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An Unclear Path Forward for the Farm Bill: Senate Passes Full Farm Bill, House Passes Partial Version

Since Congress failed to pass a 2012 Farm Bill in October, dozens of critical food and farm programs have been stranded without funding and an extension passed in January will expire in a few months. Recognizing the importance of passing a bill quickly, Congressional leadership introduced versions of the Farm Bill on the floor in both chambers, but so far efforts to pass a final bill have not succeeded.

On June 10, the Senate passed a bipartisan version of the Farm Bill by a vote of 66-27, with support from Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH). Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) was among 25 Republicans that voted against the bill.

Shortly following that passage, however, the House rejected its version of the bill by a vote of 195-234, but subsequently passed a partial version of the bill which excluded the nutrition title.

The Senate Bill

The Senate-passed 2013 Farm Bill looks similar to the one passed last year and includes reforms to commodity programs, funding for beginning and organic farmers, and investments in local and regional development.

Fortunately, many of OEFFA's legislative priorities made their way into the final Senate Farm Bill thanks to the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (LFFJA) reintroduced by Senator Brown. The Senate bill would include funding for the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, which reimburses organic farmers for up to 75 percent of their certification fees, the Farmers' Market and Local Foods Promotion Program, the Rural Micro-Entrepreneur Assistance Program, Community Food Grants, data collection, and sustainable agriculture research.

The Senate bill also included LFFJA provisions which included a directive to create a new national Whole Farm Diversified Risk Management Insurance policy for diversified farms, as well as support for publishing organic price elections.

Additionally, the Senate bill included protections to the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, which provided a three year grant to Ohio State University's Beginning Entrepreneur Agriculture Network (BEAN) project.

The bill would eliminate direct subsidy payments, set historic payment limits for commodity programs, and plug loopholes that currently allow mega-farms to collect unlimited payments, but it did not include any similar reforms to crop insurance subsidies.

Unfortunately, conservation programs would take a nearly \$6 billion cut over 10 years under the bill, disproportionately impacting the Conservation Stewardship Program. The bill also failed to remove payment limits to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative.

A Roadblock in the House

Twice now the Senate has passed a Farm Bill and twice the House has failed to pass a full Farm Bill. Ultimately, the bill failed in the House because urban Democrats objected to the steep funding cuts and stricter eligibility requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, commonly called food stamps) while Tea Party Republicans didn't think the cuts and restrictions went far enough.

Under the full Farm Bill rejected by the House, one amendment would have restored \$20.5 billion in funding to SNAP, while a second amendment would have made an additional \$11 billion in cuts. Both failed. A third amendment passed, however, which would make it more difficult for people to apply for SNAP benefits by increasing the work requirements. Additionally, the House adopted a provision which would allow states to require drug testing of all SNAP recipients and to deny SNAP benefits to some former convicts.

(continued on pg. 4)

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 41 Crosswell Rd., Columbus OH 43214 (614) 421-2022 www.oeffa.org
 Facebook: www.oeffa.org/facebook Twitter: www.twitter.com/oeffa

Carol Goland
 Executive Director
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 202, cgoland@oeffa.org

OEFFA Education Program

Renee Hunt
 Program Director
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205, renee@oeffa.org

MacKenzie Bailey
 Policy Program Coordinator
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208, mackenzie@oeffa.org

Lauren Ketcham
 Communications Coordinator
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 203, lauren@oeffa.org or
newsletter@oeffa.org

Eric Pawlowski
 Sustainable Agriculture Educator
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 209, eric@oeffa.org

Milo Petruziello
 Program Associate
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 206, milo@oeffa.org

Sean McGovern
 SARE Outreach Specialist
 (614) 306-6422, outreach@sare.org

Business Office

Carol Cameron
 Accountant
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 207, ccameron@oeffa.org

Julie Sharp
 Bookkeeper
 (614) 421-2022 Ext. 201, julie@oeffa.org

Newsletter Editor: **Lauren Ketcham**
 Graphic Design: **Philip Marr**

OEFFA Certification Program

Julia Barton
 Program Manager
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 220, julia@oeffa.org

Laura Anglim
 Crop Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 227, langlim@oeffa.org

Steve Cabral
 Crop Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 222, steve@oeffa.org

Elise George
 Crop Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 226, elise@oeffa.org

Kelly Henderson
 Crop Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 229, kelly@oeffa.org

Andy Hupp
 Operations Coordinator
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 225, andy@oeffa.org or
materialsreview@oeffa.org

Lisa Large
 Crop Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 230, lisa@oeffa.org

Jack Monsted
 Program Assistant
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 228, jack@oeffa.org

Kate Schmidt
 Compliance and Quality Assurance
 Coordinator
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 223, kate@oeffa.org

Rose Smith
 Livestock Specialist
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 224, rose@oeffa.org

Samira Zoofan
 Program Assistant
 (614) 262-2022 Ext. 221, samira@oeffa.org

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

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Next deadline: September 15, 2013



OEFFA Chapter Contacts www.oeffa.org/chapters

Athens Chapter
 Athens, Hocking, Perry, Morgan, Washington, Meigs, and Vinton counties
 Greg Howard, President (740) 698-3330, gibsonridgefarm@gmail.com

Capital Chapter
 Franklin County area
 Lisa Large, President, (614) 878-7324, lisalarge56@yahoo.com

Grain Growers Chapter
 Statewide
 Dave Shively, President, (419) 278-2701, dshively01@gmail.com

Heart of Ohio Chapter
 Knox, Licking, and Delaware counties
 Chuck Dilbone, President, (740) 587-8114, cdilbone@granvilleschools.org

Lake Effect Chapter
 Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties
 Steve Corso, President, (440) 635-0137, lake.effect.oeffa@gmail.com

Little Miami Chapter
 Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Greene, and Fayette counties
 Jeff Harris, President, (937) 486-2403, jeffreydharris.organic@yahoo.com

MOON (Miami/Oxford Organic Network) Chapter
 Butler, Preble, and Warren counties
 Harv Roehling, President, (513) 756-9272, locustrun@nuvox.net

OK River Valley Chapter
 Brown and Adams counties, OH / Mason and Robertson counties, KY
 Julie Kline, President, (937) 392-1543, jkparsnip@yahoo.com

Real FOOD (Farmers of Organic Delicacies) Chapter
 Ashland, Holmes, Lorain, Medina, Stark, Summit, and Wayne counties
 Sheryl Billman, President, (440) 926-3114, sheran8@msn.com

Southwest Ohio Chapter
 Hamilton and Clermont counties
 Sally Godschalk, President, (513) 984-0174, swoeffa@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE!
OEFFA's 35th Annual Conference
Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground
February 15-16, 2014
Granville, OH

Ohio's largest sustainable agriculture conference will feature keynote speakers, more than 100 workshops, local and organic meals, a kids' conference, childcare, a trade show, and Saturday evening entertainment. Registration will open in December.

Ideas, Food Donations, Volunteers, and Workshop Presenters Wanted

Workshop applications, workshop topic and presenter ideas, food donations, and volunteers to help plan and organize workshops, meals, the book table, raffle, and kids' conference are needed now. Don't wait to apply to be a workshop presenter if you want to be considered; only a limited number of spots are available.

For more information, or to request a workshop application, contact Milo Petruziello at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 206 or milo@oeffa.org.

Director's Letter

Carol Gpland Executive Director

I'd like to invite your help with something that's puzzling me.

In 2012, OEFFA and a group of socially motivated investors worked to create the OEFFA Investment Fund, after hearing a great deal about how farmers and businesses working in the local food economy struggle to access the capital they need to grow their operations. The fund was designed to offer \$500,000 in flexible and affordable capital to OEFFA members committed to sustainable agricultural practices.

We thought demand would be great. We braced ourselves when we announced the launch of the program in November, expecting a deluge of inquiries and applications.

And then a funny thing happened. (An old friend would always ask, "Funny strange or funny ha-ha?" This was "Funny strange.") We heard from a few people who wanted to know more, and a handful of folks submitted the first part of the application. Some of them were a good fit and were invited to take the next step. But as of yet, no one has submitted a full investment request for the committee's review and thus none of the available \$500,000 has been distributed.

One farmer suggested to me that the culture of sustainable and organic farmers simply isn't one that turns to capital—that these farmers learn to do without until they've saved up enough money to do whatever needs doing. Perhaps that's part of what's going on.

Or, maybe our analysis was wrong, and farmers do have sufficient access to capital. For example, Slow Money Ohio, Iroquois Valley Farms, and the Natural Capital Investment Fund are available to help farmers access land and provide loans for equipment and other business expenses. The OEFFA Investment Fund is unique, however, in that it's able to offer larger investments (commitments in the \$5,000 to \$50,000 range are expected, but larger or smaller investments will also be considered) and forms of investment beyond loans, such as equity investments.

If farmers' financial needs are being met, that's great news and we can all celebrate. But I'm guessing that's not the case. So the mystery remains: why so few takers?

I'd like to know what ideas you have as we consider the future of the OEFFA Investment Fund. Go to www.oeffa.org/invest to learn more. If you'd like to apply, have an idea of what might be slowing the demand, or would like to request investment paperwork by mail, please contact us at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 202 or OIFinfo@oeffa.org.



www.oeffa.org/invest

Protecting Farmers from the Negative Impacts of Fracking

It's hard to believe that in a matter of a few short years the oil and gas industry has made such a large imprint on the Ohio Statehouse, our farmland, and the public conscience. While it is clear that the fracking industry has wielded significant influence in shaping the state's energy policy, landowner, farmer, and consumer concern about impacts to our natural resources and individual property rights continue to mount.

The industry's muscle is now apparent. There are several instances in which the state has granted access to subsurface shale deposits on property where landowners have been unwilling to sign a lease to allow fracking, through a process called compelled participation. State law allows a company to apply for a pooling permit from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) after it has obtained leases for at least 65 percent of the land in a drilling unit.

In response, this spring OEFFA's policy committee and fracking working group established a set of principles on fracking to guide our state-based legislative efforts and inform our public outreach. The principles focus on three areas:

Protecting Landowner Rights: Ohio law provides an uneven level of protection to landowners compared to large oil and gas companies. The state's authority to override a landowner's personal decision to resist an oil and gas lease is a good example. Ohio must put in place better and earlier notification processes, as well as require more stringent regulations to protect landowners from compelled participation. Landowners should have the right to reject private oil and gas exploration on their property.

