Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association

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OEFFA’s 35th Annual Conference
Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground
February 15-16, 2014 · Granville, OH

Ohio’s largest sustainable food and farm conference will feature keynote speakers Kathleen Merrigan and Atina Diffley; approximately 100 workshops on sustainable farming, gardening, homesteading, cooking, and livestock; a trade show; local and organic meals; a kids’ conference and childcare; a full-day pre-conference on Friday, February 14; Saturday night entertainment, and more! Conference registration will open in December. For more information, go to www.effoa.org/conference2014 or call (614) 421-2022.

Kathleen Merrigan

Kathleen Merrigan served as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture from 2009 to 2013. Before joining the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Merrigan was a top aide to Senator Patrick Leahy, former chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. There, she helped write the original law that created the National Organic Program which established national organic standards and a certification process for organic farms and processors. From 1999 to 2001, she helped to implement the new organic rules as head of the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, the agency which oversees the organic program.

As Deputy Secretary, she played a vital role in developing the department’s Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative, championed a national farm-to-school program and funding for farmers to build hoop houses, increased crop insurance and conservation support for organic producers, and served as a strong advocate for the organic program, organic farmers, and local food systems.

A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Merrigan was also an assistant professor and director of the Agriculture, Food, and Environment graduate program at Tufts University in Boston. In 2010, Time magazine named her as one of the “100 Most Influential People in the World.”

Atina Diffley

Atina Diffley is an organic farmer, consultant, trainer, activist, and author. Her husband, Martin, founded the successful organic farm, Gardens of Eagen in Eagen, Minnesota and together they operate Organic Farming Works, which provides one-on-one coaching and consulting to organic farmers.

She is the editor of Wholesale Success: A Farmer’s Guide to Food Safety, Post-Harvest Handling, Packing, and Selling Produce, and trains farmers on selling to wholesale markets.

Diffley’s autobiographical memoir, Turn Here Sweet Corn: Organic Farming Works, which received the Minnesota Book Award in 2013, explores the Diffleys’ unbreakable commitment to their land, the impacts of suburban sprawl and pipeline development in their community, and the struggles and triumphs that farmers face every day. The book describes how she led a successful campaign against Koch Industries to reroute a crude oil pipeline to protect organic farmland. The Diffleys were also featured in an award-winning 1991 documentary film by the same name which explored the loss of greenbelt farmland to suburban development in the Eagan area.

Diffley was named Successful Farmer of the Year in 2008 by EcoFarm and Organic Farmer of the Year in 2004 by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service. She currently serves on the board for the Organic Seed Alliance and the Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture.

(continued on pg. 5)
Thanks for Supporting OEFFA!

This summer, due to your generous support, we raised almost $4,000 to support OEFFA’s free public farm tour series, which we’ve been offering for more than 30 years. In response to farm tour fundraising efforts, we received about $2,800 in support of this educational work. Thanks to Annie and Jay Warmke of Blue Rock Station, who hosted an OEFFA benefit at their home this summer, we raised an additional $1,100.

This fall, the Columbus Foundation offered a 24 hour giving event, called The Big Give, which included a $1.1 million bonus pool. The Big Give was a huge success! In one day, nearly $10.5 million was donated to hundreds of nonprofit organizations in central Ohio! Thanks to your incredible generosity, OEFFA received more than $24,000 including bonus pool funds!

These donations are a real vote of confidence in the work that we do every day to promote sustainable, local food systems that nourish our communities, our bodies, and the environment. On behalf of OEFFA’s Board of Trustees and our staff, we want to thank everyone who gave so generously this summer and fall. Thank you!
I consider the Big Lie of genetic engineering (GE) is its proponents’ declared intention to feed the world. Not only does genetic engineering do little to feed the world’s hungry, but much of the scientific evidence used to prop up this argument has been cherry picked in a way that ignores any contrary arguments or ambiguity. For example, the website of the American Farmer and Rancher Alliance, which recently held Food Dialogues in Ohio, boldly cites an article from the respected journal Nature, quoting: “Crop yields from organic farming are as much as 34 percent lower than those from comparable conventional farming practices.” What they don’t mention is that the quote is just part of a longer sentence after which the authors conclude, “Under certain conditions . . . organic systems can thus nearly match conventional yields, whereas under others it at present cannot.” This sort of distortion is endemic in the debate about the place of GE technology in our food and farm system.

If we’re serious about feeding the world, why don’t we focus on some crops that actually produce food for people? The truth is that most GE crops aren’t people food. The GE corn and soybeans that are grown in the U.S. are mostly used for animal feed and fuel. What ends up in our food are the leftovers, the same way that industrial uses of these crops in sandpaper, drywall, industrial oils, and binders are also byproducts from feed and fuel.

Moreover, no GE crop has been engineered to increase what’s called “intrinsic yield,” or yield under controlled, essentially perfect, conditions. There is another kind of yield, called “operational yield,” which is what you get out in the real world of field conditions and weather. When it comes to operational yield, what the folks waving the flag of selective science won’t tell you is this: For crops genetically engineered to tolerate herbicides, there is no increase in operational yield. For Bt crops—those engineered to produce their own insecticide—there has been 0.2 to 0.3 percent increase in operational yield per year. Given all the mouths we need to feed, this sounds pretty good, right? But what you won’t hear from science-spouting fans is that traditional breeding methods—those that don’t require moving genes from unrelated species around—have attained operational yield increases on the order of one percent per year. That’s three to five times greater yield benefits than GE technologies!

So let’s ask the biotech companies and their trade association cheerleaders to get off their high horses, please. Let’s recognize that these folks aren’t GE advocates because of a burning desire to solve the problem of world hunger (which, in any case, is not caused by a lack of calories being produced globally). They want to discredit their critics by charging that they are anti-technology, anti-science, and want to go backwards, not progress. And yet our collective ability to progress—indeed, our future—depends squarely on our good stewardship of the natural resources on which we all depend. GE crops stand in the way of that goal, and that’s one reason we’re fighting along various fronts to oppose their use. For more information, see pg. 4 of this newsletter, or go to http://policy.oeffa.org/gelabeling.

OEFFA’S 2012 ANNUAL REPORT IS NOW AVAILABLE
Learn more about OEFFA’s work and accomplishments by reading our 2012 annual report, now available online. Go to www.oeffa.org/pdfs/annualreport2012.pdf.
My father bought Swallow’s Rest Farm in 1984. All the previous owners, back to about 1940, would have farmed the land conventionally, utilizing many of the new herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers as they became commercially available.

My dad did some of this as well. Please understand, he was and still is an excellent father and he farmed as best he knew how given the information available to him at the time. But he also plowed his corn fields in the fall with no cover crops in winter. When silage corn was harvested in the fall, nothing was planted into the stubble before plowing the field for something else—sometimes not until the following spring.

