



INSIDE

An Ear to the Ground:
Newsbites from the
Editor's Desktop
Pg. 3

Breaking Ground:
Summer Tales
Pg. 4

Insuring
Family Farms
Pg. 5

Savoring the Season:
August Means
Tomatoes
Pg. 6

Perennial Weeds:
New OSU study
Pg. 9

Book Reviews
Pg. 10

Great Local Events
and Resources
Pg. 11



Who Decides What Ohio Farms Should Look Like?

By Kat Bundy, Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund

In the midst of the growing season, I surrounded by lush farmland and gardens, we are acutely aware of Ohio's fertile ground. I say *ground* instead of *soil* because the face of agriculture in the state is changing. Over the last several decades, farmers across the state—as well as across the nation—have suffered at the hand of large corporate agribusiness.

There is no doubt that the increasing number of new, small farmers joining the organic-farming trend is beginning to have an impact. People raising free-range chickens or grass-fed beef, or transitioning from non-organic to organic farming are proving that economies of scale is not a requirement for running a healthy business. This is encouraging.

However, even with the rising number of new farmers and sustainable methods used in Ohio, it is impossible to ignore the fact that over the last 20 years, about 300,000 of our nations farmers have gone out of business. We are told it's "inevitable," that

Continued on page 2

Raw Milk Judge Rules Against Farmer

MILLERSBURG, Ohio - A judge has ruled that a state law prohibiting the sale of raw milk does not violate an Amish dairy farmer's religious beliefs and has ordered him not to sell unlabeled milk from his farm.

Arlie Stutzman, who owns a herd of 27 cows near Mount Hope, appeared in court June 30 to protest a law that he says violates his religious beliefs by prohibiting him from sharing the milk he produces with others. Holmes

Continued on page 2



Denise Anderson shows off a chicken tractors at an OEFFA farm tour on 8/12. For more about upcoming tours see pg 9. (Photo courtesy of Lisa Armstrong.)

Local Harvest Dinner

September 17, 2006 • The Worthington Inn (Worthington, OH)

Indulge in the freshest and finest homegrown foods prepared by top chefs in town.

- Tom Smith - The Worthington Inn • Jon Fortes - Lindsey's Polaris •
- David Tetzloff - G. Michael's • John Skaggs - Northstar Café •

Using only the freshest local ingredients, these masters will create a tantalizing four-course meal to please the palate. Join us and celebrate the value of knowing where our food comes from at this delicious omnivore's delight. Taste the difference!

Visit www.oeffa.org/dinner. Reservations must be made by September 10.

Judge Rules...

Continued from front page.

County Common Pleas Judge Thomas D. White wrote that Stutzman may give his unpasteurized milk away to people in need, but may not accept donations for it.

Stutzman lost his dairy license after an undercover agent from the Ohio Department of Agriculture gave him \$2 for a gallon of milk last September. He was cited for selling milk in an unlabeled container. He was given a new license in April.

"We disagree with it, but obviously Arlie has to comply with it," said his attorney, Gary Cox. He didn't know whether they would appeal the ruling.

[Judge White also stated that while the ruling prohibited the sale of raw milk, it did not affect herdshare arrangements. This is an important recognition in an Ohio court.]

For more information about raw milk and HB 534 see the Spring OEFFA News (Vol. 26, No 2), or visit Action Alerts at www.oeffa.org.

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

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Next deadline September 15, 2006

Member of COSMO (Community Shares of Mid-Ohio)

Who Decides...

Continued from front page

businesses consolidate to remain competitive. But when six percent of agribusiness corporations reap a majority of the farm income, we need to think seriously about exactly who corporate agribusiness is serving.

Not only has such industrial agribusiness limited small and traditional farmers' options as they struggle to compete, but it has become alarmingly clear that when residents want to stop corporate agribusiness—such as factory farms or genetically engineered seeds—from invading communities, people are directed like cattle through the chute to the regulatory agencies. After all, as long as a business is legal, the regulatory agency is required by law to issue the corporation a permit.

So the deeper questions that farmers and community members alike are asking is: *Why is it community members are not the ones to decide what farming looks like in their own communities?* Some might reply that having a majority make the governing decisions would be untenable. Others might call it democracy. If residents are asked whether they think their locally elected officials should have the right to make laws about a small dairy farmer's ability to sell raw milk, or a 4,500-cow dairy factory's ability to site in a community, the people are likely to respond "Absolutely!" And shouldn't the local legislative body then develop such laws based on the decisions of the majority of the people in that community and not on the people who run the agribusiness corporations?