Defending Farmland from Environmental Contaminants: Fracking accidents resulting in environmental contamination have been documented. If contamination occurs on land that is used for certified organic crop or livestock production, that farmer's certification could be in jeopardy. For this and other reasons, the state of Ohio must take every step necessary to protect the land, water, and air from toxins that degrade the integrity of our farmland. Additionally, the chemicals used in the fracking process should be fully disclosed to protect environmental and public health.

Giving Rural and Impacted Communities a Voice: Currently, Ohio law does **not** mandate that ODNR give notice to the general public after a permit application has been submitted, provide a public comment process prior to approving an application, or offer avenues for appeal after a pooling request has been granted. Ohio must create clear and meaningful opportunities for public participation in the pooling process.

These principles, which will be used to reach out to our elected officials, members, and the general public, provide a platform for OEFFA's work on fracking. To get involved, contact MacKenzie Bailey at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208 or mackenzie@oeffa.org.



SPEAK OUT ABOUT PROPOSED FOOD SAFETY RULES

A large number of Ohio growers and food processors will be required to either fully or partially adhere to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) proposed food safety produce and preventative controls rules that were released earlier this year as part of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) passed by Congress in 2010. OEFFA is diligently working to analyze the rules and educate and engage our members in the rulemaking process.

In April, the FDA announced that they were extending the public comment period through September 16. Shortly following the announcement, they held an informal listening session in Wooster, Ohio, where agency representatives outlined the standards and invited members of the public to ask questions and provide comment. OEFFA staff and members attending the meeting addressed several areas of concern including:

- » **Manure Application**—FSMA stated that produce standards should not conflict with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) regulations for certified organic production. However, while the NOP allows farms to use raw manure if it is applied 120 days before harvest if the crop's edible portions come into contact with the soil, under the new proposed rule a 270 day period would be necessary. *The requirement is excessive and would make it significantly more difficult for growers to use manure as an organic fertilizer.*
- » **Cost**—*In order to comply with the proposed rule, Ohio's small family farmers could incur significant costs that could drive them out of business.* According to the FDA's own estimates, initial compliance could cost a "small" farm more than \$27,000 and from then on an average annual cost of nearly \$13,000. As a result, a farm making \$45,000 profit per year would see their profits drop to less than \$18,000 in the first compliance year.
- » **Withdrawal of Exemption Status**—The smallest farms (those making less than \$25,000 per year) will be exempted from the produce safety rule, while those making up to \$500,000 will need to follow a modified set of requirements. Although the FDA has the authority to remove a farm's exemption status, it is unclear what the withdrawal and restitution processes would be. OEFFA recommended that there be clear, predictable steps leading to a withdrawal of exemption status, rather than a "one strike and you're out" approach.
- » **Training and Education**—Sufficient training and education will be necessary for farmers and processors to successfully implement the new rules at their operations. Adequate funding will be needed for plain-speak training materials, workshops, and outreach.

Food safety is essential, but rules should not put diversified, sustainable, and organic farms at risk of going out of business. That's why it's important for farmers, processors, and consumers to speak out to ensure new regulations address the needs of sustainable producers. Please consider submitting comments to the FDA before September 16.

For more information about FSMA, the proposed rules, and how you can submit comments, go to <http://policy.oeffa.org/foodsafety>.



OEFFA members provided comment at an FDA listening session in April about the impacts of FSMA on small farmers. Pictured from left: Donita Anderson of the North Union Farmers' Market, Alex Dragovich of Mud Run Farm, Kip Gardner of Creekview Ridge Farm, and Sarah Vecci of The Veccitable Farm.

Farm Bill *(continued from pg. 1)*

The partial version of the Farm Bill strips the bill of the entire nutrition title, including SNAP benefits.

A Path Forward

At this point, it is unclear when this Farm Bill rollercoaster will end. The rigid partisan divide puts the Farm Bill at an impasse. If Congress is able to resolve a bill in conference and successfully pass it through both chambers, it will likely include a nutrition title with spending cuts. If Congress is unsuccessful, they may consider another short-term extension, but such a proposal would need to include support for beginning farmers, organic agriculture, and local food programs, along with farm subsidy reform, unlike the current extension we are now operating under.

While events unravel, please contact your representatives in Congress and tell them to pass a Farm Bill this year that creates significant reforms to the largest farm subsidy programs and invests in local and sustainable food systems and the next generation of farmers.

Note: At the time this article went to print, events in the House were still unfolding. To find the most up-to-date information on the Farm Bill visit <http://policy.oeffa.org/farmbill2013> or contact Mackenzie Bailey at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208.

In Remembrance

Mary Elizabeth "Bonnie" Mitsui passed away in May at the age of 69. Bonnie was the visionary behind Turner Farm, which sells vegetables, flowers, herbs, and meat through a community supported agriculture (CSA) program and at the Findlay Farmers' Market. Farming with horses was a passion she shared and promoted. She helped to influence new farmers and consumers through internships, farm summer camps, and adult education classes. Her legacy continues at Turner Farm and through the many organizations that have benefited from her generosity. Memorial contributions may go to Turner Farm Summer Camp Scholarships, 7400 Given Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45243 with checks payable to Turner Farm Foundation, Inc.

BROCHURE AND DISPLAY MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Are you going to be at a farmers' market, festival, booth, farm stand, or other event this summer? Help get the word out about OEFFA! Contact Lauren Ketcham at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 203 or lauren@oeffa.org to request free OEFFA materials, including brochures, farm tour programs, newsletters, and factsheets on organic production, genetically engineered food, fracking, eating locally, and more.



FARMERS' MARKET DO'S AND DON'TS

By Joan Richmond

You've grown more produce than you know what to do with. You've eaten it, frozen it, canned it, and dried it. You've given it to friends, family, neighbors, strangers, and left it on unattended front porches and in unlocked cars parked outside the library. And now you're thinking maybe you could sell it at a local farmers' market. I started like this, and have been selling at markets since 2003. Here are some tips that I've learned along the way.

DO BE ORGANIZED AND MAKE THINGS EASY TO FIND. Keep all your supplies, like scissors, price signs, markers, change, tape, bungee cords, twist ties, spray bottles, and paper towels in a clear plastic bin.

DO INVEST IN A HIGH QUALITY SCALE AND CANOPY. The rechargeable Penn CM-101 scale is a market standard and runs about \$200. Plan to spend \$250-\$300 on a good, solid canopy; cheaper ones may only last a year or two.

DON'T FORGET THE TENT WEIGHTS. Filled with sand, they weigh about 40 pounds each and will hold your tent down in a windstorm, which will happen at some point.

DO USE WASHABLE DISPLAY CONTAINERS. I display my greens in busboy bins I get at Gordon Food Service. They aren't fancy, but they are easy to clean and disinfect. Don't use baskets. Yes, they look cute, but you cannot disinfect them. Use vinyl or oilcloth tablecloths, which are also easy to keep clean.

DO KEEP YOUR PRODUCE COOL AND LOOKING FRESH. I bring much produce to the market in round tubs. I pick, wash, and pack stuff in the tubs and then put them in the walk-in cooler covered with damp clean towels (there are plans online for building your own walk-in cooler using a CoolBot and an air conditioner). For radishes and bunched greens, I also put an inch or two of water in the bins. At market, I keep the tubs under the tables with the damp towels over them, where the produce stays cool until I put it in the sales bins. Use a spray water bottle to mist your produce. Put your most heat sensitive products, like greens, on the shadiest spot on your table.

DON'T USE MONEY BOXES. They're too easy to lose or be stolen. I use a three pocket apron, putting my ones, fives, and tens in different pockets. Twenties go in my front pants pocket, since I rarely need them. Make sure you have plenty of small bills and quarters available to make change.

DON'T UNDERCUT OTHER VENDORS. I never have the cheapest produce, although my prices are usually in line with other vendors. I work too hard to give stuff away, and customers will pay a fair price for your high quality food. The vendor with the cheapest produce may sell out first, but you'll take home more money. The folks that I see making it, coming to the market year after year, do not underprice their goods.

DO MARK YOUR PRICES CLEARLY. I use laminated cards that I write on with a Sharpie. I used to use notecards, but they get wet. I tape the price on the bin or on the table in front of it. Many people use whiteboards or chalkboards, which also work well. Customers deserve the right to comparison shop if they want, and other vendors are going to find out what you're charging anyhow.

DO CONSIDER TAKING EBT CREDITS. SENIOR CITIZEN COUPONS. AND OTHER LOW INCOME BENEFIT PROGRAM VOUCHERS. You will have to fill out some paperwork, but you'll be helping more customers access fresh, healthy food.

DO INVEST IN SQUARE OR OTHER DEVICES TO TAKE CREDIT AND DEBIT CARDS. It takes just minutes to install on your smart phone and the on-site transactions aren't difficult. With Square, there are no annual fees, just a \$0.275 charge per transaction. The additional sales you make should make up for what you lose in the fee. Plus, once people know you take credit cards, they tend to buy more per visit.

DO SELL YOURSELF AND YOUR GOODS! Explain the varieties and what makes them special. Answer questions about yourself and how you grow. Give recipes and cooking tips. Consider social media. I have a farm Facebook page where I update customers about my daily doings and list each week's items for sale. I put a QR code on my business cards and on my banner (a good banner is another worthwhile investment), which takes customers right to my Facebook page.

DON'T GET IN A HURRY IF IT'S BUSY. As long as you are moving people through the line in a timely way, people don't mind waiting a bit. Enjoy the market. Enjoy your customers. After all your hard work, the lively, friendly atmosphere is a reward in itself.

Joan Richmond grows food sustainably at Meadow Rise Farm in Richland County. She has been attending farmers' markets for 10 years, and now sells at the Clintonville and Worthington markets with the help of her husband Reed, intern Alex McNeill Brown, and sales helper Karen Gotter. She may be reached on Facebook or at joan_richmond@me.com.

Find Local Food This Season Using OEFFA's Good Earth Guide

The *Good Earth Guide* is an online directory of OEFFA member farms and businesses, making it a great place for consumers to find sources for local, organic food and farm products.

The guide includes more than 400 farms and businesses and identifies sources for locally grown vegetables; fruit; 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.

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. Each listing includes name and contact information, products sold, a farm description, and whether the farm is certified organic. Many profiles also have location listings and maps for where the farm's products are sold.

Find local foods at www.oeffa.org/geg

OEFFA farmers and business members, you can create or update an existing listing at www.oeffa.org/geg. Call (614) 421-2022 or email oeffa@oeffa.org with any questions or to request a form by mail.