He did, however, house his cows in tramped style, utilizing lots of straw which made for excellent manures to spread on the fields. This helped a lot but the poor tillage practices did enormous damage to the hillsides. The loss of topsoil was “propped up” by using more fertilizers, thus loss of yields were not really noticeable during his years of farming.

As a boy, I would sometimes help my older brothers collect earthworms, or nightcrawlers, to sell to fishermen. We collected them by the hundreds on warm, moist spring nights. But we could only collect them on the lawn. Time and time again, we would search the fields in vain for nightcrawlers, but there were simply none there. I believe the poor tillage practices combined with the many years of insecticide use did them in.

My wife and I bought the farm in 2001 and for a year or two followed the footsteps of our predecessors. I was hit in the face accidentally in 2002 by a spray of mixed Baythroid which I had a terrible time getting washed off before the burning substituted. From that point on, we changed the way we farmed.

We fell in love with cereal rye and used it extensively, not only as a cover crop and tremendous soil builder, but also as a good feed for cows and horses. In our light soils, we needed an aggressive “utilizer” of manures before they could leach away, losing valuable nutrients and threatening ground water. The rye fits the bill for our soils as no other plant can do. The clovers come close and we still plant lots of it but it does not compare to rye in quickly and aggressively turning raw manure into a humus building root mass.

Since 2004, we do no fall plowing and try to plant within a week or so after beginning to plow in a certain field. The land is healing. In one of our fields, there is a fairly steep hillside which had been almost completely bare of topsoil in 2002. Today, the hillside still shows signs of drought sooner than many other areas but it is productive without the use of any commercial fertilizer.

This year, my sons and I were plowing in one of our fields. We had just finished grazing off a heavy stand of cereal rye and the plow cut through the root mass of the rye as a good scissors should cut through heavy cloth. The turning sod mass laid out behind us like a ribbon and in the furrow were nightcrawlers. Lots and lots of them. This is now a common thing in all our fields. The bobolinks are back and so are the meadowlarks.

We believe the land should be viewed as something lent to us from our children and their children. It should be a place where children are able to work with parents in most activities safely. A place where they can be introduced to the endless fascinations of learning about the natural world and our role in harnessing and simultaneously enhancing it and its endless diversity.

David Bontrager owns and operates Swallow’s Rest Farm in Indiana. The certified organic farm is home to David, his wife Elnora, their 10 children, his father and stepmother, and lots and lots of nightcrawlers.

In September, a group of 73 organic and conventional family farmers, seed businesses, and agricultural organizations, including OEFFA, filed a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn a decision to dismiss their case against Monsanto challenging the seed giant’s patents on genetically engineered (GE) seed. The case, Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA) et al v. Monsanto, seeks protection for farmers whose fields can become contaminated by Monsanto’s GE seed and then be sued by the company for patent infringement.

In June, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit upheld a decision to dismiss the lawsuit, originally filed in March 2011, after Monsanto made binding assurances that it “will not take legal action against growers whose crops might inadvertently contain traces of Monsanto biotech genes.”

“While the Court of Appeals correctly found that the farmers and seed sellers had standing to challenge Monsanto’s invalid patents, it incorrectly found that statements made by Monsanto’s lawyers during the lawsuit mooted the case,” said Daniel Ravicher, Executive Director of the Public Patent Foundation (PUBPAT) and lead counsel to the plaintiffs. “As a result, we have asked the Supreme Court to take the case and reinstate the right of the plaintiffs to seek full protection from Monsanto’s invalid transgenic seed patents.”

In the case, the plaintiffs asked the lower court to declare that if organic farmers are ever contaminated by Monsanto’s GE seed, they need not fear also being accused of patent infringement on GE seed are invalid “usefulness” requirement—Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, who wrote the decision, said that one of Monsanto’s patents would not be “injurious to the public welfare, good morals of society, and a new invention to poison the market.”

Each year the Supreme Court takes about 80 cases, which they receive. Initial consideration only takes several months.
OEFFA’s 35th Annual Conference
Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground
(continued from pg. 1)

Announcing a Special Feature for OEFFA’s 2014 Conference: NCR-SARE Farmers Forum

OEFFA is excited to host the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) program’s Farmers Forum in 2014! This is an annual event that gives farmers, ranchers, and others funded by NCR-SARE grants the chance to share information about their sustainable agriculture research and projects. The Farmers Forum will be offered as a special conference workshop track, with additional projects featured in other workshop tracks.

Become a Conference Sponsor or Exhibitor

Your business, non-profit organization, or institution can connect with more than 1200 conference participants and support OEFFA’s work to create and promote a sustainable food system by becoming a conference sponsor or exhibitor.

Sponsor and exhibitor registration forms and information are available at wwwoeffa.org/exhibitor/. For more information about sponsorship, contact Renee Hunt at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205 or renee@oeffa.org. November 4th is the deadline to be included in all pre-conference publicity. For more information about exhibiting, contact Eric Pawlowski at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 209 or eric@oeffa.org. The early bird exhibitor registration deadline is December 6th. Space has sold out at past conferences, so don’t wait to reserve your spot!

Donate to OEFFA’s Conference Raffle

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

Gently Used Books Needed

Do you have some books taking up shelf space? Donate them to OEFFA! Drop off your farm and food books in good condition at OEFFA’s book table at the annual conference. For more information, contact Renee Hunt at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205 or renee@oeffa.org.

Academic Researchers Wanted

Discuss your research findings with OEFFA’s diverse membership at the 2014 conference! Abstracts 200 words or less that include a title, three to five keywords, and names, affiliations, and contact information for the authors should be submitted to eric@oeffa.org by January 7.

In Remembrance

Jose “Lupe” Hernandez of Findlay passed away in July after a brave battle with cancer. He was the farm manager at Hirzel Farms in Luckey, where he worked for 34 years. Memorial contributions may be made to Cancer Patient Services at www.cancerpatientservices.org.

Richard Zimmerman passed away unexpectedly in July. He owned and operated Sycamore Farms in St. Paris, a family farm growing 27 acres of vegetables, grain, hay, and corn. He was also the founder of the Piqua Farmers’ Market. Donations may be made to Friend of Main St., P.O. Box 1703, Piqua, OH 45356.

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OEFFA News Autumn 2013
People who buy pumpkins based strictly on their decorative potential are like those who choose wine for the pretty label. The difference is that eventually the wine customer will unckork the bottle to see if their whim paid off in a satisfying taste.

Pumpkins are big business in Ohio bringing in more than $25 million to local growers. The demand for the fall fruits reflects our passion for Halloween, one of the highest grossing holidays in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, seven out of every eight pumpkins sold live their post-harvest life as a fall decoration before they are tossed. Most consumers are unaware of the culinary potential beneath the unconventional colors, warts, bumps, lumps, and ridges.

Crack one open. Literally. Inside you’ll find some of the most amazing shades of flesh, subtle variations in flavor, and cooked textures ranging from coarse to creamy. Certain heirloom pumpkin and squash varieties (with differences more culinary than botanical) are reappearing across Ohio at farmers’ markets and roadside stands. In general, they have smaller seed chambers and much thicker walls of flesh than the classic orange orbs used for carving (and little else).