All this is to say, when the Ohio Constitution declares, "All political power is inherent in the people," and we see this has clearly not been the case in our local communities, let alone at the state level, we should first begin to hold discussions about our fundamental rights (not just about how to regulate what we didn't want in the first place). Then we can work together with our neighbors, across the political spectrum, to achieve those rights described in the Declaration of Independence as "inalienable."

If each community member works to create a community they would like to live in, we can have a patchwork across the country of which we can be proud.

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, based in Pennsylvania, has been working with rural communities to develop local laws based on the people's governing power in those communities. The Defense Fund is now working with folks in Ohio to do the same.

See the website at www.celdf.org for more information on this strategy, and contact Kat Bundy, Community Organizer in Ohio for the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund; 937-223-1577.

An Ear to the Ground

Newbites from the Editor's Desktop

Athens Co. Gardening on the Move

ATHENS, Ohio - Community Food Initiatives (CFI) received a grant from The Sisters of St. Joseph's Charitable Fund of Parkersburg, West Virginia, in May 2006 that will total \$37,000 over a three-year period. This amount, combined with an April 2006 award from the O'Bleness Foundation of \$5,000, will help the Athens County-based nonprofit achieve its goal of helping local citizens learn how to grow and preserve their own food.

Ronda Clark, CFI's Executive Director, says the grant money will be used in part to expand community gardening in Athens. The organization's Community Gardening Project, through which local people have cultivated gardens for several years, recently expanded.

The new grant money will also help CFI further develop the group's Edible Schoolyard Project in the Trimble Local School District. A garden at Trimble Elementary/Middle School in Jacksonville, Ohio, has been used both as an educational resource by teachers and as a source of cafeteria food. Clark says that CFI wants "to teach everyone in the local school communities how to become more self-sufficient in their food production."

Some area residents hope the Edible Schoolyard Project will indirectly help students achieve higher test scores on state-mandated tests. "We believe that if students eat healthier meals, they will have clearer minds and greater ability to succeed on these tests," said Clark. She adds that fresh garden produce will also help those fighting obesity, diabetes, and other food-related conditions.

CFI serves Athens and the surrounding communities by helping area residents gain access to arable land, providing gardening resources, and teaching people how to grow, maintain, harvest, cook, and preserve garden produce. Participants in CFI programs also learn how to compost and save seeds, as well as why these practices are important.

CFI, which has a membership base of about 125, originated in 1992 as a project of ACEnet, when a group of local growers came together to create new ways to market and develop locally-grown produce. The group's mission has since moved toward helping community residents become self-sufficient in their food production.

USDA Seeks Comments on Expanding Allowable Substances in Organic Meat

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service is seeking comment on a proposed rule that would expand by eight the number of allowable substances used in treating livestock under the National Organic Program. (This is different from the "grass-fed" comment period which ended in August.)

Comments must be submitted by Sept. 15, 2006. They may be mailed to:

Arthur Neal, Director of Program Administration
National Organic Program, USDA-AMS-TMP-NOP
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Room 4008-So., Ag Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250
Fax: 202-205-7808
Internet: www.regulations.gov

*Written by Pete Hisey for Meatingplace.com
Continued (with a full list of substances) on page 8*

NAIS Forums

Excerpted in part from the Ohio Farm Bureau website.

The Ohio Farm Bureau will be holding forums throughout Ohio this summer regarding the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). This is an opportunity to learn about the NAIS program, raise general awareness, and ask some of those tough questions about effects on small family farms.

Each forum will include a review of Farm Bureau policy regarding animal ID, as well as a brief presentation regarding NAIS development efforts to date, followed by a question/answer session. All forums will begin at 7:30 p.m. For additional information contact Amy Hurst at 614/246-8262 or ahurst@ofbf.org.

September 18
Comfort Inn, Bellefontaine

September 21
Pleasant Grove Methodist Church, Zanesville

September 26
Stark County Farm Bureau office, Canton

The National Farmers Union also held a statewide listening session regarding NAIS in August at the statehouse in Columbus.

Breaking Ground

A Column for New Farmers: Summer Tales

By Joan Richmond, Meadow Rise Farm

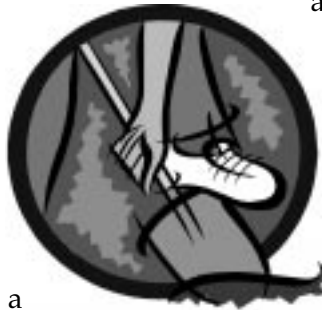
Everyone reaches a point in the season when everything is planted and one has a whiff of feeling caught up. A friend just yesterday triumphantly announced her last flat of onions was in. But it isn't easy getting there. I am finding, in our third year of this, that every year brings new problems.