Good Earth Guide

Conservation Easements: Protecting Your Farm for the Future

By Mardy Townsend



In my family, land stewardship means caring for the land to preserve its beauty, the productivity of its soils, and its unique wildlife habitats. Our definition of stewardship is why we decided to certify our farm as organic almost 20 years ago. The current definition in Ohio of the "highest and best use" of land is development: building houses, malls, and other things involving lots of concrete. We think that the highest use of our land is food production and wildlife habitat protection.

Over the years, suburban pressures have increased, and because our farm is located at a major intersection of state routes, it became obvious that some future owner could be a developer who wouldn't care about our rolling grasslands with our treasured meadow-larks, bobolinks, and other wildlife.

We decided that a conservation easement was the best way to protect our land into the future. A conservation easement is a contract entered into between a landowner and a land trust that permanently removes some of the rights to develop some or all of a property. The land trust takes on the obligation to enforce the terms of the easement in perpetuity, including monitoring the property. A conservation easement is flexible in that an owner can choose what development to restrict, provided that the conservation values of the property are protected. A conservation easement usually decreases the value of the land because it can no longer be sold for development.

Every day farm families are torn apart by inheritance issues. A common scenario is that one of the inheriting children wants to farm and inherits the farm or buys out the siblings, with the understanding that the farm will remain "the family farm." Later, for a variety of reasons, the inheriting child decides to stop farming and sells to a developer. The inheriting child makes a lot of money, and the non-inheriting children feel betrayed. I did not want this to happen in my family, even though my brothers have moved far away and were never interested in farming or coming back here to live. After five years of talking about it, we placed a very restrictive easement on our farm with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy (WRLC) that encourages farming and specifically forbids gas and oil extraction. People have told us that we were crazy to give up so much potential income. Our decision came down to family values, and what we valued was the opportunity for another family to be able to afford to buy this farm in the future and to farm it, learn from it, and love it the way we have.

Donating a conservation easement can qualify as a charitable contribution if done properly. The value of the donation is determined by appraisal, and the difference between fair market value and the lesser value of the property that is no longer developable.

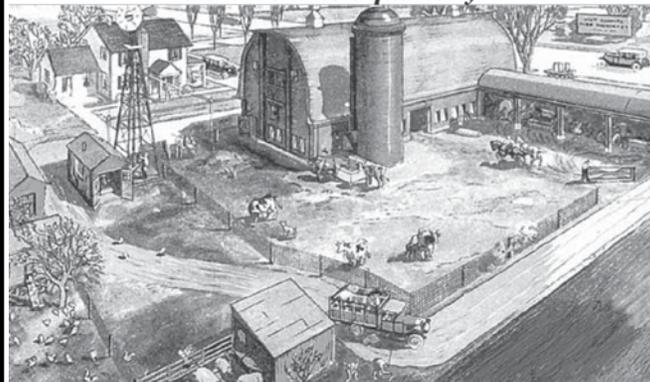
Now is a great time to consider a conservation easement for your farm since many important tax incentives are set to expire on December 31. Through the end of this year, grantors of conservation easements may take a charitable deduction of up to 50 percent of their

adjusted gross income (AGI) in the year of the gift (the previous limit was 30 percent). Farmers earning more than 50 percent of their gross income from farming may deduct up to 100 percent of their AGI. And, if the appraised value of the conservation easement is greater than the AGI limit, the grantor may carry over the unused balance for up to 15 years (previously the law allowed only a five year carryover).

To find a land trust near you, visit www.ohiolandtrusts.org or call the Coalition of Ohio Land Trusts at (812) 822-0113. For more information about conservation easements, consider attending WRLC's farm tours of Messenger Century Farm and Snake Hill Farm in Geauga County on July 28. For more information about the tours, see pg. 20 or go to www.oeffa.org/pdfs/farmtour2013.pdf.

Mardy Townsend raises grass-fed beef cattle in Ashtabula County and was the 2013 recipient of the OEFFA Stewardship Award. She may be reached at mltownsend56@yahoo.com.

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Understanding Pests in the Managed Landscape

By Debra Knapke

According to Eric Grissell, author of *Insects and Gardens* and *Bees, Wasps, and Ants*, only 5 percent of the world's insect species are considered to be pests. But when a pest is in your garden, it may not feel that way! So it's important to know how to deal with the larvae of the pretty cabbage butterfly that makes Swiss cheese out of your kale or cabbage.

First, consider your options. Integrated Pest Management (IPM, also known as Integrated Pest Control, or IPC) offers a hierarchy of pest control strategies that range from low to potentially high environmental impact. The first step is to decide how much pest damage you will accept. In my garden, I accept a higher level of damage, but if you are growing food or ornamental plants for market, you probably can't afford a lot of pest damage.

The next step is to prevent problems by removing diseased plants and cleaning up plant debris where eggs and pupae may overwinter, choosing pest- and disease-resistant plants, and rotating crops to reduce disease or pest populations. These cultural controls are all strategies that our forefathers knew and used. How did they know something was wrong? By observation. Monitoring the landscape to catch problems before they become a crisis is essential. It is much easier to deal with a small outbreak of aphids that have just started feeding on your plants, than a large outbreak that has made your nasturtium leaves and flowers unusable.

If you need to proceed to the next levels of control, understanding the life cycle and "habits" of a pest is critical. Correctly timing the use of biological and chemical controls to the vulnerable stages of a pest's life cycle will make the difference between success or failure. We can predict the date of egg hatch of a pest species (e.g. the emergence of young Japanese beetles) by using phenological data—recorded plant and animal life cycle events that are influenced by seasonal weather patterns. Ohio State University Extension publishes a weekly update every Thursday about what is happening in Ohio that you can view online or receive by email: www.bygl.osu.edu. Take a look at the section labeled Weather Watch for Growing Degree Days (GDD), which is the measurement of the growth and development of plants and insects during the growing season. For a daily GDD update, check out the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center's website: www.oardc.osu.edu/gdd. Enter your zip code and you will see flower bloom times and insect emergence data based on the GDD for your area.

If a pest becomes, well, a pest, it's time to use mechanical controls. For small outbreaks, you might handpick the pest or use a barrier such as netting or a floating row cover to

exclude a pest. But when a population expands beyond the nuisance level you may need to use biological controls. Beneficial insects, bacteria, fungi, and nematodes can be very effective in suppressing pest populations. Japanese beetle populations have been at a much lower level in my garden since my lawn care service applied milky spore (*Paenibacillus popilliae*, formerly *Bacillus popilliae*) and parasitic nematodes to my lawn. The grubs that do survive become dinner for the local skunks. Unfortunately, the lawn looks like it was shredded, but a bit of seed and water fixes the area.

Interestingly enough, if you wait, and if no pesticides have been sprayed in the area, often a natural biological control will arrive to control the pest. Tomato and tobacco hornworms are quickly parasitized in my vegetable garden. Unfortunately, if this is a new pest in the landscape it can take up to 10 days before the beneficials arrive. You can assist by attracting beneficial insects with the right plants. Species in the aster family (Asteraceae) and the parsley/celery family (Apiaceae) are excellent attractors of parasitoid wasps, lacewings, syrphid flies, and lady (bird) beetles.

The final step is using chemical controls: the weapons of last resort. Chemical controls are often non-specific—killing the good bugs along with the bad. Again, correct timing of a chemical application is critical. There is an arsenal of organic and conventional options available, but the two most important pieces of advice I can offer are: read the label and more is not better.

Debra Knapke, horticulturist, consultant, teacher, and gardener, observes nature as she gardens and tries to be understanding when eastern black swallowtail larvae eat most of her dill. For more information, go to www.debrathegardensage.com.

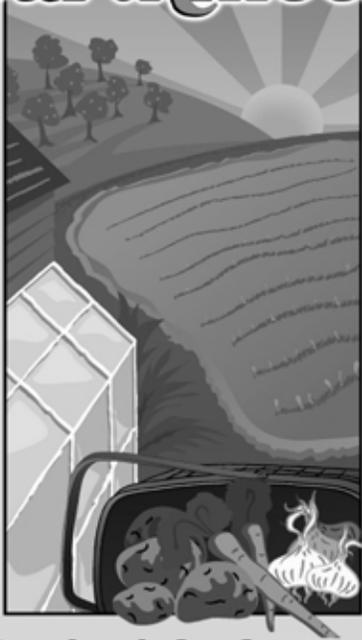
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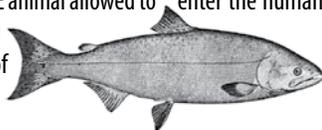
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NEWS BRIEFS

Major Grocers to Boycott GE Salmon

Several major grocery retailers, including Target, Meijer, Giant Eagle, Trader Joes, Aldi, and Whole Foods, representing more than 4,600 stores across the U.S., have committed not to sell genetically engineered (GE) seafood. If approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the salmon would be the first ever GE animal allowed to enter the human food supply. Nearly 2 million people submitted comments to the FDA opposing the approval of GE salmon.



Internet Increases Small Farm Income

According to a recent study published by researchers at Louisiana State University using U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) data, small farms with access to the internet earned more than \$2,200 in additional gross farm income compared to small farms without internet access. Sixty two percent of U.S. farm households had internet service, which allows farmers to access educational resources, research, networking tools, and online marketing opportunities.

U.S. Supreme Court Sides with Monsanto, Rules Against Farmer

In May, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that farmers cannot replant patented GE seed. This means that farmers cannot save seed and must pay seed companies like Monsanto for each planting to avoid violating licensing agreements. The case, *Bowman v. Monsanto*, originated when Indiana farmer Vernon Bowman purchased soybeans from a third-party seed supplier instead of Monsanto. The Supreme Court upheld a federal appeals court decision which ordered Bowman to pay nearly \$85,000 to Monsanto in damages. According to the Center for Food Safety, Monsanto has filed 142 seed patent infringement lawsuits involving 410 farmers and 56 small farm businesses in 27 states since December 2012 and has received more than \$23 billion in judgments.



New Multi-Farm CSA Formed

Farm Roots Connection, a new multi-farm cooperative community supported agriculture (CSA) program delivering organic and sustainably grown produce, dairy, eggs, and meats to urban northeast Ohio subscribers, is starting its first season. The CSA, developed in collaboration with the Wooster Local Foods Cooperative, is funded in part by a grant from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program awarded to a group of women farmers, including OEFFA organic grower Monica Bongue of Muddy Fork Farm.