Here’s a list to help you navigate through the selection you’re destined to find this season:

- **Cinderella** pumpkin is a beautiful French heirloom. Its deep orange with pronounced ribs, resembling the coach its namesake used to get to the ball. The flesh is thick, sweet, moist, and custard-like.

- **The Jarrahdale** is a beautiful blue grey fruit from New Zealand. Very aromatic, its flesh is deep orange, sweet, and slightly dry with a complex flavor perfect for breads and muffins.

- Named after the flat wheels of cheese once produced along the eastern seaboard, **Long Island Tan Cheese** is a “keeper” and stored properly, may last into winter. The sweet, deep orange flesh is a favorite for pie making.

- **The Fairy Tale** pumpkin from southern France is heavily lobed with a rich russet brown skin. The vibrant orange flesh is finely textured and highly flavored. Cut into it like a Bundt cake and share slices with friends. There’s a lot to go around.

- **The squat Peanut** pumpkin has a salmon colored skin covered with sugar warts resembling peanut shells. Make it a point to saw through one of these to get to the sweet, fragrant flesh often used for pumpkin butter.

- Some cooks swear by the native variety of **Cushaw** for pumpkin pie filling. Commonly green striped, they have long curvy necks and a bulbous blossom end, and yield a lot of sweet, smooth, gold-colored flesh.

Pumpkins grow on every continent but Antarctica, inspiring recipes that reflect their global nature. This delicious vegetarian recipe is a traditional Afghan dish.

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**Sweet Pumpkin with Yogurt Sauce**

Makes 4 to 6 servings

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<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/4 cup corn oil or canola oil</td>
<td>1 sm. pie pumpkin, peeled, seeded, and diced into 2 in. cubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 clove garlic, crushed</td>
<td>1 cup water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 tsp. salt</td>
<td>1/2 tsp. ginger root, grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp. coriander seeds, crushed</td>
<td>4 oz. tomato sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper</td>
<td>1/2 tsp. sugar</td>
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**Sauce**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/4 cup plain yogurt</td>
<td>1 clove garlic, crushed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 tsp. salt</td>
<td>1/2 tsp. ginger root, grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushed dried mint leaves</td>
<td>1/2 tsp. coriander seeds, crushed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heat the oil in a large frying pan with a lid. Fry the pumpkin cubes on all sides until lightly browned.

In a small bowl, mix together the garlic, water, salt, sugar, tomato sauce, ginger root, coriander, and pepper. Add to the pumpkin mixture in the frying pan. Cover and cook 20 to 25 minutes over low heat until the pumpkin is tender and has absorbed most of the liquid.

In a small bowl, mix together the yogurt, garlic, and salt.

To serve, spread some of the yogurt mixture on a serving plate and arrange the pumpkin on top. Top with the remaining yogurt and sprinkle with dried mint. Serve with rice and pita bread.

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Marilou Suszko is an Ohio-based food writer, author, and culinary instructor. For more information, go to www.marisouszko.com.

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**Explore the Culinary Potential of Ohio Pumpkins this Fall**

By Marilou Suszko

Photo Credit: Marilou Suszko

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**ORGANIC FARMER TRAINING PROGRAM**

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

The Organic Farmer Training Program is a unique opportunity for new and beginning farmers seeking intensive instruction in year-round diversified production of fruits, vegetables and livestock for local markets. The program emphasizes student learning through hands-on farm management and decision-making as well as development of necessary production and business skills.

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The oil and gas industry is poised to cash in on the claims its staked in eastern Ohio. Meanwhile, Ohio law continues to leave its citizens, landowners, air, and water vulnerable. Permits are being issued without the environmental protections required for similar industrial activities. Impacted citizens are left without a voice in the process and unprotected because of a lack of transparency and accountability. Property owners are being convinced to sign heavy handed leases drawn up by drilling companies. And, many polluters elude enforcement because state and local governments lack the staff and tools needed to compel bad actors to comply with the law. Legislation is needed to fill these gaps.

That’s why this summer the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) rolled out a proposal for a sweeping upgrade to state oil and gas laws. The SAFER GAS Act (Safeguarding Appalachian Families with Environmental Regulation of Gas and Shale) would plug more than 30 gaps in Ohio law by establishing:

» Stronger safeguards against air and water pollution from oil and gas drilling;
» Stepped up enforcement authority and transparency requirements for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency;
» Greater industry and government accountability, including permit appeal rights for affected citizens; and
» Stronger consumer protections for landowners who lease their land for drilling.

While the SAFER GAS Act would help to protect human health and the environment, the proposal’s number one purpose is to ensure every Ohioan—from oil and gas workers, to farmers and their families—are protected during the leasing, permitting, and operational phases of oil and gas drilling.

The proposed legislation would give landowners a right to audit the drilling company’s production records, and make sure that the driller is paying its fair share to the landowner—even for leases that have already been signed. For those early leases where there is no right to audit, the SAFER GAS Act would increase the statute of limitations for disputes on royalties to allow landowners who find past royalty discrepancies the ability to seek proper compensation.

Although well pads may be situated on personal property, leases typically restrict landowner access to the area, and for good reason—these are dangerous industrial operations. Nevertheless, it is still the landowner’s property, and they need to know it is safe and secure. Remarkably, current law does not require the driller to immediately notify a landowner when an accident or incident has or is suspected to have occurred. The SAFER GAS Act would change this. This is a common sense measure to ensure the safety of landowners and their families.

The SAFER GAS Act would also require new safeguards in all oil and gas leases. Leases would need to require drillers to immediately notify the landowner about important activities concerning the well site, including when a lease has been partially assigned, the property has become part of a drilling pool or unit, the land is included in an ODNR permit to drill, or when ODNR is inspecting a safety or pollution incident. These property protection provisions would also require leases to include a minimum 15 percent royalty to landowners and mandatory groundwater testing. And, applicants for a drilling permit would need to verify that the information on the permit application actually complies with the leases it has signed with landowners.

The SAFER GAS Act would also require registration and oversight of landmen. For landowners not interested in leasing their land, the proposed legislation would make it more difficult for oil and gas companies to apply for a permit using unitization—forcing unleased land into a fracking unit—by increasing the minimum percentage of leased land from 65 percent to 80 percent. The bill would also limit the number of unitization applications an operator can submit each year.

In an unusual move, OEC released this SAFER GAS Act proposal even before a lawmaker was secured to introduce it. Our hope is that if we lay out our cards in a transparent and forthright way, it will spur more open dialogue among the public, lawmakers, regulators, landowners, and industry. The OEC realizes that it’s going to be hard work to fill so many gaps in a steadfastly divided Statehouse, and this “ mega-bill” may ultimately be divided into separate segments in order to get enough support for passage. While we may compromise on its structure, we cannot compromise on the goal of protecting Ohio, so please contact your state legislators and ask them to support OEC’s SAFER GAS Act.