I believed last year, when I decided to use a bagged poultry manure fertilizer instead of using local horse manure, I had solved a big worry. Before this my dad, Bill Schaefer, and I had found a good used manure spreader, and it seemed to be just what we needed. Horse farms around here love for people to haul away manure, so we were all set. But it was a lot more work than I expected. Not for me, but for Dad. He doesn't trust me or my husband, Reed, with The Big Equipment yet, so for every load, he would run the front-end loader (a Farmall 300), then clamber onto the other tractor (the John Deere B) to haul it two miles down the road to our place, spread it, drive back, climb on the front end loader, and repeat, and repeat, and repeat. Plus, it had rained earlier in the week, and the farther we got into the pile, the heavier and wetter it became--and more the difficult to load. I learned new farm vocabulary from Dad that week. It was just too much. A great plan gone awry.

Many times you think you have something figured out, only to discover new problems. So my next plan was to use this bagged fertilizer using a new spreader I bought for the ATV. It works well for seeds, but the fertilizer pebbles were just too heavy. So I bought a spiker/spreader for the lawn tractor (still trying to use the equipment we could handle ourselves). Well, this, too, wasn't very successful. The catalogue said "professional," but clearly this spreader was meant for lawns.

Here, the inane kicked in. The last of the spreading was done by putting me in the back of our lawn tractor wagon clutching a plain old hand-pushed spreader as we bounced and rumbled across the field. I got pretty green (car sick) from riding backwards in the trailer, and my arms ached for a week. But it served. I don't know what we'll do for next year. Get inventive again, I guess. Or take Dramamine.

I tell these tales to illustrate the fact that you will have great ideas that will fail miserably. Be prepared for it,



and learn from it. I know now, for example, that poultry manure is the way to go, but I need to do a lot more research on the right kind of equipment to spread it, especially for our situation.

The point is, you have to take the best ideas out there and recast them to work for you—and plan to revise your plans. Plus, if you continue in your venture, it's wise to find ways to complete tasks as much on your own as possible. You really don't want to be dependent on others' equipment or schedule to make your plans work, even when people have the best of intentions.

This year we had a sort of debacle getting the sweet corn and cucurbits in too. We have three "bottom" acres where we rotate sweet corn, cucurbits, and "green manure." My brother Jeff did a great job of preparing it with the JD-B by plowing, disking, harrowing, and cultipacking it, the week of April 12. With the ATV, I planted the green manure acre with field peas, oats, and hairy vetch. I wanted to plant the other two acres in mid-May, since we don't plant treated corn and wanted to be sure the ground was warm enough. The plan was to hit it with the disks again to knock down germinated weeds, cultipack, and plant.

Mid-May came and went. Too wet. Then the weather was good, but Jeff's schedule wasn't. Then we spent one weekend in Piqua disassembling a used greenhouse that was too good a deal to pass up. Then more rain. Then Dad's hip surgery. Every time I drove by a field of germinated and rapidly-growing corn, I winced. We had a dry spell, but Jeff's family vacation to Florida loomed. I felt doomed.

The whole ten days he was gone, we got no rain. When he got back, first thing he did, on his last vacation day (bless his heart), was to get our field ready. That was a Monday. Tuesday, June 19, Reed planted the corn acre with an Earth-way seeder. With a hoe, I planted the cucurbits acre. The forecast called for rain for the next six days, so we had to get it in. We thought we might expire, but we did get it done, and that felt good. Even if it was physically, not so good. While I put away equipment, Reed soaked in the tub. Then he put the chickens to bed while I soaked. We both wondered how old we'll be when we have to cut this out. After that week I think the age limit dropped.

Breaking Ground...

Continued from page 4

In the end, I think it worked out for the best. If we had planted the week before Jeff left, the dry weather would have limited germination anyway. As it was, the corn we planted Tuesday sprouted by Saturday, and the squash and cucumbers were all up, too. The warm weather and rain forecast meant that the corn caught up fast (it does grow much faster planted in June than in May). The CSA might have to wait an extra two weeks for the corn, but that's okay. And the caterpillar killer in our Zea-lator contraption (see Johnny's Seeds) will head off most of the corn borers we now expect with the later corn. Disaster averted.

Plus, Reed had a brainstorm we can use every year. After the field was prepped, he asked Jeff to use his Farmall Cub cultivators to mark rows in the field. The great insight was that Reed could use the cultivator marks to run the one-row corn seeder. I used them for planting the cucurbits. This saved hours of time over me marking each row with stakes and a yardstick as Reed planted it, and the rows are so much straighter, making later cultivation a snap. If we hadn't had the extra time (and pressure), we probably wouldn't have thought of it.

