDC) East Badger Organic Research Farm with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Organic Research Initiative.

In an effort to identify a lower cost feed alternative for organic farms, our research was designed to determine whether a naked oats diet would support the growth of healthy organic birds and how different poultry breeds would respond to the diet. We also wanted to know how long it would take for each breed to reach finished carcass weight and how the naked oats diet would impact certain carcass traits.

To this end, we tested whether naked oats can comprise up to 75 percent of a complete poultry diet without supplemental amino acids (methionine). Naked oats are higher in protein and the key amino acids methionine and lysine compared with corn. Our diet also contained 20 percent extruded full-fat soybeans as a supplemental protein source, a form of soybean meal often more available to organic producers. The end result was a diet with 16 percent protein which is considerably lower than typical organic or conventional poultry diets without supplemental methionine.

Our four year study tested the use of naked oats, spelt, and clover/poultry in a yearly three plot rotation. The naked oats could be used in on-farm organic poultry diets the following year, thus reducing overall feed costs.



At 21 days, we placed the chicks in the outdoor pens and began to feed them our organic test diet. Each year after the removal of a first cutting of hay, the broilers are placed on a plot containing clover, designed to maximize the yearly return from that plot. We reared two groups of broilers each summer.

We compared the growth and carcass characteristics of commercial broilers and a slower growing strain (RedBros) that is popular with many pastured poultry

producers. Both were fed the naked oats test diet. In both 2012 and 2013, it took the RedBros approximately 65 days to reach a target carcass weight of 4.5 to 5 lbs compared with 51 days for the commercial broilers. The commercial broilers had significantly more breast meat and this contributed to an overall increase in carcass weight as a percentage of live weight. The RedBros had increased carcass fat when compared with the commercial broilers; however, both strains had similar cooking losses (29 percent). The health of both strains was outstanding; we had less than two percent mortality combined for both strains.

We found that the naked oats test diet could be an alternative feeding strategy in raising organic broilers while decreasing organic feed costs. The breed of choice can significantly impact weight gain and will need to be considered in the economic tradeoff between reduced organic feed cost and growth.

Michael Lilburn is a professor in the Department of Animal Sciences at Ohio State University in Wooster. He may be reached at lilburn.1@osu.edu. John Anderson is a research associate in the Department of Animal Sciences in Wooster. He may be reached at anderson.37@osu.edu.

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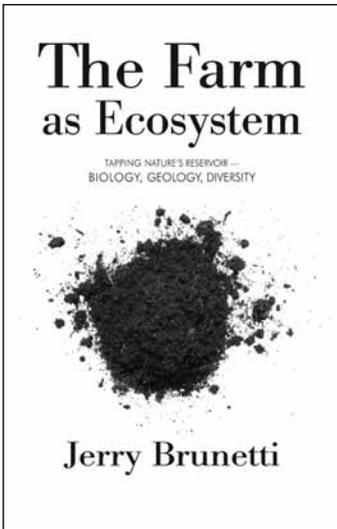
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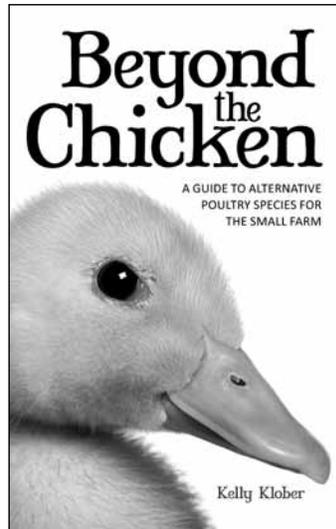
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FARM to TABLE

Savoring the Seasons

by Trish Mumme

Wheat Berries Make Hearty Winter Dishes

What ingredient makes a great base for salads, desserts, and bread? Wheat berries! These nutty kernels with crunch really add heartiness and flavor to the following recipes.