Trent Dougherty is the Director of Legal Affairs for the Ohio Environmental Council. He may be reached at tdougherty@theoec.org.

For more information on how to get involved with OEFFA’s Fracking and Farmland Working Group, contact MacKenzie Bailey at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208 or mackenzie@oeffa.org.
Number of Women Farmers on the Rise
According to statistics released this spring by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), there are nearly three times as many women farmers as there were 30 years ago. Between 1977 and 2007, women farmers grew from 5 percent of all farmers to 14 percent. Ohio has more than 29,000 women farm operators and more than 9,100 female principal farm operators.

FDA Moves to Limit Outdoor Access for Hens
This summer, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a draft guidance document to clarify how farmers with 3,000 or more laying hens kept on pasture can comply with its 2009 egg safety rule aimed at reducing salmonella contamination in the nation’s egg supply. The rules are designed to prevent the spread of salmonella from wild birds and other animals to hens and their eggs, although there is little evidence that pastured chickens pose a food safety threat. In order to comply with the pastured poultry requirements, the FDA encourages farmers to cover their outdoor pastures with either roofing or netting, or use noise cannons to scare away wild birds, solutions which are both impractical and costly.

USDA Approves First Non-GMO Label for Meat
In response to a petition filed by several meat companies wanting to label their products free of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), the USDA has approved a “non-GMO” label for meat and liquid egg products. It is the first time that the department, which regulates meat and poultry processing and labeling, has approved a non-GMO Project label. This summer, the Non-GMO Project submitted a petition to USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) seeking approval of its non-GMO label for meats, eggs, dairy, and seafood products. The filing was in response to a petition filed by several meat companies wanting to label their products free of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), the USDA has approved a “non-GMO” label for meat and liquid egg products. It is the first time that the department, which regulates meat and poultry processing and labeling, has approved a non-GMO Project label.

EPA Proposes Raising Limits on Glyphosate
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is on track to raise limits on the allowed residue levels of glyphosate, the key ingredient in Monsanto’s Roundup herbicide, on fruits and vegetables sold in the U.S. Comments on the new ruling were accepted this summer. The EPA announcement comes despite multiple peer-reviewed studies pointing to serious health impacts from exposure to this toxic herbicide. Glyphosate, even at low concentrations, has been linked to endocrine disruption and breast cancer, among other serious health concerns.

FDA To Prepare EIS for Proposed Produce Safety Regulations
The FDA has released a notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for its proposed produce safety regulations released in January. The regulations include a number of standards that could conflict with farm conservation and environmental goals by encouraging wildlife habitat destruction and the use of synthetic chemicals over manure and compost. Although the FDA initially said it would not complete an EIS, the draft rules were issued pursuant to the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010 in which the FDA was required to take into consideration conservation and environmental impacts, standards, and polices.

Ohio Fracking Disclosure Law Violates Federal Statute
According to the EPA, an Ohio law passed in 2001, which requires that drilling companies share information about hazardous chemicals only with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, which is supposed to keep the information available for local officials, violates federal law. EPA officials argue that the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986, which requires companies to share a hazardous chemical inventory directly with local officials, supersedes the Ohio law. Quick access to chemical information is important for emergency management officials and first responders in the event of a fracking spill or other event in which public health is threatened.

Kitchen Incubator Opens in Youngstown
In October, the Common Wealth Kitchen Incubator, a shared use commercial kitchen, celebrated its grand opening in Youngstown.

Ohio Adds Almost 10,000 Conservation Reserve Acres
The USDA Ohio Farm Service Agency announced that nearly 10,000 acres were accepted during the 45th Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up; however, funding may not be available due to Congress’ failure to reauthorize the Farm Bill. Currently, there are 26.9 million acres enrolled in the program nationwide, with more than 317,000 CRP acres in Ohio. CRP is a voluntary program that allows eligible landowners to receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving practices on their farms.

CDC Calls for Phase Out of Antibiotics in Livestock Industry
A new report issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calls for phasing out the routine use of antibiotics in industrial livestock production, which has been linked to antibiotic resistant bacteria. Each year in the U.S., more than 29 million pounds of antibiotics are used in animal agriculture and two million people contract antibiotic resistant infections resulting in 23,000 deaths.

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- Improved Quality
- Increase Plant Metabolism
- Increases Resistance to Stress for Healthier Plants and Higher Yields
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- Increases Natural Resistance to Pests and Diseases
- Increases Uptake from the Roots on Four Vital Micronutrients

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- Boosts Crop Yields
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- Reduces Soil Compaction
- Boosts Spray Performance
- Reduces Surface Tension of Waters

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- Boosts Crop Yields
- Enhances Seedling Vigor
- Produces Faster and Healthier Root Development and Emergence - Larger Shoots and Roots Systems
- Reduces Stress for Healthier Plants at Higher Yields

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Diana Thomas, President/Owner
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Columbus, OH 43224
gdsmrclld@sbcglobal.net
Living and Learning Forest Farming
By Gene Logsdon

We live on the edge of an encroaching forest. Our four acre woodlot is connected to the neighbor’s much larger grove and now the old pasture behind those trees is abandoned and growing up into brush and new trees. That area connects to three other old growth groves, totaling something more than a hundred acres of developing forest and brush. This is a startling new development that seems to be overlooked by nearly everyone in farming. Small acreages of rather erosive land, mostly along creeks, have been kept in pasture because they were not conducive to industrial grain farming. Now the livestock are gone too. Are there opportunities here that are being overlooked?

Many of us treasure this kind of land because it can provide an occasional timber sale plus fuel wood and fence posts. It also can provide a variety of wild foods—wild nuts and berries, various mushrooms, sassafras, and fruits like pawpaws and wild peaches.

Did you say wild peaches? Yes, indeed. We learned about them quite by accident. We built our chicken coop in a clearing in our woods and fed the belongings from purchased peaches to the hens. Sure enough, seedling trees popped up in the clearing around the coop. In five years they started producing fruit, some of it very nice even though we had been taught that volunteer fruit trees from seed do not come true to variety. Essentially they are wild trees. Ours produce almost every year although our climate is not supposed to be particularly favorable for growing peaches. The surrounding hardwood trees provide some protection against late frosts, we think.

Pawpaws have become a new source of income for some farmers in Ohio and since we planted one in our woods, we can see why. After the first years, they spread like mad from suckering. The whole eastern side of our grove is thick—too thick—with pawpaw saplings now. Wild persimmons grow by suckering the same way. On a farm not far away I once found an old pasture grown up into a big persimmon grove.

With good fenceposts selling for eight dollars and cornerposts for twelve, locust logs, which won’t rot for a human life time or two, are very much a commodity in Ohio. Catalpa posts last nearly forever too, and are even better for fencing because they are light and take a nail or staple much easier. Catalpa orchards used to grow all over Ohio, and you could get a new one in production in ten years. The trees adapt well to coppicing at that age and then go on producing fenceposts indefinitely. Knowing what I know now, I’d sure love to be young again.