The take away? I'm still sorting it out, but I believe it is this. Number one, engage and bless the help you get from friends and family, but be aware that you are on their schedule. Two, research and assemble as much equipment you can that suits your budget, operation, and abilities. Three, don't expect a problem solved this year to stay solved the next. Even if it is, you will have new ones. Four, stay calm. Things are rarely the crisis they first seem. You can make it work. Five, be prepared to change. Reed and I need to assess whether or not we are really prepared for handling that bottom three acres. Do we need to give that up for a year or two? Hire out? Should we bite the bullet and borrow for midsize equipment we can handle, such as a hydrostatic-drive small tractor? Can we get by with an uncertain schedule again next year and just hope for better weather?

This is the kind of assessment we make yearly. I don't expect we'll give up on the bottom acres. Perseverance is the answer, in the end. You'll never do everything just right--unexpected problems will crop up even if you did--and people will criticize your methods or grin at your apparent lack of expertise (I wonder how many experienced farmers are reading about our travails and having a good chuckle!), but you'll deal. We're learning, we're improving, and we're growing. Two steps forward and one step back still means progress. Who ever gets caught up anyway? Maybe just retired farmers.

Insuring your Business

By Jim McGuire

The traditional farm insurance policy is not designed to cover just any kind of farm. As smaller farms change to incorporate new kinds of enterprises, insurance policies are having to change too. Before undertaking a new business venture you may want to check with your insurance agent and see if it can be covered.

Most of today's conventional agricultural production, marketing, and distribution system can be described as an "hourglass." More than two million farmers/ranchers produce the nations' food. These in turn sell to a few firms that add value through processing, packaging, and transporting (the neck of the "hourglass"). These in turn sell to hundreds of millions of domestic and foreign customers. The firms in the middle incur costs and risks, add value to the products, and transport them to market. They also make most of the money.

In some cases, small farmers are the ones to do the work traditionally done by the "middle man." This is often done by adding extra value through processing, packaging, maybe transporting, or perhaps through what are called alternative enterprises.

Many profitable small/nich farms have incorporated one or more of these types of alternative enterprises :

- **Farm Markets and Specialty Products** – value added products from food to crafts
- **Product Processing** – an education activity providing an opportunity to take something home
- **Fairs, Festivals, and Special Events** – a very profitable way to attract customers
- **Horses and Other Farm Animals** – petting zoos that raise exotic animals (from fiber to food)
- **Unique Dining Experience** – a special location or fun dining experience (play, entertainment, etc.)
- **Wildlife/Fish** – bird watching; guided or unguided hunting; managing land for improved game habitat
- **Nature-based Recreation** – hiking, picnicking, biking, float trips, paintballing, or other team sports
- **Floriculture** - flowers, bedding plants, or herbs
- **Education** – public or private education (all ages)
- **Heritage and Culture** – rural "quality of life"; antiques, cabins, homesteads; experiences that mimic the life of a bygone age
- **Arts and Crafts** – food or value added items; use of journeyed crafters

Continued on page 7

Farm to Table: Savoring the Season

By Trish Mumme, Garden Patch Produce



August Means Tomatoes

Ah, tomato season. It's not that long in Ohio, but it's oh-so-sweet. Beefsteaks, plums, cherries, or red slicers will all be coming in for the next month. We need to make the most of them before the first frost puts an end to it all.

Pasta with Uncooked Tomato Sauce is my favorite dinner to make in the hot, humid days of August and early September. The cold sauce on hot pasta is so refreshing. It's really beautiful when made with yellow and red tomatoes. Serve with fresh corn on the cob for a complete meal.

Every year I try to freeze several quarts of Pasta Pedro sauce to defrost for a quick supper in the winter. Save one batch in the freezer for the day in March that you start your tomato seeds. One bite will remind you why you are doing this. It will taste like August.

Beefsteak tomatoes really don't need a recipe. Slice them and eat them alone or on a sandwich. But if you want to show them off for a dinner party, try Beefsteak Tomato Tart on page 7. A side dish of fresh corn and tomato salad will be welcome with almost any meal. [Check the Editor's Corner of the OEFFA website for the salad recipe.]

Pasta with Uncooked Tomato Sauce

5-6 cups chopped ripe tomatoes, preferably yellow and red plum tomatoes
1/4 cup olive oil
3-4 cloves minced garlic
1 to 1 1/2 cups chopped fresh basil leaves
1/2 cup chopped onion (sweet or red)
1/2 cup flat leaf parsley, chopped
1/2 cup sliced ripe olives (optional)
4 Tbls. tarragon or other wine vinegar
1/2 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. salt
1 lb. rotini or penne pasta
16 oz. pkg. Italian blend shredded cheese
Parmesan cheese

Place tomatoes in a colander, to drain out excess juice. Combine with remaining ingredients except pasta and cheese. Let set at room temperature for 4-6 hours, stirring occasionally. When ready to serve, cook pasta

and divide into microwave-safe serving dishes. On each pile of hot pasta, add a handful or two of Italian blend cheese. Microwave 30-60 seconds till cheese melts. Use a slotted spoon to put sauce on top of each plate, with perhaps a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Serve and rake in the compliments. Store leftover sauce in refrigerator and eat within two days.