Wheat Berry Salad

1 1/2 c. hard wheat berries	1/2 c. parsley leaves, finely chopped
3/4 c. chopped walnuts	3 Tbs. olive oil
2 stalks celery, finely chopped	2 Tbs. lemon juice
1/2 c. tart dried cherries, chopped	Salt and pepper
1 scallion, chopped	

Sort through wheat berries carefully; discard any stones and rinse well. In a large pot, combine the wheat berries and enough water to come 2 inches over the wheat berries. Bring to a boil and cook uncovered for 1 hour, or until tender. Drain and let cool. Toast the walnuts in a medium dry skillet over medium-high heat until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. In a large bowl, combine the wheat berries, walnuts, celery, dried cherries, scallions, parsley, olive oil, and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Wheat Berry Pudding

1 c. wheat berries	1/2 c. pure maple syrup
2 Tbs. plus 3 c. milk, divided	1 tsp. vanilla
1 cinnamon stick	1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1 strip orange zest (1/2 by 2 inches)	1/2 c. low fat maple yogurt (optional)
Pinch of salt	

Place wheat berries in a large heavy saucepan and add water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer, adding more water if necessary, until the wheat berries are tender, about 1 hour. Drain well. Place the wheat berries and 2 Tbs. milk in a food processor. Pulse until most of the wheat berries are coarsely chopped. Combine the chopped wheat berries, the remaining milk, cinnamon stick, orange zest, and salt in a Dutch oven or other heavy-bottomed pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring often to prevent sticking, until the mixture is very thick, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the heat; discard the cinnamon stick and orange zest. Stir in maple syrup and vanilla. You can add more milk to the pudding if it gets too thick as it stands. Serve warm or chilled, sprinkled with cinnamon and topped with a dollop of maple yogurt, if desired.

Sprouted Wheat Berry Salad

2 c. sprouted wheat berries	2 tsp. honey or maple syrup
1 lg. apple, cored and chopped	1 tsp. salt
1/4 c. currants or raisins	1 1/2 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
2 c. kale, stemmed and chopped	1 Tbs. flax oil or walnut oil
1 c. carrots, grated	

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl and serve.

Trish Mumme operates Garden Patch Produce, a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm in Licking County offering vegetables, herbs, cut flowers, honey, and fruit to subscribers. She may be reached at gardenpatchproduce@earthlink.net.



RESOURCES

Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry—The Ohio Department of Agriculture has developed an online database accessible to pesticide applicators where producers can register the locations of pesticide-sensitive apiaries and crops.

 www.agri.ohio.gov/scr

Beginning Farmer Tax Information—The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) has developed a factsheet which provides an overview of some important income tax issues that farmers need to be aware of, including business deductions, capital gains, and depreciation.

 www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/summary.php?pub=439

Online Farmers Forum—The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA) has launched a “Farmer Knows Best Forum.” The free, online forum provides a platform for farmers to exchange ideas and share information.

 www.attra.ncat.org/farmerknowsbest/

Agroforestry Training Manual—The Center for Agroforestry at the University of Missouri has released the 2013 edition of its *Training Manual for Applied Agroforestry Practices*. The manual is designed for natural resources professionals and landowners and includes worksheets and exercises.

 www.centerforagroforestry.org/pubs/training/

Farm Transition Toolkit—The Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, NCAT, and the Farmers’ Legal Action Group have released a resource guide to help farmers understand the issues involved in transferring the farm to the next generation and developing a transition plan.

 www.landstewardshipproject.org/morefarmers/farmtransitiontoolkit

Soil Sampling Factsheet—Ohio State University has created a fact sheet designed to help growers take accurate and effective soil samples for nutrient level testing.

 www.bit.ly/JD0cBD

Direct Marketing Legal Guide—The Drake University Agricultural Law Center has developed an online version of *The Legal Guide for Direct Farm Marketing*. The guide includes information on direct marketing legal issues, contracts, property law, labor, insurance, and other topics. It provides an extensive checklist, a state-by-state listing of organizations and agencies that can provide additional services, and more.

 www.directmarketersforum.org

Value-Added Producer Grants—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced the availability of nearly \$10.5 million in grants to help value-added producers. Grants are available to help create new products, expand marketing opportunities, or develop specialty products. Grant applications are due by February 24.

 www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html

Food Safety and Conservation Guide—The Wild Farm Alliance and the Community Alliance with Family Farmers have released *A Farmer’s Guide to Food Safety and Conservation: Facts, Tips, and Frequently Asked Questions*. The guide includes guidance for successful food safety inspections and information farmers can share with an auditor about the co-management of food safety and conservation.

 www.wildfarmalliance.org/resources/FS_Facts_Tip_FAQ.htm

Want to learn more? OEFFA’s online Grower Resources section includes links to dozens of websites, publications, and organizations on a wide-range of topics including organic production, food safety, livestock, soil fertility, and much more. Go to www.oeffa.org/growers.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

For a complete calendar of events go to www.oeffa.org/events

I'm Not as Young as I Used to Be

Friday, January 24—1-3 p.m.