A friend just bought eight acres of old abandoned pastureland for a homesite and found some huge Osage orange trees, once planted profusely for hedge fencing. This is the hardest and longest lasting wood in America. It makes awesomely beautiful wooden objects. Bows made from it are much in demand. And I just learned that Osage hedge balls, traditionally used to repel insects and vermin from pioneer homes, are still used that way and can be purchased online.

And don’t be dissuaded by all the negative talk about tree diseases. Even as all the old white ash trees die in our grove from the emerald ash borer, thousands of seedlings are springing up, just the way the elms are coming back after Dutch elm disease. We could be swinging those good ash baseball bats again in another twenty years. Trees are very resilient. Gingkoes, whose seeds have traditionally been used for food all over Asia, survived Hiroshima.

Gene Logsdon has published more than two dozen books, both practical and philosophical. His nonfiction works include Holy Shit, Living at Nature’s Pace, The Contrary Farmer, and his most recent book, A Sanctuary of Trees. He writes a popular blog, The Contrary Farmer, and is a regular contributor to Farming Magazine. He lives and farms in Upper Sandusky, Ohio. For more information, go to www.thecontraryfarmer.wordpress.com.

HELP KEEP AGRICULTURAL PLASTICS OUT OF LANDFILLS

Thanks to a collaborative effort between the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), the Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio State University Extension, and the Stark-Tuscarawas-Wayne Solid Waste Management District, farmers in Ashland, Holmes, Stark, and Wayne counties can recycle their used agricultural plastics free of charge.

Bale wrap, silage bags, drip tape, bunker and bale covers, plastic mulch, high tunnel and hoop plastic, plastic twine, netting, mesh, and seed and grain bags can be placed in free “super sacks,” which are able to hold 400 pounds or more, and dropped off at multiple locations.

Empty sacks, along with additional information about the program, are available through the county SWCDs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashland SWCD</td>
<td>1763 State Rte. 60, Ashland, (419) 281-7645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes SWCD</td>
<td>62 W. Clinton St., Millersburg, (330) 674-2811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark SWCD</td>
<td>2650 Richville Dr. SE, Massillon, (330) 830-7700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne SWCD</td>
<td>418 W. Liberty St., Wooster, (330) 262-2836</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Through the end of 2013, if farmers place a qualifying order from Ohio Earth Food, they will pick up one full super sack of plastic to recycle from your farm at no cost.
World renowned expert, Graeme Sait, comes to Ontario to teach 4-day course in biological farming.

The Certificate in Sustainable Agriculture is an internationally-acclaimed four-day course for farmers and growers.

Graeme Sait’s practical approach and easy-to-follow methods take the mystery out of the soil-to-plant relationship and give you a simple, logical pathway to growing healthier crops.

This is an important course for anyone who is serious about the future of agriculture. This course has made a difference for thousands of farmers around the world and it will make a difference for you, too. The course includes a combination of lectures, hands-on workshops and take-home guidebooks that teach:

- Reducing chemical dependence & increasing fertilizer efficiency
- Accessing soil nutrient reserves
- Improving water management and soil structure
- Boosting both your health and the health of your livestock
- Acquiring simple strategies to combine with existing practices

January 27-30, 2014
The Delta Hotel
50 Stone Road W, Guelph, ON

For more information and to enroll, go to: www.agriculturesolutions.ca/events or call 855-247-6548.

Graeme Sait is the internationally acclaimed author and educator who co-founded Nutri-Tech Solutions (NTS) 19 years ago. He has written hundreds of articles and a popular book “Nutrition Rules!”. Graeme has formulated many of the soil health and human health products for which NTS is renowned. He is a powerful presenter who speaks at conferences and seminars around the globe and his inspiring presentations are often described as “life changing”.

Agriculture Solutions
Fertility for Life
Periodic Residue Testing and Integrity Inspection Update

In the spring newsletter, we explained that the National Organic Program (NOP) added a requirement that certifiers test samples of agricultural products for residues of prohibited substances from at least five percent of their clients annually. We also described what would be done with the results, particularly if residues are found. In this edition, we will explain how OEFFA is implementing this new requirement and provide an update on the results of tests conducted so far.

In addition to the testing requirement, in September 2012, the NOP instructed certifiers to have inspectors conduct unannounced inspections at least five percent of certified operations annually. These “integrity inspections” have long been a part of our program. They’ve largely occurred as follow up visits to specific operations where an inspector has previously identified compliance issues, but have also been conducted at random. The client may receive a courtesy phone call an hour or so before the inspector visits, but generally does not have time to prepare for a full inspection. Consequently, most of these visits are limited to a specific part of the operation—either focused on a particular compliance issue or a part of the operation that is in flux.

To meet the new requirements, the OEFFA certification program has decided to implement the integrity inspection program alongside the pesticide residue sampling program. In other words, OEFFA certified operations that are selected for pesticide residue sampling will, ideally, also have some aspect of their operation inspected without advanced notice and vice versa. Though both residue sampling and an integrity inspection will not be possible in all cases, our efforts to combine these programs will ensure that OEFFA efficiently meets the requirements laid out by the NOP and that pesticide residue samples are gathered from operations without advance notice.

We prioritize selecting operations for testing and inspection that have a high risk for contamination, a history of compliance issues, or who have had multiple inspections outside of the growing season. Since these operations do not account for a full 5 percent of our clients (we project about 35 operations will meet this selection criteria in 2013), other operations are selected based on their geographical location or at random.

The first round of visits for this program was conducted between July 17 and July 24, 2013. We collected 15 samples of products, including fruits, vegetables, small grain, and corn from the field or from storage, and completed 18 integrity inspections. Clients were receptive to the program and were generally pleased to see the additional efforts to verify the integrity of organic products. The 15 samples were submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture lab in North Carolina and all came back negative for more than 200 pesticides. A second round of visits took place throughout early and mid-October. We will be sure to have sampled and visited 5 percent of our clients, unannounced, by the beginning of 2014.

If you have questions about periodic residue testing or integrity inspections, please call OEFFA at (614) 262-2022. We appreciate your support of these efforts as we work alongside OEFFA’s certified producers to uphold organic integrity and meet the requirements of the NOP.
Maximize yields and improve soil health.

Organic farming can be a challenge, but there’s an easy solution to selecting the right fertilizer. Nature Safe Natural & Organic Fertilizers represents the highest concentrated OMRI listed fertilizers on the market. Made from pet food grade animal proteins like meat, bone, feather and blood meals, these ingredients deliver a complete and consistent release that result in higher yields and reduced application costs.