Pasta Pedro

2 Tbls. olive oil
4 cloves garlic
1 med. onion
1 med. zucchini, chopped
1-2 hot peppers, seeded and diced
1 tsp. ground cumin
6 cups chopped tomatoes, mixed colors. Can use cherry tomatoes, halved
1 can red beans or light kidney beans, rinsed and drained
Corn cut from 1-2 ears, opt.
1/3 cup chopped cilantro leaves
Salt to taste
1 lb. package of thin spaghetti
4 oz. shredded cojack or Mexican blend cheese

Chop garlic and onion, and saute in olive oil for 3 minutes. Add zucchini, and saute 2 more minutes. Add hot peppers and cumin, and cook 2 more minutes. Add tomatoes and cook and stir over medium heat 5-10 minutes, till tomatoes are cooked and sauce starts to thicken. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions.

Add kidney beans, corn, and cilantro to tomato sauce, and salt to taste. Heat through. Serve sauce on a bed of spaghetti, topped generously with shredded cheese. Note: To freeze for winter use, add corn and cilantro, but omit beans. Defrost, heat in a saucepan, and add beans. Warm while you cook the pasta.

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Insuring your Business...

Continued from page 5

- **Farm Stays** – relaxation; dude farms/ranches
- **Tours** – groups see foliage, blossoms, farm activities (harvesting, cheese making, maple syrup, etc.)
- **Pick-, Cut-, Gather-, or Grow-Your-Own** – watch or participate in production activities; rent-a-cow, tree, field, or bush; pick/harvest crop

Any of these types of activities are a much different business from traditional farming. Two major changes occur: 1. The farmer becomes a price-setter. The farmer is not asking, "What will you give me?" Instead he or she is establishing a fair market price for the product/service. 2. The business becomes a people business in which the farmer works directly with the customer.

Impact on your Insurance

While the traditional farm insurance policy is not designed to cover any of the alternative enterprises listed above, a few farm insurance companies have acknowledged the change in the smaller farm, and are underwriting these activities.

Before undertaking any alternative enterprise, you **MUST** discuss it with your agent. Don't be surprised if he or she can not insure it! This is a result of the agent's lack of knowledge and the reluctance of the companies he or she represents to insure what you are doing.

Be prepared to shop your insurance needs. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Have a clear idea of what you plan to do.
- Contact your local Extension Service, or trade group. They may know of local agents who can meet your insurance needs.
- While there are many agents who can write home and car insurance, there are **VERY FEW** agents who can properly write insurance for your farm.

Beefsteak Tomato Tart

1 8 oz. package cream cheese or Neufchatel
1 pie shell, baked at 350 till lightly browned
1/2 cup each fresh chopped basil and parsley
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
2-3 sprigs fresh thyme, or 1/4 tsp. dried
1-2 peeled beefsteak tomatoes, sliced 1/2 inch thick
Salt and pepper
1 Tbls. extra virgin olive oil, opt.

Soften cream cheese and mix with basil, parsley and garlic powder. Spread on cooled pie shell. Top with sliced tomatoes and sprinkle with fresh thyme and a little salt and pepper. Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes.

- Find an agent who is familiar with changes taking place in small farms.

- Give your agent plenty of lead time. It may take a couple of weeks to get the coverage you need.

In the process of finding the coverage, ask a lot of questions. Remember that while your agent will help you find the coverage you need, **YOU are ultimately responsible for understanding the insurance policy!** Read it from start to finish. Pay particular attention to the exclusions, conditions, and definitions. Remember that the Devil is in the details.

You can find insurance that will cover what you do. Take the time to ask questions and find just what you need. Having the right policy for you can make all the difference.

*Jim McGuire can be contacted at
Starkey Insurance, 740/743-1822*



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USDA Seeks Comments...