Hancock County Senior Center • 339 E. Melrose Ave., Findlay, OH

Aging farmers who want to learn how to remain productive in agriculture, continue gardening, and stay active outdoors can learn tips and techniques from OSU's AgrAbility Program. Free and open to the public. For more information, call (614) 292-0588 or to go www.agrability.osu.edu.

OEFFA Board Meeting

Sunday, January 26—10 a.m.

Denison University • Granville, OH

OEFFA's Education and Certification Boards of Trustees will meet. For more information, call (614) 421-2022 Ext. 202 or email cgoland@oeffa.org.

6th Annual Local Food Seminar

January 26—1:45-5 p.m.

St. George Catholic Church • State Rte. 125, Georgetown, OH

Join OEFFA's OK River Valley chapter and keynote speaker Kristin Gangwer, Food Hub manager of Our Harvest Cooperative. There will be workshops on making maple syrup, raising sheep, farm to school, and raised bed gardening. For more information, call Julie at (937) 392-1543.

Kraut Making

Tuesday, January 28—6:30-8 p.m.

City Folks Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Learn how to preserve vegetables using brine lacto-fermentation. Andy Reed of Crazy Kraut will share the basics of making sauerkraut and discuss the values of fermented foods in our diets. Cost: \$40. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

OEFFA Grain Growers Chapter Meeting

Saturday, February 1—9:30 a.m.

Village Restaurant • 435 N. Warpole St., Upper Sandusky, OH

Join OEFFA's Grain Grower Chapter for a round table event with John Kempf, the CEO of Advancing Eco-Agriculture, where the group will identify weed and pest pressures in their 2013 crops and diagnose the nutrient status of their soils. Socializing begins at 9:30 a.m. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. Free and open to the public. For more information, call (419) 278-2701 or email dshively01@gmail.com.

Ohio Farmland Preservation Summit

Wednesday, February 5—9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

OSU Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center • 2201 Fred Taylor Dr., Columbus, OH

This farmland preservation summit will feature guest speakers, breakout sessions, an exhibit space, and lunch. Cost: \$50. For more information, go to <http://fairfield.osu.edu>.

Introduction to Permaculture

Saturday, February 8—3-5 p.m.

Solid Ground Farm • 13262 Liars Corner Rd., Athens, OH

See firsthand how Solid Ground Farm is applying the principles of Permaculture design and bio-mimicry to create a sustainable homestead and farm. Join Community Food Initiatives for a brief lecture and tour of the farm with owner Weston Lombard. Cost: \$5 for CFI members, \$10 for non-members. For more information, call (740) 593-5971 or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.org.

Biodynamic Beekeeping

Saturday, February 8—3-4 p.m.

City Folks Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Janine and Tim Degitz will cover the basics of Biodynamic beekeeping including bee behavior, managing the hive, equipment, and bee diseases. Cost: \$20. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

Seed Starting Indoors

Thursday, February 13—6-8 p.m.

City Folks Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Join Joseph Swain for a hands-on seed starting workshop. Learn step by step how to start seeds like a pro and provide yourself with transplants for your garden. Cost: \$25. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

OEFFA's 35th Annual Conference:

Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground

Friday, February 14- Sunday, February 16

Granville High School and Middle School • 248 New Burg St., Granville, OH

OEFFA's conference will feature keynote speakers Kathleen Merrigan and Atina Duffley; more than 100 workshops; a kids' conference, teen conference, and childcare; a trade show; Saturday evening entertainment, and pre-conference events on produce wholesale marketing and soil health and biodiversity. For more information, see pg. 4, call (614) 421-2022, or go to www.oeffa.org/conference2014.

CFI Seed Exchange

Saturday, February 22—3-5 p.m.

Saturday, March 29—3-5 p.m.

Athens, OH

Join other seed savers to gift, swap, buy, and sell seed varieties grown in the area. Free and open to the public. For more information, call Community Food Initiatives at (740) 593-5971 or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.org.

Maple Tapping Workshop

Saturday, February 22—2-4 p.m.

City Folks Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

In this outdoor workshop, Rachael Taysse Baillieul will demonstrate how to tap a tree, collect sap, and boil sap into syrup using a traditional wood fire. Cost: \$30. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

Forest Garden Design

Sunday, March 2—5:30-7 p.m.

Solid Ground Farm • 13262 Liars Corner Rd., Athens, OH

Explore a perennial based agriculture system, modeled after woodland ecosystems, as Community Food Initiatives and Weston Lombard help participants learn to create low-maintenance, self-nourishing forest gardens. Cost: \$5 for CFI members, \$10 for non-members. For more information, call (740) 593-5971 or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.org.