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- 8-5-5
- 10-2-8
- 8-3-5
- 5-6-6

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Allganic™ Nitrogen is a natural source of highly soluble nitrogen, originally from Chile, that is effective at supplementing your crop rotations and manure applications with immediately usable nitrate nitrogen that can be applied at critical times during the growing season. Allganic™ Nitrogen also contains many trace minerals such as boron and magnesium, and its use will not acidify the soil.

www.allganic.net

SQM North America
Tel: (1 800) 667 8528
E-mail: allganic@sqm.com
The number of organic dairies in the U.S. has been growing steadily during the past decade. However, farmers still lack access to science-based information on alternative therapies and training programs to support best herd health practices.

Prevention of disease at the herd level requires constant effort and effective coordination of the whole system (animals, environment, facilities, and personnel). Substantial knowledge exists to prevent many diseases or conditions; however, it must be translated into on-farm applications or practices to have a measurable effect on herd health. Every farm is an integrated system; decisions made on one area will have an impact on other areas of the farm.

Reproductive failure and mastitis are the top two health issues affecting dairy cows, resulting in early removal of cows from dairy herds and increased replacement costs. Although the organic livestock system relies on preventive health practices to reduce the risk of common diseases, effective alternative treatments are also needed to ensure best animal welfare and farm profitability.

First, to address these issues, OSU Veterinary Extension has focused on identifying health risk factors, best herd health practices, and effective treatments for uterine diseases. Between 2009 and 2012, we conducted studies to investigate the effects of intrauterine dextrose as an alternative therapy for clinical endometritis (CE) in lactating dairy cows in conventional and organic management systems. Findings from these studies showed that: (1) there was no difference in the prevalence of uterine diseases (retained fetal membranes, metritis and CE) between conventional and organic dairy herds and (2) the administration of dextrose significantly improved clinical cure and reproductive performance of lactating dairy cows diagnosed with CE in both systems.

Second, we offer workshops designed to transfer science-based information and practical knowledge about cow-calf health into on-farm practices for immediate use. Practicing veterinarians, dairy producers and personnel, and certifier-consultants can participate in the workshops. The programs focus on best transition cow management, risk factors for cow-calf health disorders, diagnosis, establishing standard operating procedures, record-keeping, data management, and decision-making, among other areas. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to walk through an operation and conduct a herd audit to learn how to identify within-herd risk factors affecting health and/or performance (milk yield, reproduction) in order to re-adjust management practices accordingly. Learn more about the workshops by visiting http://vet.osu.edu/extension/dairy-resources.

Gustavo M. Schuenemann is an Assistant Professor within the Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine at The Ohio State University. He can be reached at schuenemann.5@osu.edu or (614) 292-6924.
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info@alpacaspringvalley.com
Sweet Peppers for Fall Meals
Ripening at the end of the season, sweet peppers can’t be beat for flavor and nutrition. Use sweet peppers in pasta dishes, salads, and side dishes, like those below. Freeze peppers just by chopping and putting in freezer bags (no blanching necessary) or sauté them in a little olive oil before cooling and freezing. Roasted red peppers can also be peeled, chopped, and frozen in small containers. You’ll appreciate these little olive oil before cooling and freezing. Roasted red peppers can also be peeled, chopped, and frozen in small containers. You’ll appreciate these little fresh packages of flavor all winter!

Fettuccini with Chicken and Peppers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken breast</td>
<td>2 (6 oz.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour</td>
<td>3 Tbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>1/4 tsp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>1/4 tsp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>2 Tbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken broth</td>
<td>1/3 cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Place whole peppers in the oven directly on the rack. Roast for about 15 minutes, turning if needed, until the skin is well scorched. Immediately place in a bowl covered with plastic wrap or in a paper bag, and allow to cool. Remove the skins and rinse under cold water. Remove stem and seeds, then cut into strips. Place peppers into a serving bowl, and stir in the remaining ingredients. Refrigerate until serving time.

Marinated Roasted Pepper Salad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloves</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinegar</td>
<td>1 Tbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Place whole peppers in the oven directly on the rack. Roast for about 15 minutes, turning if needed, until the skin is well scorched. Immediately place in a bowl covered with plastic wrap or in a paper bag, and allow to cool. Remove the skins and rinse under cold water. Remove stem and seeds, then cut into strips. Place peppers into a serving bowl, and stir in the remaining ingredients. Refrigerate until serving time.

Roasted Red Pepper Hummus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red pepper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickpeas</td>
<td>1 (15 oz.) can, rinsed and drained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon juice</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahini</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic clove</td>
<td>1-lg.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cut peppers into flat pieces and arrange skin-side up on a baking sheet. Broil in oven 5 inches from heat for about 5-10 minutes. Put peppers in a resealable plastic bag and set aside for 15 minutes. Peel away and discard charred pepper skin. Chop finely, reserving 2 Tbs. to use as a garnish. Combine tahini and lemon juice in a food processor. Process for 1 1/2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides and bottom of bowl if necessary. Add the olive oil, minced garlic, cumin, cayenne pepper, and the salt and process for 1 minute. Add chickpeas, half at a time, and process 1 minute each time. Add peppers and process 1 more minute. Add more lemon juice or water if the mixture seems too thick. Add half of the cilantro and process 30 seconds. Transfer hummus to a serving bowl and garnish with reserved chopped pepper, cilantro, and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve with pita chips, crackers, or vegetable sticks.

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.

Books, Guides, and Reports

**GAP Manual**—North Carolina State University (NCSU) and the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association have released a new manual, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for Small Diversified Farms, with tips for cost-effectively managing food safety risk and passing an audit for the GAP certification program.


**Websites and Online Tools**

**Web Soil Survey**—The latest version of the Web Soil Survey, launched by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), includes soil maps and data by county.


**Fioriculture Search Engine**—The American Floral Endowment has partnered with NCSU to create the Floriculture InfoSearch Engine, providing comprehensive access to floriculture literature, publications, videos, and presentations.

[http://floricultureinfosearch.ies.ncsu.edu](http://floricultureinfosearch.ies.ncsu.edu)

**Ohio Agricultural Law Blog**—An outreach project of Ohio State University (OSU) Extension and the OSU Agricultural and Resource Law Program, this blog includes regular updates on Ohio food regulations.

[www.ohioaglaw.wordpress.com/category/food](http://www.ohioaglaw.wordpress.com/category/food)

**International Organic Information Archive**—Organic Eprints is an international online archive of more than 13,000 papers and projects about organic food and farming research.

[www.orgprints.org](http://www.orgprints.org)

**Funding Opportunities**

**NCR-SARE Grants**—The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) program is now accepting proposals for its Youth Educator Grant. Approximately $20,000 in funding is available to educators for sustainable agriculture projects involving youth. Proposals are due November 1. NCR-SARE is also accepting proposals for its Farmer Rancher Grant. Approximately $400,000 is available to farmers for projects exploring sustainable solutions to problems on the farm. Proposals are due November 14.

[www.northcentralsare.org/grants](http://www.northcentralsare.org/grants)

**OFRF Grants**—The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) is accepting proposals for research, education, and outreach projects on organic farming and food systems. The deadline for proposals is November 15.