Connecticut and Maine First to Pass GE Labeling Laws

This spring, Maine and Connecticut became the first states in the country to pass legislation requiring that GE foods be labeled. However, Connecticut's law will not take effect until at least four other states pass similar GE labeling laws, including at least one bordering state; Maine's law requires five states to adopt labeling requirements.

HSUS Forms Ohio Agriculture Advisory Council

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has formed an Ohio council made up of farmers and producers to help consumers find livestock producers who manage their animals using higher animal welfare practices, help other farmers transition to more humane animal management practices, showcase good examples of humane livestock production, and advise HSUS on issues affecting family farmers. Founding members include OEFFA members Mardy Townsend of Marshy Meadows Farm, Bruce Rickard of Fox Hollow Farm, Joe Logan of the Ohio Environmental Council; and Warren Taylor of Snowville Creamery.

Study Reveals Disturbing Effects of GE Feed on Pigs

A new, peer-reviewed study published this June in the *Journal of Organic Systems* revealed that pigs fed a GE diet suffered significantly higher rates of severe stomach inflammation and had heavier uteri (a condition that could signal endometrial cancer, endometriosis, or gynecological polyps) compared to pigs fed a non-GE diet. Independent researchers in Australia and the U.S. studied 168 newly weaned pigs reared under identical conditions for five months until their slaughter, when they were autopsied by veterinarians. The findings could have significance for understanding the potential impacts of GE food on human health.

APPEALS COURT BINDS MONSANTO TO PROMISE NOT TO SUE ORGANIC FARMERS

In June, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit upheld a decision to dismiss a lawsuit brought against Monsanto by OEFFA and 82 other plaintiffs after the biotech giant made binding assurances that it "will not take legal action against growers whose crops might inadvertently contain traces of Monsanto biotech genes."

The case, *Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association et al. v. Monsanto*, was originally filed in March 2011 by organic farmers, seed growers, and agricultural organizations seeking protection for farmers whose fields can become contaminated by Monsanto's genetically engineered (GE) seed and then be sued by the company for patent infringement.

The plaintiffs' attorney, Dan Ravicher of the Public Patent Foundation (PUBPAT), views the decision as a partial victory. "The decision means that the farmers did have the right to bring the suit to protect themselves, but now that Monsanto has bound itself to not suing the plaintiffs, the Court of Appeals believes the suit should not move forward," said Ravicher. "The decision also allows farmers who are con-

taminated to sue Monsanto and Monsanto's customers for the harm caused by that contamination without fear of a retaliation patent infringement claim."

The plaintiffs' complaint detailed Monsanto's history of aggressive patent enforcement and the societal harms caused by Monsanto's GE seed, including the proliferation of herbicide-resistant "superweeds" and the increased use of pesticides which are applied to "Roundup Ready" crops. The plaintiffs also argued the legality of Monsanto's patents.

"We're encouraged by this binding commitment that will protect farmers from lawsuits for trace contamination," said Carol Goland, OEFFA's Executive Director. "However, we are disappointed that the courts have not taken action to protect our food supply from the continued proliferation of Monsanto's GE technology."

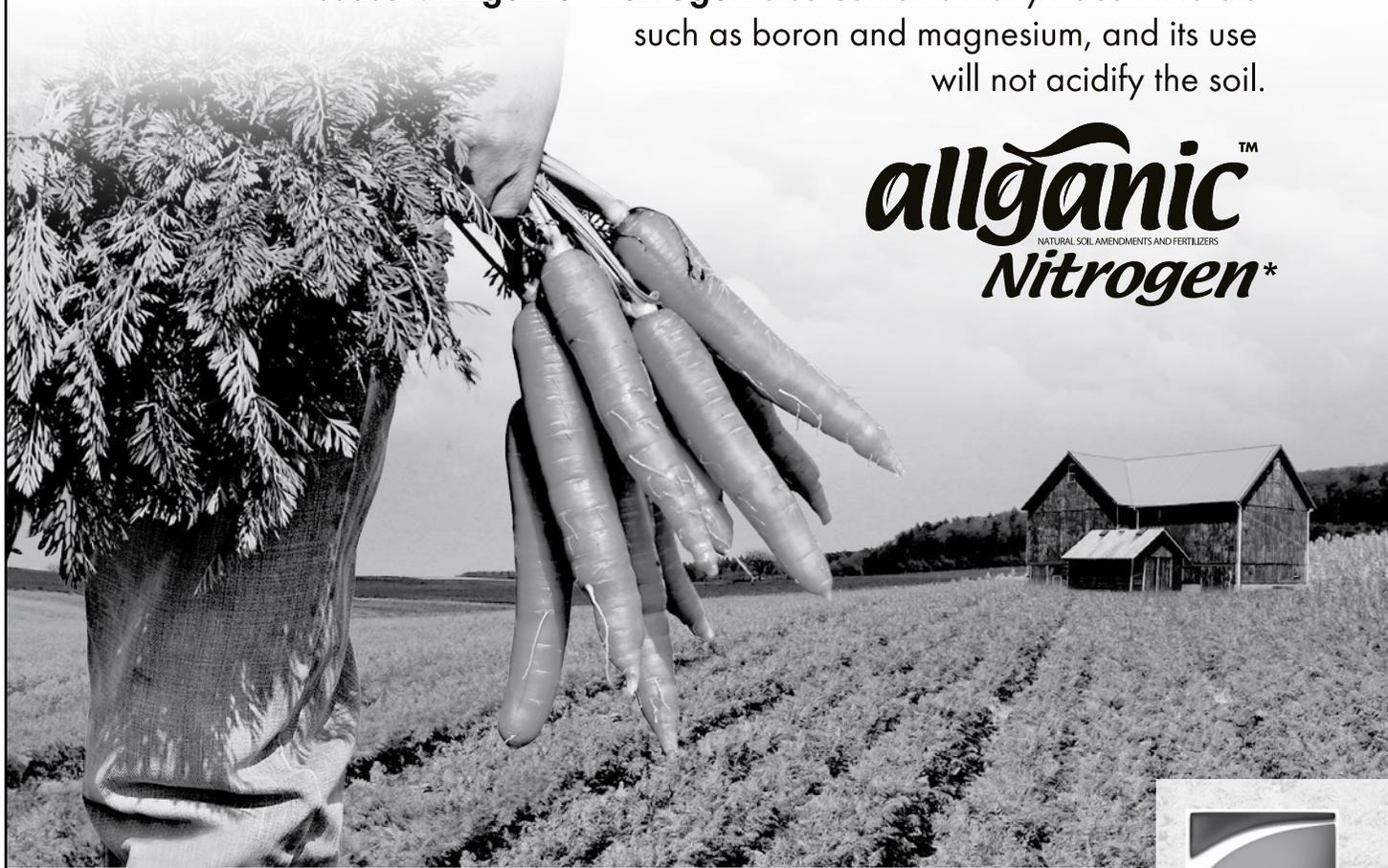
Despite the Court of Appeals' decision, plaintiffs still have the option to ask the Supreme Court to review the decision and reinstate the case. Plaintiffs have 90 days to request a Supreme Court review.



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By Wes Duren

Your lawn and garden soil has a fascinating story to tell. Whispering of its ancient origins, this dynamic complex of sand, silt, clay, and organic matter is perpetually cycling life into death and death into life. Soil is the manifestation of an infinite web of life, and for healthy soil to exist, every component of the web is vital. In healthy soil, harmony exists which can promote bigger, brighter, longer lasting blooms; vibrant plant health, and more nourishing harvests.

One way we can promote healthy soil is through composting. Compost increases soil fertility, reduces drought stress, improves disease and insect pest resistance, increases nutrient levels in fruits and vegetables, prevents soil erosion, loosens clay-bound soils, and breaks down toxic chemicals such as pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

Compost can be made in your yard by simply piling organic matter such as food scraps, lawn and garden clippings, leaves, wood chips, manure, paper, and more. Your various compostable ingredients instantaneously begin transformation once piled, eventually converting into a dark, rich soil-like consistency, brimming with dozens of species of beneficial organisms. Rotate your compost piles with a pitchfork every month to increase oxygen levels and expedite decomposition. Apply 1/2 inch layer of compost on your lawn and up to a 4 inch layer on garden beds every year.

Aside from compost, there are numerous ways to improve soil and plant health. By simply mulching your gardens annually, you are feeding and protecting your soil life. There are countless varieties of mulch on the market; the best for ornamental plants are wood-based mulches and the best for vegetables are leaf and straw mulches. Mulching not

only reduces weeds and conserves soil moisture, but provides a constant supply of food for organisms in your soil.

Organic fertilizers also improve soil health by feeding soil microbes and enlivening your soil's natural nutrient cycling process. Worm castings and larvae frass (insect poop) are other excellent soil amendments which can be used on both house plants and garden plants alike.

Another way to get the most from your soil is by making liquid soil stimulants. The first method is through a process called actively aerated compost tea, which uses a small quantity of compost, which is added to a five gallon container of water, with molasses added, and a submersible oxygenating pump for 48 hours. The bubbling oxygen and molasses proliferates the soil organisms from the compost, and the resulting tea is teeming with beneficial life. The second liquid soil stimulant you can make at home is through an age old process of fermentation. You will need enough fresh or dried comfrey or alfalfa foliage to pack a container one quarter full. Fill the rest of the container with water to within 6 inches of the brim. Cover the container with a lid, and allow the submersed foliage to ferment in the vessel for up to a week. The resulting ferment is packed with vitamins and minerals your plants will love.

Lastly, you can plant soil fertility by taking advantage of nitrogen fixing plants such as red and white clover, alfalfa, soybeans, cowpeas, and sweet vetch. Rhizobia bacteria live in nodules on the roots of nitrogen fixing cover crop plants and capture nitrogen from the atmosphere. When the cover crop is cut back or tilled under, the stored nitrogen is released back into the soil, and readily available for plant root uptake.

As a living ecosystem, soil and humankind are intimately linked. If we feed the soil, we will reap tremendous rewards—larger and more nutritious harvests, fewer pests and diseases, increased drought tolerance, and more resilient plants. The future of our soil is in our hands. Feed 'em and reap!

Wes Duren is the Landscape and Construction Vice President of Marvin's Organic Gardens in Lebanon, Ohio. He can be reached at wes@marvinsorganicgardens.com.