Continued from page 3

Proposed USDA additions to allowable substances for organic meat:

- Atropine: Used as an antidote for organophosphate poisoning, usually the result of exposure to pesticides. Atropine is an extract from the plant atropa belladonna. The NOP consulted with both EPA and FDA about the appropriateness of use of atropine and received approval.
- Bismuth subsalicylate: Used as an absorbant, anti-diarrhea drug, as well as for relief from stomach ulcers. FDA advised NOP that bismuth is approved for use in humans and could be approved for use in livestock.
- Butorphanol: Used as painkiller prior to surgery. This is in a class called opiate agonists, and is similar to morphine or fentanyl. It is a significant aid in pain relief, but wears off quickly. The National Organic Standards Board recommended use in organic livestock production, but specified that the period between last use and either slaughter or sale of milk be twice as long as recommended by FDA. USDA does not believe that extension of the withdrawal period is necessary.
- Flunixin: Used in the treatment of inflammation or pyrexia. Flunixin is non-narcotic and non-steroidal. It is a synthetic drug that breaks down quickly and is removed from the body in urine. Again, NOSB recommended a withdrawal period twice the length required by FDA, and USDA disagreed.
- Furosemide: Used for treatment of udder and pulmonary edema. It is a diuretic. Again, NOSB accepted the drug but requested an extended withdrawal period. USDA, again, disagreed on the necessity for such an extension.
- Magnesium hydroxide: For use as an antacid and laxative for use in treatment of upset stomach and constipation. This is a naturally occurring mineral.
- Peroxyacetic/peracetic acid: Used for facility and processing equipment sanitation and as a topical disinfectant on animals and meat and dairy products. Approved by FDA as an indirect food additive.
- Poloxalene: For treatment of bloat in cattle, it is a stool softener, and can be used in emergency situations or as a preventative as an addition to feed. It is synthetic. NOSB recommended that it be approved only for emergency treatments; USDA wants it to be used for preventative care as well.

Comments must be submitted by September 15, 2006. See page 3 for the address.

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Perennial Weeds

New Study Looks at How to Control Them while Building the Soil and Going Organic

By Kurt Knebusch, OSU/OARDC

WOOSTER, Ohio — Ohio State University scientists have received a four-year, \$400,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant to tackle a deep-rooted thorn in organic farming's side.

John Cardina, an Associate Professor of Horticulture and Crop Science, and his colleagues, will target perennial weeds--specifically, how to control them without using synthetic weed killers and how those methods affect crops, the soil, and a farmer's bottom line.

The work will focus on vegetable crops, which tend to fare poorly when competing with weeds, and on the three-year transition period from conventional to organic production, a time when the farmer needs to build up the soil--a key to success in organic farming--while growing a crop to make money, too.

Funded by the Integrated Organic Program of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), the project will evaluate transition strategies that both improve the soil and control perennial weeds. It will share and further work with the findings in an ongoing "learning community"--of farmers, researchers and Ohio State University Extension educators.

Spurring the effort: farmers' concerns, voiced at field days and other events and borne out by a survey of 22 Ohio organic vegetable farms that found that perennial-weed species, not annual ones, were most likely to be poorly controlled by current methods.

Farmers helped develop the plan, including selecting which treatments to study. Their farms will host some of the research.

The scientists, all with the university's Organic Food and Farming Education and Research (OFFER) program, call perennial weeds "among the most serious impediments to the adoption, expansion and sustainability of organic farming."

Reason: Long-lived vegetative parts--roots and the like--let perennial weeds regrow quickly after cultivation (a common organic way to fight weeds) and survive in a place year after year.

(Annual weeds don't do that. Cultivation usually wipes them out, lock, stock, barrel and root. They survive to the next year only through their seeds.)



Quackgrass, bindweeds, Canada thistle and yellow nutsedge rank among the culprits. So do pokeweed, hemp dogbane, Johnsongrass and broadleaf dock.

"Our central hypothesis," the scientists said, "is that biologically based and properly timed control efforts, integrated with soil-building measures, will provide effective and economical transition strategies that can be readily adopted by organic and transitioning farmers."

They'll test that hypothesis in "scale-appropriate" production-system experiments at the university's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) in Wooster and in on-farm studies--on a half dozen or so Ohio organic farms--of how perennial weeds respond to various practices. An outreach effort will share the new knowledge.

"The on-farm studies will follow perennial weed populations in whatever rotation and management strategy the cooperating farmers choose to use," Cardina said. "We want to learn how perennial weeds respond to real-life farming situations and how farmers respond to changes in those weed populations."

The project will look at a range of crops, including peas, squash, lettuce, sweet corn, potatoes, tomatoes and others. Each particular strategy tested will determine the crops that get used.

"For example, one strategy will be clean fallow with soil-building cover crops during the three-year transition period," Cardina said. "At the other extreme will be multiple cropping with tomato and cabbage in year 1, bell pepper and broccoli in year 2, and squash and lettuce in year 3."