[www.ofrf.org/research/grants](http://www.ofrf.org/research/grants)

**Whole Foods Loan Program**—Whole Foods Market is providing up to $10 million in low-interest loans to local farmers and food artisans to pay for expansion and capital expenditures. Applications are accepted online on a rolling basis.


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Upcoming Events

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

Farm Dinner
Sunday, October 27, Sunday, November 17, and Sunday, December 21 — 5 p.m.
Mockingbird Meadows Herbal Health Farm • 16671 Burns Rd., Marysville, OH
Learn about homesteading through dinner and conversation. Cost: $60.
For more information, call (614) 354-5162 or go to www.mockingbirdmeadows.com.

FDA Food Safety Regulations Webinar
Monday, October 28 — 6 p.m.
During this free online webinar, OEFFA’s Policy Program Coordinator, MacKenzie Bailey, will describe how to submit comments to the Food and Drug Administration regarding proposed food safety rules for specialty crop growers and food processors. Comments on the rules are due by November 15. To register, go to www.oeffa.org/pfsuw. For more information, call (614) 421-2022 ext. 208 or email mackenzie@oeffa.org.

Fermented Foods for Natural Probiotics
Tuesday, October 29 — 7-8 p.m.
Saturday, December 7 — 4-5 p.m.
The Going Green Store • 909 River Rd., Granville, OH
Teresa Peters of The Going Green Store will discuss how to purchase and make your own fermented foods from late season vegetables in October and beverages and tonics in December. Cost: Free. For more information, call (740) 963-9644 or go to www.thegoinggreenstore.com/calendar.

United Plant Savers Presentation
Sunday, November 3 — 6 p.m.
Mockingbird Meadows Herbal Health Farm • 16671 Burns Rd., Marysville, OH
For more information, call (614) 354-5162 or go to www.mockingbirdmeadows.com.

Bionutrient Rich Crop Production Course
Thursday, November 7 and Thursday, March 20, 2014 — 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Rockefeller Park Greenhouse • Cleveland, OH
Learn the advantages of cold weather production and see what can be grown in Ohio during the fall and winter. Cost: Free. Sponsored by OEFFA as part of the 2013 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop Series. For more information, call (774) 573-6804 or go to www.bionutrient.org/events.

Cold Season Vegetable Production Farm Tour
Saturday, November 9 — 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Turner Farm • 7400 Given Rd., Cincinnati, OH
Learn about the advantages of cold weather production and see what can be grown in Ohio during the fall and winter. Cost: Free. Sponsored by OEFFA as part of the 2013 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022 or go to www.oeffa.org/pdfs/farmtour2013.pdf.

Heart of Ohio Chapter Meeting: Tractors, Tools, and Equipment
Monday, November 11 — 7-9 p.m.
Granville District Office • 130 N. Granger St., Granville, OH
OEFFA’s Heart of Ohio Chapter will have a meeting about hand tools, equipment, tractors, and implements. Attendees are asked to bring their favorite hand tool(s) and share why they favor this tool. For more information, call (740) 587-8114 or email cdilbone@granvilleschools.org.

Heart of Ohio Chapter Meeting: Cultivation Practices
Monday, January 13, 2014 — 7-9 p.m.
Granville District Office • 130 N. Granger St., Granville, OH
Join OEFFA's Heart of Ohio Chapter for a discussion about cultivating practices. Topics will include raised beds, strip beds, low tunnels, shade cloth, seed germination, planting practices, and soil preparation. For more information, call (740) 587-8114 or email cdilbone@granvilleschools.org.

OEFFA Board Meeting
Sunday, January 26, 2014 — 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.

OEFFA’s 35th Annual Conference: Affirming Our Roots, Breaking New Ground
Friday, February 14-Sunday, February 16, 2014
Denison University • Granville, OH
Learn how herbs can be used to fight off seasonal illnesses. Cost: $35. For more information, call (614) 354-5162 or go to www.mockingbirdmeadows.com.

Raising Heritage Poultry for Profit and Pleasure
Saturday, November 23 — 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wholesome Valley Farm • 927 Rte. 62, Wilmot, OH
This workshop is designed for small, sustainable poultry farmers who are interested in breeding, raising, and selling heritage poultry. For more information, call (209) 890-5326 or go to www.sustainablepoultrynetwork.com/workshops-seminars.

Herbs 101
Sunday, December 15 — 2 p.m.
Mockingbird Meadows Herbal Health Farm • 16671 Burns Rd., Marysville, OH
Learn the basics about herbs and their medicinal uses. Cost: $40. For more information, call (614) 354-5162 or go to www.mockingbirdmeadows.com.

OEFFA News Autumn 2013 21
OEFFA Investment Fund Available to Grow Opportunities in Sustainable Agriculture

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

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

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

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

Rural Action and Green Edge Gardens Teach Agriculture Professionals about Season Creation with High Tunnels
By Joe Barbaree

Agriculture professionals throughout Ohio are learning about high tunnel operation from one of Ohio's most successful year-round farms thanks to a partnership between Rural Action and Green Edge Organic Gardens, and a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program.

The workshops are designed to "teach the teachers," including Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservationists, Ohio State University Extension educators, university faculty, and farmers looking to become peer-to-peer educators.

The project highlights the successes and skills of Green Edge staff and owners Kip and Becky Rondy—long-time OEFFA members and certified organic farmers. Agriculture professionals receive training over two years (2013-2014) on-farm at Green Edge to understand, replicate, and ultimately to be able to teach year-round high tunnel production to farmers in their work regions.

More than 30 professionals have attended the first two workshops alone, which introduced the infrastructure, business model, marketing, and labor needed for high tunnel specialty crop production.

"The high tunnel model for specialty crop growing is highly innovative yet underutilized by many farmers regionally, while demand for local product year-round keeps expanding," said Rural Action's Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator Tom Redfern. "This targeted approach to education will allow agriculture professionals to support farmers as they learn the techniques needed to grow year-round. Longer growing seasons equate to increased production, meaning more money in farmers' pockets and additional fresh, local produce on community members’ plates."

All workshops in the series are seasonally specific. The next workshop is scheduled for December 12. For more information about the program, call (740) 677-4047 or go to www.ruralaction.org.

Joe Barbaree is an AmeriCorps VISTA Development Specialist with Rural Action. He may be reached at joe.bi@ruralaction.org.

Producing Growing

For Agricultural - corn, soybeans, hay, pastures, wheat and specialty crops

David Benchoff | Banzhaf Garten Organic Farm
Affiliations:
Founding member and board member of Wooster Local Roots, member of Ashland Local Roots governing committee, and active member of Ohio Ecological Farm and Food Association and certified organic through OEFFA since 2003.

"TM AG was applied as foliar feed to potato plants. We have obtained yields greater than in previous seasons from the same number of row feet."