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NOSB Prohibits Antibiotics in Organic Apple and Pear Production

At its April meeting, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) rejected a petition to extend the expiration date for the use of tetracycline and streptomycin, used to treat fire blight in apples and pears. After October 21, 2014, the antibiotics will be prohibited in organic production. Although some fruit growers argued that there are no suitable alternatives available, antibiotic opponents cited concerns about antibiotic resistance and that their use is inconsistent with the exclusion of antibiotics in organic agriculture. The NOSB's fall meeting will take place October 22-24 in Louisville, Kentucky.

NOP Updates List of Certified Organic Operations

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program (NOP) has published an updated 2012 list of certified organic operations, available online at <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/nop/>. This searchable list now includes nearly 18,000 organic operations in the U.S., including 587 in Ohio.

Fire Damages Organic Valley Headquarters

Fire and smoke damaged about two-thirds of the Organic Valley headquarters in La Farge, Wisconsin in May when flames quickly spread through the building of the nation's largest organic cooperative. None of the 400 people who work in the building were injured. Organic Valley's Cashton facility is fully operational, and the shipping and receiving of orders remained on schedule.

NOP Deputy Administrator Visits OEFFA

Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the NOP, visited OEFFA on July 1. McEvoy spent the day meeting with OEFFA Certification staff regarding the Sound and Sensible certification initiative, livestock inputs, and compliance issues.

Organic Practices Improve Soil Health

A new study published in *Crop Management* shows significant improvements in soil quality on research plots managed with organic practices. The organic plots had up to 40 percent more biologically-active soil organic matter than conventionally managed plots. Organic soils also had lower acidity and higher amounts of carbon, nitrogen, potassium, phosphorous, and calcium. The study was established in 1998 as part of the Long-Term Agroecological Research Experiment at Iowa State University.

Organic Diet Helps Fruit Flies Live Longer

Fruit flies that are fed organic food have better fertility, are more resistant to stress, and live longer, healthier lives compared to those that are fed conventionally grown food, according to a recent study in the journal *PLOS ONE*. Fruit flies are often used by researchers to study human diseases.

Gene-Blocking Organic Corn Variety Prevents Cross-Pollination

New varieties of organic corn that contain a naturally occurring gene blocking trait have been found to significantly reduce cross-pollination from genetically engineered corn. The corn varieties known as PuraMaize were developed by Blue River Hybrids, an Iowa-based organic seed company. Blue River Hybrids introduced three PuraMaize hybrids in 2012: 47PM37cnv (102 day), 58PM36 organic (107 day), and 71PM50cnv (114 day).



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MAKING SENSE OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM REGULATIONS

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

Sound and Sensible Certification

In response to certifier and inspector input, the National Organic Program (NOP) initiated a new effort in January 2013 to reduce paperwork and other burdensome aspects of organic certification while maintaining high standards, ensuring compliance, and protecting organic integrity.

This "Sound and Sensible" initiative involves identifying and removing barriers to certification, streamlining the certification process, focusing enforcement on the most egregious violations, and correcting small issues before they become larger ones. The overall goal is to make organic certification more accessible, attainable, and affordable for farmers and processors.

The five principles of the Sound and Sensible initiative are:

- 1. Efficient processes:** Eliminate bureaucratic processes that do not contribute to organic integrity.
- 2. Streamlined recordkeeping:** Ensure that required records support organic integrity and are not a barrier for farms and businesses to maintain organic compliance.
- 3. Practical plans:** Support simple Organic System Plans that clearly capture organic practices.
- 4. Fair, focused enforcement:** Focus enforcement on willful, egregious violators; handle minor violations in a way that leads to compliance, and publicize how enforcement protects the organic market.
- 5. Integrity first:** Focus on factors that impact organic integrity the most, building consumer confidence that organic products meet defined standards from farm to market.

The NOP has a number of projects underway to introduce Sound and Sensible principles across organic accreditation and certification processes. Here are some examples:

New technical assistance instruction: This instruction, released this spring, outlines what certifiers and inspectors can and can't do to assist organic operations.

Updated certification instructions: The NOP is updating its instructions related to the "5 Steps to Certification," recordkeeping, certificates, and other topics to reflect Sound and Sensible principles based on certifier feedback and accreditation audit results.

Auditor training: In April, the NOP held a series of "recalibration" training sessions with NOP accreditation auditors (the NOP staff that inspect certifying agencies) about how to audit using Sound and Sensible principles.

Removing barriers project: The NOP is currently working on a project focused on identifying and removing the key barriers to organic certification encountered by small businesses. This project has included a number of interviews with certifiers, feedback from the Accredited Certifiers Association, and discussions with many others in the organic community.

What does this mean for OEFFA Certification? We do our best to keep up with all NOP changes using official edits to the National List of Approved and Prohibited Substances, guidance documents from the NOP, and National Organic Standards Board recommendations. Paradigm shifts, such as Sound and Sensible, and previously, "The Age of Enforcement," also occur from time to time. We will work to keep our clients informed about any changes to the certification process. In the meantime, we welcome your ideas, questions, and input as we strive for Sound and Sensible certification. Please contact us at (614) 262-2022 or organic@oeffa.org.



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GE Wheat Contamination: What Could It Mean for Organic Farmers?



On May 29, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced that a strain of genetically engineered (GE) wheat was found in a field in Oregon. It was discovered after a farmer reported to an Oregon State University Extension office that he sprayed the weed killer, Roundup, on a few wheat plants which did not die. Samples were collected and sent to APHIS, where it was confirmed that the plant was a strain of Monsanto's GE wheat, known as MON 71800. Since Monsanto never released its GE wheat for commercial use, the contamination is suspected to be a result of field tests last conducted in Oregon in 2001.

The discovery adds to concerns about GE contamination in the food supply. Once these unnatural GE organisms are released into our environment, they have proven difficult to control, leaving valuable farmland vulnerable to contamination that damages the integrity of our food system, consumer confidence, and farmers' ability to compete in export markets which prohibit GE food. For example, despite USDA assurances that biotech wheat never entered the commercial food supply, immediately after the discovery, Japan—one of the largest export markets for U.S. grown wheat—suspended some imports.

According to the Center for Food Safety, between 1987 and 2007, APHIS authorized roughly 50,000 field tests of experimental GE crops on over half a million acres. USDA records reveal that Monsanto has conducted 279 field tests of herbicide-resistant wheat alone on over 4,000 acres in 17 states since 1994.

The USDA National Organic Program prohibits the use of GE materials in certified organic food and farm products, and requires growers and processors to show that they haven't used GE materials. If there is an identified risk of contamination, an organic operator is required to take steps to prevent physical exposure to a GE crop and must document those steps in their annual Organic System Plan. If certified organic cropland does become contaminated, a farmer's certification could be in jeopardy.

Although organic farmers take significant steps to prevent GE contamination of their non-GE crops, the recent report of contamination of Monsanto's GE wheat is incredibly concerning. Starting this year, organic certifiers must start sample testing for GE contamination at organic farms, so we may soon have a better sense of how widespread the problem is.

Ultimately, it is unfair to place the burden of contamination prevention on non-GE farmers alone, instead of on the farmers using GE seed and the companies responsible for developing them. This most recent contamination incident underscores the need for more oversight during and after these field trials.

For more information on OEFFA's GE work, visit <http://policy.oeffa.org/gelabeling>.



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Research in Focus: Can Cover Crops Improve Tomato Health?

By Brian McSpadden Gardener, Ph.D.

Numerous studies have found that cover crops can increase yields and protect crop plants from soil-borne disease. However, the complex interaction of various factors, such as cover crop species or cultivar, soil characteristics, pathogen pressure, and weather, determines the extent to which cover crops can beneficially impact vegetable crop health. Given these variables, and that not all studies have observed a benefit from cover crops or green manures, sufficient data has been lacking to help farmers predict the effects of specific cover crops on subsequent cash crop health.

Collaborating with labs at Ohio State University, Cornell University, and the University of Maryland, we have just completed the most extensive and rigorous study yet of the short-term benefits of single and mixed-species cover crop use in organic agriculture. From 2010 to 2012, we studied the effects of cover crops on tomato health across 16 sites using Celebrity, a disease-tolerant tomato variety.

Overall, just 25 percent of the 16 sites tested showed significant improvements from cover crop treatment (CCT) in total yield or shoot biomass. Similarly, soil variables measured within one week of tomato transplanting (two to six weeks following cover crop incorporation) were usually similar regardless of CCT; significant differences were found at only 22 percent of the tested sites. Cover crop effects on tomato disease levels were significant in relatively few instances. No cover crop impact was observed on Gray Mold or Late Blight, but Early Blight and Septoria Blight were affected at about 35 percent of the sites. Our study clearly demonstrates that mixed-species and single-species cover crops are not able to consistently affect tomato crop productivity or suppress disease after a single season of incorporation.

However, significant “field specific” patterns were observed in every state. For example, in New York, tomato yields following all mixed cover crops were greater than the single rye cover crop in a high productivity field, but this pattern was reversed in an adjacent lower productivity field. Thus, while we can’t make a general regional recommendation for a specific cover crop mixture that enhances tomato productivity or reduces disease, growers can expect that responses to cover crops will be similar from year to year in certain fields on their farm.

Depending on the nutrient and organic matter content, weed pressure, erosion propensity, or amount of compaction in a field, different cover crops or mixtures can serve the specific needs of a grower. It will be necessary for growers to closely evaluate the effects of CCT on their land to ensure a positive return on investment.

Brian McSpadden Gardener is a Professor of Plant Pathology at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center where he also directs the Organic Food and Farming Education and Research Program. He may be reached at mcspadden-garden.1@osu.edu.

Farm Business Websites: When Do You Need to Call in a Professional?

By NA Olson

Customers expect to get their questions answered online quickly and easily. If you don't have a website, they may head for a farm that does. Whether it is the type of heirloom tomatoes you grow or a Swiss chard recipe, customers want information about your farm at their fingertips. But, to have an effective website you need to know what people want and how to deliver it.

Websites need to deliver information in a clear, concise format allowing ample white space for the eye to rest, navigational ease, and fast loading. The primary focus of your website is to answer a few basic questions: Who are you? What do you have? How can people find you? And, when are you open? You may also want to address what makes your business stand apart from the competition, but don't get bogged down in distracting details. First give the basics, *then* sell.

As farmers, we're resourceful, multi-talented, and often thrifty. However, considering how much can be riding on that all-important first impression, the do-it-yourself website may not always be your most cost effective choice. If you're going to design your own website using sites like Wordpress or Weebly, make sure you're not sacrificing professionalism for cost and convenience. Lack of design knowledge, mediocre or bad photography, grammar errors, and even font choice can add up to an overall lack of professional quality on your site that can cost you sales.