Fruit Tree Pruning

Saturday, March 8—2-5 p.m.

Solid Ground Farm • 13262 Liars Corner Rd., Athens, OH

Join Kurt Belser for an afternoon of fruit tree pruning basics. Cost: \$5 for CFI members, \$10 for non-members. For more information, call Community Food Initiatives at (740) 593-5971 or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.org.

OEFFA Heart of Ohio Chapter Meeting: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Monday, March 10—7-9 p.m.

Granville District Office • 130 N. Granger St., Granville, OH

Join OEFFA's Heart of Ohio Chapter for a discussion to focus on organic methods and techniques used to control weeds, pests, and invasive species. For more information, call (740) 507-5615 or email sunbeamfamilyfarm@gmail.com.

Season Creation Professional Development Program Advanced Session

Thursday, March 13—10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Green Edge Organic Gardens • Amesville, OH

Rural Action and Green Edge Organic Gardens present another workshop in their intensive series that equips agriculture educators with the tools needed to pass on high tunnel guidance to their clients, colleagues, and members. For more information, contact Tom Redfern at (740) 677-4047 or tomr@ruralaction.org.

Bionutrient Rich Crop Production Course

Thursday, March 20—9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Rockefeller Park Greenhouse • Cleveland, OH

Saturday, March 22—9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Wholesome Valley Farm • 927 Rte. 62, Wilmot, OH

The Real Food Campaign, a project of the Bionutrient Food Association, will be offering workshops led by Dan Kittredge designed to help growers increase the bionutrient level of their soil and achieve larger, higher quality yields. For more information, call (774) 573-6804 or go to www.bionutrient.org/events.

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OEFFA BOARD ELECTIONS 2014-2015

OEFFA members will have the opportunity to discuss and vote on a new OEFFA Board of Trustees at the 2014 business meeting in Granville on Saturday, February 15 from 5:15-6:15 p.m. The meeting will be held on-site at the OEFFA conference and will be open to all OEFFA members at no cost.

Board of Trustees Candidates

The current board has proposed the following slate of officers. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the time of the election. The Board of Trustees will elect its own President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Mary Ida Compton (current OEFFA Board President)

Mary Ida Compton moved to Cincinnati in 1999 and co-founded the Hyde Park Farmers' Market. She has worked actively with her children's school to incorporate local, healthy food into the lunch menu. Professionally, Mary Ida is an investment consultant and brings strong financial management skills to the board along with her passion for local and organic food.

John Sowder (current OEFFA Board Treasurer)

John Sowder is a long-time member of OEFFA who works in the food industry. As the current treasurer, John believes he has made significant improvements to OEFFA's finances, and hopes to build on this success if re-elected.

Mardy Townsend (current OEFFA Board Secretary)

Mardy Townsend, of Marshy Meadows Farm in Ashtabula County, is a certified organic grass-fed beef farmer and active, long-time OEFFA member, previously serving as the board representative for the Lake Effect chapter.

Perry Clutts (current OEFFA Board Member-at-Large)

Perry Clutts is the fourth generation farming his family's Pleasantview Farm, near Circleville. He got his start in organic agriculture in the early 90s through attending OEFFA conferences and transitioned the 545 acre Ohio Century Farm to a certified organic grass based dairy. Perry's passions are the cows, the dogs, and compost. He also supports the organic and sustainable communities through serving on the board of directors of the Organic Trade Association and as the President of the Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council.

Mike Laughlin (current OEFFA Board Member-at-Large)

Along with his wife, Laura, Mike Laughlin owns and operates Northridge Organic Farm in Johnstown. His farm, which raises fresh market vegetables, has been certified organic for 20 years. Mike has been an OEFFA member for more than 25 years and has held many positions on the board including President.

Darren Malhame (current OEFFA Board Member-at-Large)

Darren Malhame is a lawyer by training and a former litigator in Washington D.C. Several years ago, Darren decided to return home to Ohio and join his brother and sister-in-law as controlling partner in the Northstar Café restaurants. Darren brings a deep passion for local food system development and business experience to the board.

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UN-CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: Lovely mini-farm, house with many modern updates, two barns, 3.9 acres, newer well. 7895 MV High, Plain City, OH. \$297,500. Contact Jennifer, e-Merge Real Estate, at (614) 306-1481 or www.JenniferBrabb.com.