Photo Credit: Matt Moore

12966 Prospect Road | Strongsville, Ohio 44149 | P: 440-638-4540 | www.LandmarkDGroup.com
OEFFA staff and interns with Miles McEvoy during his visit to Columbus. In July, Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator for the National Organic Program, visited OEFFA’s office in Columbus. He provided an overview of the new “Sound and Sensible” initiative and met with staff to review our certification processes and answer questions.

Welcome New OEFFA Members

6/12/2013 - 9/12/2013

Business
Hong Park, Parkway Greenhouse

Family Farm
Aber and Lena Beiler, Lime Stone Ridge
Robert and Joy Blackston, Shade Valley Farms
David Bontrager, Swallow’s Rest
Lamar Bontrager, Wolf Co-Op
Floyd and Amos Bowman
Ray and Robin Car, Three Creeks Farm
Dwayne Coblenz, Coblenz Organic Goat Farm
MacKenzie Carpenter and Rachel Gross, Giants Farm
Brad Day, LT Land Development
Tony Dillman, DNO Produce
Moses Esh
Gideon Fisher, Fisher Farms
Ben Friesen, Spruce Run Farm
Neal Graber, Graber’s Farms
Dennis Hostetler, DKM Farm
Denny and Christi Koehl
Rodney Kroop, Kroop Feeds
Daniel Lapp, Forest View Farm
Elvin and Salome Lapp
Bud Manke, Manke Ranch
Marcus and Minerva Martin, Whispering Pines Dairy
Rodney Martin
Michael and Teresa Messari, Messari Family Farm
Kyle Metzger, Clear Creek Family Farm
Danny and Martha Miller
Joe and Susie Miller, J&J Farms
Carolyn and William Moore, Martin Hollow Farm
Nevin Nolt
Cameron and Audrey Pederson, Bending Bridge Farm
Neil Perin and Stephanie Rawlins, Arcadian Acres
Conrad Perry
Rick Riccardi and Adriana Quinones-Riccardi, Almost Eden Farm
Ivan Raber
Marvin Raber, Pine Lane Produce
Lisa Reed, Garden of Flavor
Neal and Michele Reishus, Healthy Homestead, Ripberger Farm
Philip and Jessica Risser
Matthan and James Schwartz, Schwartz Farms
Carrie Raver and John Schwartz, J&C Organic Farms
Mark Seeley, Full Circle Farms
Philip and Verna Shirk

David Stoltzfus
Melvin Stoltzfus, Penn Hills Farm
Aden Troyer, Pleasant Valley Poultry
John and Julia Troyer, Hidden Acres
Atlee and Susan Weaver, Green Meadow Farm
Leroy Weaver, Spring Bottom Acres
Henry Wengerd
Stephen and Lydia Wengerd
Erik and Keith Willett, Snell Farm
Devon and LaVerda Yoder
Martin and Barbara Yoder, Forks Valley Dairy Farm
Brendan Zimmerman, Whispering Brook Farm

Family
Robert Coleman
Jim and Susan Irvine
Laura and Chris Reynolds
K. Ann and Robert Stiebbs
Kevin Fitzgerald and Lauren Walker

Nonprofit Organization
Linda Foor, Westerville Farmers’ Market

Individual
Beth Blissman
Garen Burnett
A.J. Gentry
Bethany Majeski
Kristina Markey
John Metz
Rita Nagle
Mark Seminew
Daniel Wiggins

Student
Jimmy Conroy
Penny Cestn
Sarah Fenske
Jeff Hensel
Chelsea Johnson
Nia Llewellyn
Laura Lee
Nicolette Mikuza
Andrew Pelletier

OEFFA Welcomes New Staff

OEFFA welcomed Marilyn Kircher as our Member Care Associate in late August. Marilyn comes to us from the private sector, where she spent 26 years in the software industry. Earlier this year she made the decision to explore options in the nonprofit sector so that she could devote her time and energy to an organization with a mission that fit her own values. In that regard, she has been involved in the GoGo bike share program and The Nature Conservancy, among others. Marilyn also recently completed the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist training. Welcome Marilyn!
Heart of Ohio Chapter Update

The Heart of Ohio Chapter has planned their schedule of events for the next year. Meetings have been scheduled for November 11 (hand tools, tractors, and equipment), January 13 (cultivation practices), and March 10 (organic weed and pest control). Each of these meetings will be held at the Granville School District Administration Building, 130 N. Granger St. in Granville and begin at 7 p.m. The chapter has also scheduled an April 7 farm tour and irrigation discussion at Clearview Farm, 11015 Mill St. SW in Pataskala and a May 6 dinner and discussion about food safety regulations at Granville High School, 248 New Burg St. in Granville. Both events will begin at 6 p.m. For more information, contact Chuck Dilbone at (740) 587-8114 or cdilbone@granvilleschools.org.

Southwest Chapter Update

The Southwest Chapter is busy this fall with a number of programs. Carriage House Farm hosted a farm tour on September 14 and Hayfield's Orchard held an apple tasting on October 6 with proceeds benefiting the chapter. The chapter collaborated with Slow Food on a pizza party at Gorman Heritage Farm on October 19, which included a talk by Jamie Stoneham who attended the Terra Madre conference. The chapter also helped sponsor Farm to Fork II: A Celebration of Women Farmers at Grailville on September 29. Upcoming events include a farm tour at Turner Farm on November 9 and a potluck celebration at Peterloon the next afternoon at 1 pm. Steve Gordon will give a presentation, "Pigs, Pedigrees, and Porkopolis: Miami Valley Agriculture and the Rise of the Meat Packing Industry, 1825-1861." A planning meeting will likely be held in December or January, with details to be announced later. For more information, contact Sally Godschalk at (513) 984-0174 or swoeffa@gmail.com.

OEFFA Offers Webinars for Farmers and Consumers Concerned about Proposed Food Safety Rules: Submit Your Comments to the FDA by November 15

In January, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a set of proposed food safety rules for specialty crop growers and food processors. Since then, OEFFA and our partners have raised concerns about the impact the regulations could have on farmers and local food systems.

The FDA is accepting comments on the rules through November 15. It’s essential for farmers, processors, and consumers to speak out to ensure new regulations address the needs of sustainable farmers, while also protecting the safety of our food.

To help farmers learn about the rules, OEFFA offered a webinar on September 23 featuring Ariane Lotti of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. She presented an overview of the proposed regulations, who would be regulated, and how the rules could impact Ohio’s farmers and processors. To watch a recording of the webinar, or read more about the rules, go to http://policy.oeffa.org/foodsafety.

All farmers, processors, and consumers are invited to attend a follow up webinar set for Monday, October 28 at 6 p.m. OEFFA’s Policy Coordinator MacKenzie Bailey will help members navigate the process of submitting comments to the FDA and provide suggested talking points. To register for the webinar, go to www.oeffa.org/q/fsw.

For more information, go to http://policy.oeffa.org/foodsafety or contact MacKenzie at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 208 or mackenzie@oeffa.org.