Several common problems to avoid on your website include:

- » Having lengthy descriptions of your farm, your family, your crops, your struggles, your belief system, or your political leanings, especially on your front page. Want to share? Put it on your blog where people who want to know you on a more intimate level can interact with you and your farm.
- » GRAMMARI! Please do not depend on spell check or grammar check. It will fail you. Ask someone else to check over your site. When you spend a long time working on the same thing, your eyes start to see what is supposed to be there, instead of what really is. Another trick is to read your work out loud. If you stumble over the words and phrasing, chances are it will not read clearly to your audience.
- » Bad photography. Blurry or unclear images are the worst, but lack of composition principles, blasted out or flat lighting, and clutter in the images can all make your website seem amateurish. The photography on your site needs to convey the best your farm has to offer. Consider hiring a professional or taking time in the off season to take a class in photography and composition.

Can you do your own website? Sure. But, if your strengths do not include design, writing, and photography, consider saving yourself the stress and hassle. Having a well-meaning friend or relative design your site can lead to hurt feelings if you don't like their work. The best way to make your website look professional may be to hire a website designer who will listen, get to know the "feel" of your farm, and then work with you to produce a site that reflects the uniqueness of your business.

NA Olson is co-owner of The Little Red Truck Farm and Wavelength Technical Consulting, in Norwalk, Ohio, where she designs websites; grows daylilies, heirloom garlic, and heirloom tomatoes, and makes handcrafted artisan jams. For more information, go to www.thelittleredtruckfarm.com or www.wavelengthtechnical.net.



Look for OEFFA and Community Shares in Your Workplace Giving Campaign

For many employees in central Ohio, workplace giving season is about to start. Look for OEFFA and Community Shares in your workplace giving campaign, and support OEFFA's work by making a paycheck donation. Community Shares will be participating in these workplace campaigns in 2013:

Public Workplaces

Capital University, City of Columbus Combined Charitable Campaign, City of Dublin, Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus Public Schools, Columbus State Community College, Combined Federal Campaign of North Central Ohio, Franklin County Combined Charitable Campaign, Heart of Ohio Combined Federal Campaign, Hilliard Public Schools, Licking County Combined Charitable Campaign, Miami Valley Combined Federal Campaign, OSU "Bucks for Charity," South Western City Schools, State of Ohio Combined Charitable Campaign, Three Rivers Combined Federal Campaign, Upper Arlington City Schools, Westerville Public Schools

Private Workplaces

Betty's Fine Food and Spirits, Central Ohio Transit Authority, Columbus Food League, Commerce National Bank, Denison University, Dirty Frank's Hot Dog Palace, Edison Welding Institute, Fulcrum Creatives, Hahn Loeser and Parks, Jury Room, Ohio Civil Service Employees Association, Surly Girl Saloon, Telhio Credit Union, Tip Top Kitchen and Cocktails

Nonprofits

ADA-Ohio, CASA, CHOICE, Center for Wholeness, Columbus Film Council, Columbus Landmarks Foundation, Columbus Metropolitan Libraries, COSI, Dreams on Horseback, Earthtouch, Greater Linden Development Corporation, Kaleidoscope Youth Center, LifeCare Alliance, Mercy for Animals, Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio, Neighborhood Services Inc., Ohio Alliance for Arts Education, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Ohio Historical Society, Ohio League for the Mentally Retarded, Strategies Against Violence Everywhere, University Area Enrichment Association, Vietnam Veterans of Ohio, VoiceCorps, WCBE, WOSU

Email oeffa@oeffa.org if you would like Community Shares and OEFFA brochures to distribute at your workplace. If your employer is not on the above list, visit www.communityshares.net to find out how you can make charitable giving a part of your workplace.

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Natural Gas Pipelines Transform Ohio's Countryside

With drilling and fracking comes the need for pipelines to move gas from wells to natural gas processing plants and ultimately to end users. Landowners across Ohio—even those outside of the shale footprint—are being asked to sign agreements allowing companies to purchase easements for pipeline construction. According to the *Columbus Dispatch*, there are 95 pipelines in various stages of completion in Carol and Harrison counties alone.

Pipelines can be a threat to public safety, the environment, and land values. Risks include explosions, such as the November 2011 natural gas transmission pipeline explosion in Morgan County that burned three houses and left a 30' wide by 15' deep crater, and pipeline spills, such as the November 2012 spill that polluted 1.5 miles of Boggs Fork in Harrison County. Construction impacts, including surface disturbance and access roads, are also issues to consider.

What's a landowner to do? We asked Michael Braunstein, a Professor Emeritus at the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and a practicing eminent domain attorney with Goldman and Braunstein, LLP, a Columbus-based law firm that represents landowners in eminent domain negotiations and litigation.

OEFFA: What is a pipeline easement?

Michael Braunstein: An easement is a limited right to use the land of another for a specific purpose. In the case of a pipeline, the company that owns the pipeline needs an easement to bury it on someone's land. The property owner still owns the land and is compensated for the easement.

OEFFA: Who is affected by gas pipeline development in Ohio?

MB: Typically gas pipelines are routed through rural areas, usually passing through numerous counties. For example, the ATEX Enterprise Pipeline runs through 13 different Ohio counties. The Bluegrass pipeline will be built across the entire state, primarily affecting southern Ohio.

OEFFA: How many new pipelines are being built?

MB: A number of proposed pipeline projects have been announced or are already well underway throughout Ohio, including the ATEX Enterprise Pipeline, the Bluegrass Pipeline, Sunoco Logistics Alleghany Access Pipeline, and the proposed NEXUS Gas Pipeline.

OEFFA: What are the risks associated with pipelines and pipeline easements?

MB: A pipeline easement can greatly restrict current and future property and land use rights. For example, it can affect your access to your property and you often cannot build over an easement, which can affect future use of the land and its value. In addition, a pipeline can impact the safety of those living on the property, along with their livestock. It isn't common but there are cases of pipelines leaking and/or exploding. These factors can certainly jeopardize a landowner's livelihood and the land's overall value to prospective purchasers or heirs.

OEFFA: What should a landowner do if they're approached about an easement?

MB: I recommend landowners allow an appraiser onto their property, as forbidding access will not stop the process. But don't be intimidated by condemning authorities. The law gives you important protections and rights. Landowners should not sign any agreements without first having them reviewed by an expert. An experienced lawyer can assist a landowner in negotiating settlements and developing easements and agreements so they better protect the property owner. And a lawyer is essential if the matter ultimately goes to litigation.

OEFFA: What are landowners' options if they don't want an easement on their property?

MB: If a landowner doesn't want to grant an easement, the pipeline company can take the landowner to court because in Ohio many companies have the power of eminent domain. But not all pipeline projects have this authority. In Ohio private pipeline companies regulated as common carriers of public utilities have the power of eminent domain in certain situations. And some pipelines that are not public utilities are given the power of eminent domain by specific statute. For example, a pipeline carrying natural gas has the power of eminent domain, but if it carries natural gas derivatives it probably does not. Because it varies, consultation with an attorney is advisable.

OEFFA: How can a landowner ensure that their family and their property are properly protected and compensated?

MB: Seeking the opinion of an expert who is knowledgeable and informed in regards to pipeline easements is the best way to ensure fair and equitable treatment. Without proper legal protection, a pipeline company will negotiate an easement that is in their best interest, not yours.

Need Advice? Ask a Farmer!

OEFFA's Farmer Information Network connects individuals with specific questions about sustainable and organic food production and marketing with experienced farmers who have the answers. To ask a question of a fellow farmer, or to volunteer to be a part of the network, call (614) 421-2022 or email oeffa@oeffa.org.

3 easy ways

to stay up-to-date on food and farming events, workshops, resources, and news



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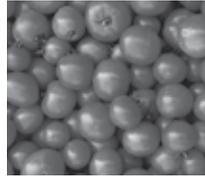


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FARM to TABLE

Savoring the Seasons

by Trish Mumme



Early Summer Salads Featuring Potatoes and Cucumbers

Some of the first fruits of the summer garden are new potatoes and cucumbers, coming in just after you are beginning to get tired of lettuce. For a salad of a different type, feature these beauties in one of the following recipes.

Asparagus and Potato Salad

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 2 lbs. small red potatoes, halved or quartered | Juice of 1 lemon |
| 1 lb. asparagus, cut in 2 inch lengths | 1 Tbs. Dijon mustard |
| 1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen peas, thawed or
2 cups fresh peas, steamed | 2 cloves garlic, crushed |
| 1 sm. red bell pepper, cut in thin strips | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1/2 cup heavy cream | 1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper |
| 1/2 cup mayonnaise | 2 Tbs. minced fresh parsley |
| 1/4 cup minced red onion | 1 tsp. dried dill |

In boiling salted water, cook potatoes 15 minutes or just until tender; drain. Place in large bowl; keep warm. In boiling water, cook asparagus, peas, and peppers 4 minutes, or until just tender; drain. Add to bowl with potatoes and cover. In medium saucepan, combine cream, mayonnaise, onion, lemon juice, mustard, garlic, salt, and freshly ground pepper. Cook, stirring until it begins to boil. Stir in parsley and dill. Pour sauce over vegetables; toss well to coat evenly.

Potato and Green Bean Salad

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 lb. small new potatoes | 1/4 cup olive oil |
| 1 lb. green beans, trimmed and cut in 1 inch lengths | 1/4 cup red wine vinegar |
| 1 cup onion, sliced into thin rings | 1/4 tsp. dried oregano |
| 1 green bell pepper, sliced into rings | 1/2 tsp. salt or to taste |
| 1/2 cup chopped celery | 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper |
| 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley | |

Cover potatoes with water and simmer about 14 minutes, until mostly cooked. Add the green beans and boil until both beans and potatoes are just cooked. Let sit until cool enough to handle. Cut the potatoes into 1-inch cubes, leaving their skins on; place in a large bowl with beans. Add onion, green pepper, celery, and parsley. In a small bowl or jar, combine the oil, vinegar, oregano, salt, and pepper. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss gently to combine. Serve at room temperature.