For Sale: Nolt Model P850, 80 gallon, single wheel, pull-type transplanter. Nolt Model S148, 3 pt plastic layer with waterline attachment. John Deere #30 combine in working condition. Hogback 16 inch vegetable washer with sorting cable. Roadside produce stand 20' x 6'. Call Alex in Stark Co. at (330) 268-2600.

For Sale: Ranch-style home on 5.22 acres (3.5 acres certified organic) in Mansfield, OH. Includes organic apple orchard with approx. 200 semi-dwarf trees and 2 solar-heated greenhouses. Call Frank in Richland Co. at (419) 747-4949 or fstanek@neo.rr.com.

For Sale: Herd of 21 (bred for spring calves) purebred Black Angus cows and heifers. Pregnancy tested. Two of the cows are registered animals. Good gentle herd. Contact Marlin at (989)742-4505, goebelmarlin@gmail.com, or 24885 Morrow Rd., Hillman, MI.

For Sale: Looking for neighbors who are interested in sustainable farming and sharing work and equipment. Two farms (77 acres, 97 acres) for sale adjoining our farm. House and barns on each farm. Call Julie and Steve in Brown Co. at (937) 392-1543.

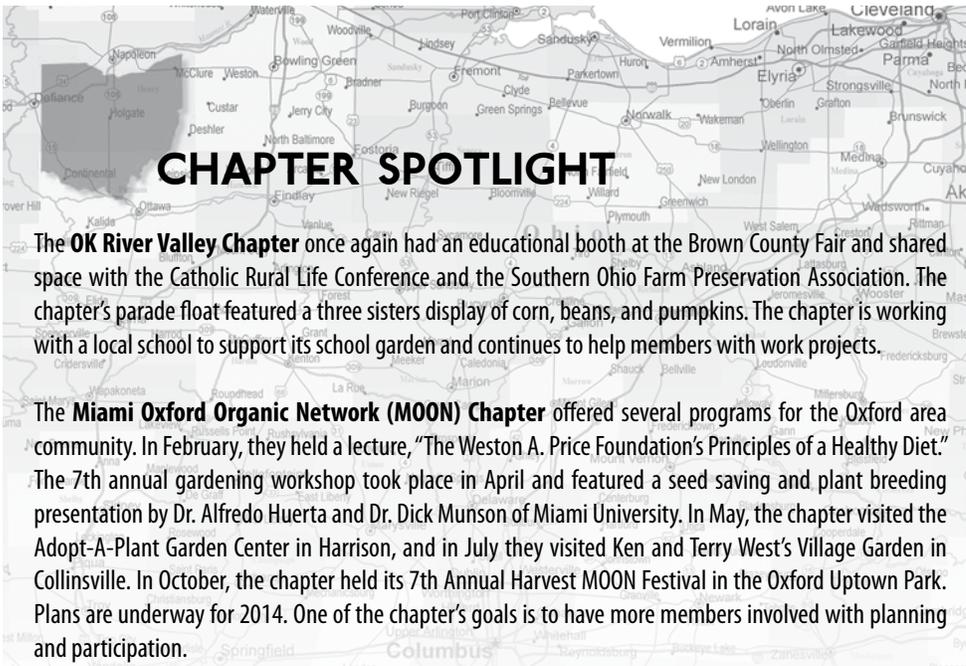
Organic Growing Supplies: We test soil and sell amendments and fertilizer. Free catalog. Ship, deliver, and over 50 Midwest dealers. Grower prices and 5% discount in January. Call (330) 877-9356. Ohio Earth Food, 5488 Swamp St., Hartsville, OH. www.ohioearthfood.com.

Now Hiring: Olney Friends School, a Quaker boarding school in Barnesville, OH, is hiring a full-time cook. This position is an opportunity to serve local, fresh food, educate students, and to work closely with farmers. Contact Eric in Belmont Co. at eric@olneyfriends.org.

Now Hiring: Greenacres Foundation in Cincinnati is hiring a full-time garden production manager. www.green-acres.org/index.php/about-us/career-opportunities/

Residential Caretaker Needed: Small produce farm in Minerva, OH. Farmhouse living in exchange for light responsibilities and partial payment of utilities (\$300/month). Income possibilities. Contact Kip at creekviewridge@gmail.com.

Classified ads are free for members and \$5 for non-members. Submissions no longer than 30 words are due by March 15 for the spring issue. Email newsletter@oeffa.org or call (614) 421-2022 Ext. 203.



CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

The **OK River Valley Chapter** once again had an educational booth at the Brown County Fair and shared space with the Catholic Rural Life Conference and the Southern Ohio Farm Preservation Association. The chapter's parade float featured a three sisters display of corn, beans, and pumpkins. The chapter is working with a local school to support its school garden and continues to help members with work projects.

The **Miami Oxford Organic Network (MOON) Chapter** offered several programs for the Oxford area community. In February, they held a lecture, "The Weston A. Price Foundation's Principles of a Healthy Diet." The 7th annual gardening workshop took place in April and featured a seed saving and plant breeding presentation by Dr. Alfredo Huerta and Dr. Dick Munson of Miami University. In May, the chapter visited the Adopt-A-Plant Garden Center in Harrison, and in July they visited Ken and Terry West's Village Garden in Collinsville. In October, the chapter held its 7th Annual Harvest MOON Festival in the Oxford Uptown Park. Plans are underway for 2014. One of the chapter's goals is to have more members involved with planning and participation.

For information about upcoming chapter events, see pg. 21 or go to www.oeffa.org/chapter.

WELCOME NEW OEFFA MEMBERS

9/11/13-12/9/13

BUSINESS

Dan Healy, *Zimmerman's High Tunnels*
Marvin Miller

FAMILY FARM

Matt and Morgan Aultman, *Aultman Farm and Livestock*
Mahlon Beachy
Millard Brady
Craig Britton, *Whitebarn Organics*
Maureen Burns-Hooker and David Hooker, *Herbal Sage Farms*
Timothy and Niqui Chatfield, *Sunshine Seasons Farm*
Heidi Detty
Joanne Dietz and Jeffrey Warner, *Mad River Garlic Growers*
Roland Headings
Jeffery Heinsohn, *Walnut Grove Farms*
Mark Helmuth, *Hilltop Evergreen Farm*
Rudy Helmuth
Ben Johnson, *The Leiter Farm*
Michael and Suzy Johnson
David and Chiqui Levy, *Tombstone View Farm*
Chris Osterhues, *Reilly Farm*
Becky Pike, *City Chick's, LLC*
Mike Popowicz, *Sweet Designs Chocolatier, Inc.*
Scott Purvis, *Grays Creek Farm*
Joe Ramunni and Sarah Johnson
Ben and Katie Stoltzfus
Abbe Turner, *Lucky Penny Farm*
Levi Weaver, *Weaver Farms*
Kelly and Tim Wilson

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Mary and John Buchenic
Paul Goland
Jack and Ann Plumley
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Alice Chalmers
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Shannon Kelley
Marilyn Kircher
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Create or Update Your *Good Earth Guide* Listing Today!

The *Good Earth Guide* is an online directory of OEFFA member farms and businesses, making it a great place for farmers, gardeners, businesses, and local food consumers to find each other.

In 2013, the guide listed more than 400 farms and businesses that sell directly to the public, including 180 certified organic farms and businesses and more than 90 community supported agriculture (CSA) programs.

The directory identifies sources for locally grown vegetables; fruits; herbs; honey; maple syrup; dairy products; grass-fed beef, pork, and lamb; free-range chicken and eggs; fiber; flour and grains; cut flowers; plants; hay and straw; seed and feed, and other local farm products.

Each farm listing includes name and contact information, products sold, a farm description, and whether the farm is certified organic.

The searchable database includes tools that make it easy to search the listings for a specific product, farm or farmer, by county, or by sales method. Many profiles have location listings and maps for where the farm's products are sold.

Find local foods, update your listing, or create a new listing at www.oeffa.org/geg. Contact Renee Hunt at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205 or renee@oeffa.org with any questions or to request a form to create or update your listing by mail.

OEFFA Apprenticeship Program: Linking Green Thumbs with Green Hands

OEFFA encourages you to consider our Farm Apprentice Program, where host farms and apprentice farmers can connect. Whether you're a farmer or an apprentice, pre-planting season is an excellent time to consider listing your facility as a host farm or to connect with farmers planning for the 2014 season.

To create an apprentice or host farm profile, go to www.oeffa.org. Host farms simply create a listing through the *Good Earth Guide*, then create a profile in the Apprenticeship Program, both of which have links on the home page. Apprentice applicants can create a profile through the Apprenticeship Program link, and approved profiles will be posted for viewing only by registered host farms. Contact Eric Pawlowski at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 209 or eric@oeffa.org for assistance or to find out more.

OEFFA News ~ Winter 2014