Cardina's co-researchers on the project are Doug Doohan, associate professor, and Joel Felix, research associate, both of the Department of Horticulture and Crop Science; Deb Stinner, research scientist, Department of Entomology, and OFFER coordinator; and Marv Batte, professor, Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics. Batte and Felix hold appointments with OARDC; Doohan, Stinner and Cardina with both OARDC and OSU Extension.

"Lack of relevant information," the team noted, "is a serious obstacle to the sustainability of existing organic farms and their expansion into fields where perennials are present, limiting the broader adoption of organic methods by conventional farmers and the ability of organic agriculture to meet future production and quality demands."

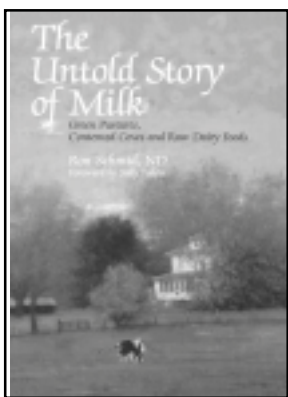
Contact Join Cardina at (330) 263-3644 or cardina.2@osu.edu to learn more. Picture of Canadian thistle courtesy of www.ca.uky.edu

Books

Four Good Books

By Herman Beck-Chenoweth, Back40 Books

How does YOUR garden grow? The time of summer bounty is upon us. I don't know about you, but our baskets runneth over. Our book crop is doing well, too. I have four nice varieties to review in this issue. But first--a reminder to all. If you order from us on-line and want OEFFA to get a donation for your purchase you MUST either visit via the Back 40 link on OEFFA's home page, enter "OEFFA" in the "PROMO CODE" box when checking out, tell the Order Entry person if you call, or write "OEFFA" somewhere in your correspondence if you order by mail. Now, to the books.



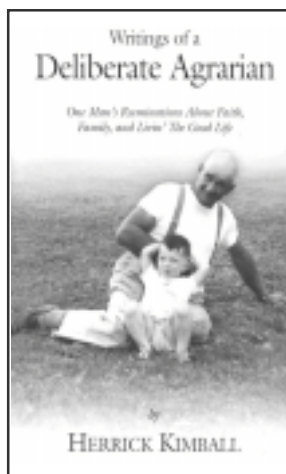
My first book is *The Untold Story of Milk: Green Pastures, Contented Cows and Raw Dairy Foods*, by Dr. Ronald Schmid. Unless you are already a member of a "raw milk coalition" this book will change the way you think about milk. Schmid chronicles the role of milk in the rise of civilization and in

early America, the "distillery dairies," compulsory pasteurization, the politics of milk, traditional dairying cultures, and the modern milk industry. He details the betrayal of public trust by government officials and dissects modern myths about cholesterol, animal fats, and disease, as well as describing how scores of scientists have documented the superiority of raw milk and its health benefits. Foreword by Sally Fallon. Soft cover, 6 x 9, 454 pages, \$19.95.

The *Winter Harvest Manual* is a very hard-to-find book. Self-published by Eliot Coleman, this 62-page comb-bound book gives all the secrets of commercial greenhouse production in cold weather climates without the use of supplementary heat. You'll find complete construction details, planting dates, varieties, and all kinds of tips and pointers about "farming the backside of the calendar." This 8 1/2 x 11 book is \$15.00.



What? A book about politics in OEFFA?! Yes, *Crunchy Cons* by Rod Dreher is a must read. Whether you are a "lefty" or a "righty" you will be stunned by this book. The author describes the "Small is Beautiful" style of conservative politics that sometimes finds him in the same camp as lefties outside the Democratic mainstream. Readers are introduced to people who are pioneering a way back to the future--people who believe that being a conservative today means protecting the environment, standing against the depredations of big business, and focusing on family. You'll meet Birkenstocked Burkeans, organic gardeners, evangelical free-range farmers, hip home schooling mommas, and many others. Fascinating! 6 x 9, 259 pages, hard cover, \$24.95.



Lastly, we have *Writings of a Deliberate Agrarian* by Herrick Kimball. This book of essays is a celebration of "The Good Life" viewed through the eyes of one man leading his family into the promised land of Christian agrarianism. Thought provoking and well written, this is about faith, family, and livin' the good life. Soft cover, 135 pages, 6 x 9, \$12.95.

Would you like to Become an OEFFA Member?

You can now become an OEFFA member by...

- visiting www.oeffa.org
- calling the OEFFA office at 614/421-2022
- sending your information and dues (on back) to OEFFA, Box 82234, Columbus, Oh 43202

OEFFA members receive 6 issues of the *OEFFA News* (electronically or in print), the *OEFFA Membership Directory*, the *Good Earth Guide*, a *Good Earth Guide Listing*, and voting rights, along with discounts on OEFFA's annual conference, OEFFA workshops, farm insurance, and more!