Cucumber Salad with Dill

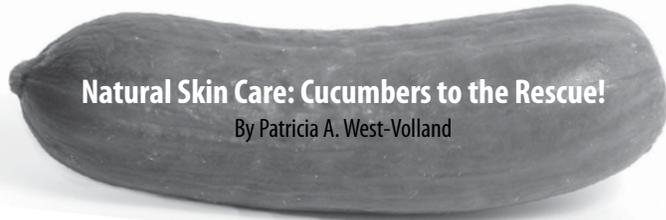
- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 lg. or 3 sm. cucumbers, thinly sliced | 2 Tbs. vinegar |
| 2-3 Tbs. finely chopped purple onion | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 1/2 cup sour cream | 2 Tbs. fresh chopped dill or 2 tsp. dried dill |

Arrange cucumber slices in a serving bowl, sprinkling layers with salt. Place a saucer or other weight on cucumbers to weigh down. Cover and let stand for at least 2 hours. Pour off juices. Add purple onions and toss. Combine sour cream, vinegar, pepper, and dill; pour over cucumbers.

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.

Natural Skin Care: Cucumbers to the Rescue!

By Patricia A. West-Volland



Cool, crisp cucumbers are not just for salads anymore. Beauty experts have long known the benefits of the cucumber to reduce puffy eyes, tighten pores, and soothe sunburns. Try these techniques for unlocking the skin care benefits of cucumbers this summer.



For sunburn relief or to relieve the itch of poison ivy and bug bites:

Thinly slice cucumbers and lay them on your skin; don't overlap the cucumbers. Use as many slices as necessary to cover the affected area. Rest quietly for 20 minutes to allow the cucumber juice to penetrate your skin. Don't shower for at least four hours because the cucumber will continue to work on the skin during that time.



To reduce dark circles around your eyes or to tighten sagging under-eye skin:

Grate a cucumber and apply to the area beneath your eyes. Leave the cucumber on for 20 minutes and then rinse with cool water. Or for a quick pick-me-up during the summer, mix the grated cucumber with a small amount of milk and refrigerate for 30 minutes before applying. Both treatments can be used on the entire face to reduce oily shine too.



A cucumber mask can also help clear and prevent blemishes:

Place the following ingredients in a blender:

- 1/2 cucumber, peeled
- 1 Tbs. instant nonfat dry milk
- 1 tsp. plain yogurt

Blend until smooth. Apply to your face. Leave the mixture on for 20 minutes and then rinse thoroughly. Spot treatments a few times throughout the day helps clean the blemish too.



To tighten pores, remove dead skin cells, and nourish skin, try a cucumber-avocado facial mask:

Place the following ingredients in a blender:

- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped peeled cucumber
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped peeled avocado
- 1 egg white
- 2 tsp. powdered milk

Blend until smooth and then refrigerate for 30 minutes. Apply to your face and neck. Leave the mask on for 30 minutes, then rinse with warm water followed by a splash of cool water. Gently pat your skin dry.

Patricia A. West-Volland owns and operates Butternut Farms Bed and Breakfast and offers classes in natural cosmetics. She can be reached at greenlivingwoman@gmail.com.



RESOURCES

Ecological Pest Management Database—The National Center for Appropriate Technology offers a searchable comprehensive database of ecological pesticides and beneficial organisms. The database indicates which treatments are approved by the Organic Materials Review Institute and can be searched by pest name or type of treatment.

 www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/biorationals

Transplant Production Decision Tool—Developed by Chris Blanchard of Flying Rutabaga Works and the Iowa Organic Association, this web-based tool offers information and case studies about developing an effective on-farm transplant process, from selecting a growing tray and designing an irrigation system to setting transplants in the field.

 www.leopold.iastate.edu/cool_tools/transplant-production-decision-tool

SARE Season Extension Resources—The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program has developed a collection of resources on season extension, including guidebooks, curricula, webinars, bulletins, and other how-to materials to help farmers, educators and researchers implement effective season extension strategies.

 www.sare.org/season-extension

Specialty Crop Webinars—OEFFA and the Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy have partnered to offer webinars for specialty crop growers as part of Specialty Crop Block Grant funding. Twelve recorded webinars are currently available, including "Employees on Your Farm," "Ten Simple Steps to Food Safety," "What's It Worth? Setting Profitable Prices for Multiple Outlets," "Estimating Cover Crop Nitrogen and Choosing Organic Fertilizers for Your Farm," "Creating a Mission Statement for Your Produce Operation," "Selling Produce to Schools," and "Building Relationships with Regional Grocers."

 www.oeffa.org/news/?page_id=569

Pesticide Forum Videos—Beyond Pesticides has released videos from its 31st National Pesticide Forum from speakers including Jeff Moyer and Andrew Kimbrell.

 <http://bit.ly/12dkqCV>

Ohio Herd Share Network—The Ohio Herd Share Network was formed in January 2012 to support Ohio's raw milk farmers and protect herd share contracts. They offer a blog, newsletter, and monthly conference calls.

 www.ohioherdsharenetwork.wordpress.com

Energy Legislation Tracker—Colorado State University has released the Advanced Energy Legislation Tracker, a new online database of energy-related legislation pending in all 50 states. It includes information on legislation impacting renewable energy, energy efficiency, transportation, natural gas, and more and allows users to read bill language, track legislative progress, and compare trends across states.

 www.aeltracker.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

OEFFA Board Meeting

Sunday, July 28 and Sunday, October 20—10 a.m.

Denison University • Granville, OH

OEFFA's Education and Certification boards of directors will meet. For more information, call (513) 561-1205 or email maryida@cinci.rr.com.



Historic Century Farm Tour*

Sunday, July 28—2-3:30 p.m.

Messenger Century Farm • 17098 Messenger Rd., Chagrin Falls, OH

Join Bill and Dee Belew for a tour of Messenger Century Farm, which is protected by a conservation easement with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and specializes in maple syrup, hay, and blueberries. For more information, call (440) 543-4513.

Diversified Organic Farm Tour*

Sunday, July 28—4-5:30 p.m.

Snake Hill Farm • 18173 Geauga Lake Rd., Chagrin Falls, OH

Lou and Savery Rorimer of Snake Hill Farm raise organic Belted Galloway beef, chickens, and a variety of seasonal vegetables. The farm, which has been in the family for 100 years, is protected by a conservation easement with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy. For more information, call (216) 295-1105.

Sustainable Cut Flower Farm Tour*

Sunday, July 28—1 p.m.

Sunny Meadows Flower Farm • 3555 Watkins Rd., Columbus, OH

Join farmers Steve and Gretel Adams for a tour of Sunny Meadows Flower Farm, a seven acre urban flower farm, to learn about growing flowers sustainably and intensively. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



Flower Arranging Classes

Wednesdays, July 31, August 28, and September 25—6:30-8:30 p.m.

Turner Farm • 7550 Given Rd., Cincinnati, OH

Learn to create round, oval, and horizontal flower arrangements. Each class begins with flower cutting in the gardens. Cost: \$15/class. For more information, call (513) 561-7400 or go to www.turnerfarm.com.

Plan Your Fall Garden

Thursday, August 1—6:30 p.m.

City Folk's Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Learn how to grow carrots, cabbage, greens, and lettuce for fall and winter harvest with instructor Rachel Tayse Baillieul. Cost: \$20. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

Sustainable Beekeeping Workshop

Saturday, August 3 - Sunday, August 4

Mockingbird Meadows Herbal Health Farm • 16671 Burns Rd., Marysville, OH

Learn about the philosophy and science behind sustainable beekeeping methods and hands-on beekeeping techniques. Cost: \$40/day. For more information, call (614) 354-5162 or go to www.mockingbirdmeadows.com.

Ohio Valley Greenmarket

Saturday, August 3 - Sunday, August 4

Ault Park and Peterloon Estate • Cincinnati, OH

Events feature regional and national speakers, vendors, a community dinner, and gardening and cooking demonstrations. For more information, go to www.ohiovalleygreenmarket.com.

Backyard Chicken Nutrition

Tuesday, August 6

City Folk's Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Join Michelle Gregg to learn about poultry feed varieties and their impact on flock health. Cost: \$20. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.

Home Chicken Butchering

Saturday, August 10—9 a.m.

City Folk's Farm Shop • 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH

Learn how to kill, clean, and dress a chicken for personal consumption with instructor Denise Beno. Cost: \$20-35. For more information, call (614) 946-5553 or go to www.cityfolksfarmshop.com.



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Agri-Tourism and Poultry Production Tour and Consultation*

Saturday, August 10—11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Manchester Hill Bed and Breakfast, Farm, and Winery • 13160 Tarlton Rd., Circleville, OH
Co-sponsored by Women Farm, learn about Jenie and Patrick McGrath's poultry business and diverse approaches to agritourism, including a family winery, bed and breakfast, and farm to table events. Optional cost: \$5 for wine tasting, \$20 for lunch. For more information or to pre-register for lunch, call (800) 713-8575 Ext. 2 or email sharon@womenfarm.com.



Hops Production Tours*

Thursday, August 15—6-8 p.m.

OSU South Centers • 1864 Shyville Rd., Piketon, OH

Thursday, September 5—6-8 p.m.

OARDC Research Field • 5082 Oil City Rd., Wooster, OH

Join OSU to learn about new hop cultivars; innovative hop production techniques; insect and disease control methods; and harvesting, processing, and marketing techniques. For more information, call (740) 289-2071.

Urban Community Garden Tour*

Saturday, August 17—10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Magyar Garden • 2353 York St., Toledo, OH

Join Master Gardener Karen Wood and OSU for a tour of Magyar Garden, an urban community garden farmed by city gardeners for more than 60 years. For more information, call (419) 578-6783.

Historic Artisan Market and Urban Farm Tour*

Saturday, August 17—10 a.m.

Ohio City Farm • W. 24th St. and Bridge Ave., Cleveland, OH

One of the country's largest contiguous urban farms, Ohio City Farm incubates workforce development programs and entrepreneurial farm businesses by providing urban farmers with low-cost land, shared facilities, and technical assistance. The Refugee Response, Great Lakes Brewing Company, the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority, Central Roots, and Cleveland Crops all farm the land near the publicly-owned historic West Side Market. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



6th Annual Garlic Festival

Sunday, August 18—1-5 p.m.

Jandy's Farm • 3624 Township Rd. 136, Bellefontaine, OH

Tour Jandy's gardens, meet local producers, buy garlic, enjoy local music, and visit with Contrary Farmer Gene Logsdon. For more information, call (937) 468-2853 or email janandy1988@yahoo.com.

OEFFA Benefit: An Evening at Blue Rock Station*

Saturday, August 24—5-7:30 p.m.

Blue Rock Station • 1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, OH

Join Annie and Jay Warmke of Blue Rock Station, a 38 acre farm and educational center that is home to Ohio's first earthship, for a tour of the farm and an evening of music, local food, and discussion. Suggested donation: \$25. Donations benefit OEFFA. For more information or to pre-register, call (614) 421-2022 Ext. 206 or email milo@oeffa.org by August 16.



Innovative Cover Crop Farm Tour*

Tuesday, August 27—6-8 p.m.

Brandt's Farm • 6100 Basil-Western Rd., Carroll, OH

David Brandt farms 1,250 acres of corn, soy, and wheat, and five acres of produce in Fairfield County. A no-till farmer since 1971, David has been using cover crops extensively since 1978. Join David for a twilight tour as he shares his innovative cover cropping techniques. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Field Day*

Thursday, September 5—5 p.m.

Agricultural Incubator Foundation • 13737 Middleton Pike, Bowling Green, OH

During this OSU field day, tour the Organic Valley corn variety plot, and learn about organic grain crop and Zeolite soil amendment research, pest scouting and organic controls, and other OFFER projects. For more information, call (419) 354-9050.

Organic Dairy Farm Tour and Panel Discussion*

Thursday, September 12—9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Rolling Ridge Meadows • 5950 Township Rd. 409, Millersburg, OH

This tour, co-sponsored by Organic Valley, will include a tour of Rolling Ridge Meadows with organic dairy farmer Jerry Miller, and a morning farmer panel featuring experienced Ohio organic dairymen David Kline, Mark Martin, and Jim Gasser. A free lunch will be provided. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



Local Food From Farm to Plate Tour and Open House*

Saturday, September 14—12-4 p.m.

Carriage House Farm • 10251 Miamiway Rd., North Bend, OH

Established in 1855, Carriage House Farm is a 300 acre Ohio Century Farm growing specialty grains, produce, herbs, and honey. Participants will tour the beehives and high tunnel with farmer Richard Stewart and sample farm fresh food prepared by local chefs. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



Diversified Organic Farm Tour and Food Preservation Workshop*

Sunday, September 15—1 p.m.

Strawberry Hill Farm • 24514 Township Rd. 167, Fresno, OH

Operated by Ron and Mary Meyer, Strawberry Hill Farm grows a wide variety of organic vegetables and fruit, specializing in strawberries, along with grass-fed beef and free range pastured poultry. At 4 p.m. Mary will lead a hands-on food preservation demonstration. Cost: The tour is free. The workshop is \$10. For more information, or to pre-register for the workshop, call (614) 421-2022 Ext 206.



Ohio Goat School

Saturday, September 21 - Sunday, September 22

925 W. Main St., Hillsboro, OH

Sponsored by Highland Quality Living, this workshop will cover aspects of raising goats for meat, fiber, and dairy. Cost: \$75-\$200. For more information, call (937) 205-7046 or go to www.servicescene.org.

Soap and Cheese Making Workshop

Monday, September 23—9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Highland County Administration Building • 119 Governor Foraker Pl., Hillsboro, OH

Learn easy ways to make our own soap along with yogurt, mozzarella, and feta using fresh goat's milk. Cost: \$100. For more information, call (937) 205-7046 or go to www.servicescene.org.

Organic Farm Production and Business Management Tour*

Thursday, September 26—2 p.m.

Birdsong Farm • 11316 Wheeler Rd., Garrettsville, OH

Birdsong Farm is a family-owned certified organic farm specializing in greens, herbs, and root crops. Farmer Matt Herbruck will talk about how he keeps his land and his business healthy. For more information, call (614) 421-2022.



7th Annual Harvest MOON Festival

Sunday, October 13—1-5 p.m.

Oxford Uptown Park • High and Main St., Oxford, OH

Join OEFFA's MOON Chapter and enjoy farm animals, live music, children's activities, informational and farmers' market booths, and short talks on food and farming issues. For more information, call (513) 756-9272 or email locustrun@nuvox.net.



* This event is part of the **2013 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop Series** presented by OEFFA, OSU, and the Coalition of Ohio Land Trusts. For complete event information, go to www.oeffa.org/pdfs/farmtour2013.pdf. Call (614) 421-2022 to request printed copies of the farm tour brochure. Tours in the series are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.



**PLANNING TO GO TO
A FARM TOUR THIS
SUMMER?**

OEFFA is looking for volunteers to take photographs. High resolution photos are preferred. Photographers receive photo credit for photos used by OEFFA on the website or in print. Email photos to lauren@oeffa.org or mail by CD to OEFFA, c/o Lauren Ketcham, 41 Crosswell Rd., Columbus, OH 43214.



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 Judith Spater
 Jamie Thompson

STUDENT

Joel Abraham
 Cory DiBello
 Jeremy Shechter



OEFFA WELCOMES NEW STAFF

Lisa Large joins OEFFA as a Certification Specialist. Lisa is a long-time OEFFA member and president of the Capital Chapter. She has worked with OEFFA as a contract inspector since 2007.

OEFFA also welcomes **Jack Monsted** and **Samira Zoofan** as new Certification Program Assistants. Jack and Samira are both recent graduates of Ohio State University and former OEFFA interns.

Finally, **Eric Pawlowski** joins OEFFA as our full time Sustainable Agriculture Educator. Eric is a long-time OEFFA member, former inspector, and experienced organic farmer. Among other positions, he spent three years at Turner Farm and five years at Shepherd's Corner.

We're pleased to welcome these fine folks to team OEFFA!

Certification inspectors and staff during an inspector training in April.



OEFFA Certification Staff in the Field This Summer

Keep an eye out for OEFFA Certification specialists this growing season! In addition to our regular team of inspectors, several members of our staff will be heading out of the office and into the field to serve as staff inspectors. We are looking forward to meeting more OEFFA producers face-to-face and seeing your operations in person rather than on paper. We hope that this experience will make us all a little better at our jobs, and will improve communication among OEFFA clients and staff.

THANK YOU OEFFA INTERNS!

OEFFA's interns play a crucial role in the organization. We have been and continue to be blessed with passionate, intelligent, capable interns who have been able to accomplish special projects and help with day to day work, while learning about sustainable agriculture, food and policy issues, and organic certification.

Many thanks to our 2012-2013 school year interns: Andrea Boudreau (OSU), Ryan Griffith (OSU), Zeb Martin (Otterbein), Jack Monsted (OSU), Shane Richmond (Denison), Kayla Smith (OSU), Ian Wright (OSU), and Samira Zoofan (OSU). Your positive energy and good work are much appreciated!

We'd also like to welcome our 2013 summer interns: Jimmy Conroy (OSU), Chelsea Eastman (Denison), Laura Lee (OSU), and Andy Peiffer (OSU). Thank you for all that you bring to the team!

UN-CLASSIFIED ADS

Free: 19 antique cold frame sashes with 3 rows of glass and 5-6 pieces per row. Need repair, but may be of interest if re-creating a period-style farmstead. Contact Jan in Logan County at (937) 468-2853 or janandy1988@yahoo.com.

For Sale: New, in package, row covers. 12' x 75' with reinforced edges. Medium weight. \$10.00 each. For pick-up only in Logan County. Willing to meet half-way for large enough order. Contact Jan at (937) 468-2853 or janandy1988@yahoo.com.

Classes Available: City Folk's Farm Shop, 4760 N. High St., Columbus, OH, supports learning this summer with advanced chicken classes on disease, nutrition, and butchering, among other workshop topics. Details at www.cityfolksfarmshop.com/calendar.

Travel Support Available: The 4th National Conference for Women in Sustainable Agriculture will be held November 6 - 8 in Des Moines, IA. Contact Women Farm if you may want to attend or learn about their van for group travel. Contact Sharon at (800) 713-8575 Ext. 2 or sharon@womenfarm.com.

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



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OEFFA Offers Programs to Help Specialty Crop Farmers Grow and Expand Businesses

This season, OEFFA is focused on increasing the capacity of Ohio's sustainable and organic specialty crop growers and promoting Ohio grown specialty crops.

OEFFA and the Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy (CVCC) are helping Ohio's sustainable and organic produce growers scale up and take advantage of growing opportunities with retailers, wholesalers, and institutions. This summer look for monthly business skill webinars offered by CVCC, and OEFFA farm tour stops featuring established specialty crop operations (see pg. 20 of this newsletter).

A two-part intensive specialty crop workshop in Wooster November 2-5 will feature Linda Halley and Chris Blanchard, experts in produce production and farm business management. Linda will focus on scaling up production. An organic produce grower since 1989, she spent 15 years as the co-owner of Harmony Valley Farms in Wisconsin, a highly successful certified organic farm with a diverse marketing strategy that includes a CSA, farmers' markets, and wholesale sales. Today she manages 100 acres of transitional organic production at Gardens of Eagan in Minnesota, another thriving farm with a diversified marketing strategy. Chris Blanchard is returning to Ohio to lead the business management session. He owns and operates Rock Spring Farm in Iowa, a 15 acre vegetable and herb farm that supplies a 200 member CSA, food stores, and a farmers' market. For more information about the workshop, go to www.oeffa.org/pdfs/farmtour2013.pdf#page=10.

Central Ohio distributor DNO Produce is a prime example of the expanding opportunities for Ohio's produce growers. They are introducing an Ohio grown label this summer to market more local produce to grocery stores. DNO is interested in working with small farms across the state, including organic farms. To learn more, call Tony DiNovo at (614) 231-3601.

OEFFA and CVCC are also looking to facilitate growers' networks that can help farmers expand their market opportunities. If you are interested in exploring this model, please give us a call.

Addressing the supply side of specialty crops by educating consumers is also part of the equation. OEFFA has partnered with the Ohio Grocers Foundation, Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association, and Ohio Department of Agriculture on a retail marketing campaign called "OH So Fresh." This initiative provides promotional tools and media outreach to help participating stores showcase Ohio grown products. Go to www.ohsofresh.org for more information and www.oeffa.org for a full list of participating retailers.

Growers, if you already work with a participating retailer, please encourage them to utilize these tools to promote your products. If you are not already working with one of these retailers, now is a great time to reach out to them!

All of us can help by supporting the stores that support our farmers and by telling our regular grocer that we want to see more sustainable and organic Ohio grown produce in their store.

These projects are supported in part with Specialty Crop Block Grant funding awarded by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. For more information, contact Milo Petruziello at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 206 or milo@oeffa.org.