Events

Local Harvest Dinner - September 17, 2006; Columbus, Ohio. (RSVP by September 10.) Indulge in the freshest and finest homegrown foods prepared by top chefs in town. 100% of the proceeds benefit OEFFA. For reservations visit www.oeffa.org/dinner or call 614/421-2022.

Annual Paw-paw Festival - September 16-17, 2006; Lake Snowden, Albany, Ohio. Many events for all ages! Music, cook off, paw-paw eating contest, beer garden, 4-H sponsored petting zoo, atlatl throwing, etc. For more information visit www.pawpawfest.com, or call 740/698-2124.

Autumn Harvest Plant and Garden Exchange - September 16, 2006; Philo, Ohio. Bring garden tools, plants, produce, supplies, books, and magazines to swap, barter, or sell/buy. The day will include workshops on making insecticides and repellents out of natural ingredients. For more information visit www.bluerockstation.com, or call 740/674-4300.

A Wool Gathering - September 16-17, 2006; Yellow Springs, Ohio. An event of the Midwest Festival of Fibers at Young's Dairy. Everything from raw wool to yarn, and carders to wheels. For hours and directions visit www.youngsdairy.com, or call 937/325-0629.

Apple Fest - September 23-24, 2006; Aullwood Farm, Dayton, Ohio. Farm fresh food, childrens' activities, and horse-drawn wagon rides. Small fee applies. Call 937/890-2968 for more information.

Flying J Farm Fall Festival - September 30, 2006 (Noon-11:00 pm); Johnstown, Ohio. Speaker, horse-drawn wagon rides, hiking, horseback riding, farm market, exhibitors, archery, music, dancing, bonfire, potluck dinner, and more. Admission will be charged, and proceeds will benefit OEFFA. Contact: Dick Jensen, 740/967-4030, or rjensen@core.com.

Sustainability Festival - September 30 - October 1, 2006 (3:00-11:00 pm); Athens County Fairgrounds. From sustainable farming to renewable energy, this event will include demonstrations, over 40 workshops, great food, vendors, live music, informational booths, documentaries, and children's games. Visit www.susfest.org.

Annual Harvest Fair - October 14, 2006 (Noon to 6:00 pm); Stratford Ecological Center, Delaware, Ohio. Join us for horse-drawn wagon rides, kite flying, crafts, good food, and entertainment. This is a great way to enjoy Stratford and celebrate the fall harvest with family and friends. \$5.00/adults, \$3.00/children (ages 2-12). For more information call 740/363-2548 or visit www.StratfordEcologicalCenter.org.

Resources

SARE Research Highlights - Farmers, ranchers, and agricultural educators seeking to learn more about profitable and practical agricultural systems will find a wealth of ideas from the 2006/07 SARE Highlights. This new publication features 12 of the most innovative research projects funded by SARE. Download the entire publication at www.sare.org/publications/highlights.htm. To order free print copies, visit www.sare.org/webstore.htm, call 301/504-5411, or email san_assoc@sare.org.

OEFFA Farm Tours Series



Farm Tour participants move a portable electric fence at 2silos Farm. (Photo courtesy of Lisa Armstrong.)

Still to Come...

Making It Work: Flower, Bedding Plants, and Produce
Peach Mountain Organics - Doug and Leslie Seibert
September 24, 2006 • 1:00-3:00

Learn how Doug and Leslie have made a full-time business out of growing and marketing organic garden products. Learn how you can too.

Low Input Orcharding
Windy Hill Apple Farm - Charlie Fritsch and Family
October 7, 2006 • 2:00-5:00

Charlie will show how orchard cleanliness, persistent pruning, and other strategies produce fruit that is chemical and pesticide residue free.

Herbs, Renewable Energy, and Year Round Production
Rain Fresh Harvest - Barry Adler and Family
October 8, 2006 • 4:00-6:00

A unique blend of nature and technology! Barry will review the renewable energy equipment used, and discuss sustainable growing practices, fresh herb production, and marketing.



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UNCLASSIFIED ADS

For Rent - Three bedroom farm house in Morengo County with five acres that is mostly fenced. There is also a primitive barn on the property. \$900/mo. Call Carmen at 614/268-5578, or 614/263-5919, for more information.

For Sale - Navaho Churro ram lambs and ewes Also Navajo-Churro raw wool. Call Larry Wright at 740/967-8383 or email wrightacres@netzero.net.

Thanks

...to everyone who submitted comments to the USDA about the "grass-fed" meat label. It is important to let them know that we want this label to remain only for livestock raised with no significant quantities of grain in their diets. The comment period closed on August 14.

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