

# Northeast Ohio Agri-Culture Newsletter

Your Weekly Agriculture Update for  
Ashtabula, Geauga, and Trumbull Counties

July 25, 2017



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## ***Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!***

The wet weather continues! Hay making has been a real struggle for most folks this year. The prediction for August is a little drier which should help out. Corn fields have loved the hot temperatures and high humidity. But on the other hand, these conditions are ripe for many fungal diseases. It is important for farmers and gardeners alike to be vigilant in their scouting.

We had a great diagnostic clinic last Friday at the OARDC Ashtabula Research Station. Kudos to Andy Kirk and his staff for coordinating such a valuable in-service for our grape growers.

Have a great week!

David Marrison  
Extension Educator  
Ag & Natural Resources  
Ashtabula County

Lee Beers  
Extension Educator  
Ag & Natural Resources  
Trumbull County

## **Centerra to Close Jefferson Feed Mill**

In a letter from Centerra Co-op dated July 21, 2017, the closing of the Jefferson Feed Mill (Jefferson, Ohio) was announced. The closing will happen during the fall of 2017. This decision to close the feed operations was driven in part by the requirements to come into compliance with the Federal Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) as well as major electrical and structural issues at the facility.

Further details will be share by Centerra in the future; however a few questions from producers were addressed in the letter. These include:

- Livestock feed needs will still be able to be received from the Sterling Feed Plant, the Orrville Purina Plant or with Centerra bagged feeds from the farm stores.
- They will continue to receive grain at the Jefferson facility on a seasonal basis.
- Procedures have been established for producers with grain in the grain bank (pick up grain, sell grain or leave in grain bank if getting feed from Sterling Plant).
- The closing date will be sometime in September.
- Delivery of bagged feeds such as milk replacers and supplements will still be delivered to Jefferson facility for pick up by farmers. Although there will be no “walk-in” sales.
- The in-house Centerra brand feeds (swine, beef, sheep, goat and chicken) will be available at the Centerra Farm Store on East Jefferson Street in Jefferson,
- No fertilizer will be available in Jefferson this fall. No decision has been made for next spring.
- Off-road dyed diesel will no longer be sold at the Jefferson location.

More information about the closing can be address to Bill Rohrbaugh at 419-207-2160

## **5 Farm Bill Goals from AFBF**

By [Ben Potter](#), AgWeb.com - Social Media and Innovation Editor

Source: <https://www.agweb.com/article/5-farm-bill-goals-from-afbf-naa-ben-potter/>



As preparations to develop the next farm bill continue, the American Farm Bureau Federation [penned a letter](#) to key congressional agricultural committee members spelling out its top priorities.

“These recommendations are not set in stone,” the letter reads in part. “Rather, they are designed to provide the necessary flexibility to ensure that Farm Bureau is prepared to work with you in achieving the best possible farm bill that meets our key farm policy objectives while assisting you in meeting the challenges this important legislation will endure.”

In the letter, AFBF proposes the following:

1. Protect current farm bill spending.
2. Maintain a unified farm bill that includes nutrition programs and farm programs together.

3. Ensure any changes to current farm legislation be an amendment to the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 or the Agricultural Act of 1949.
4. Prioritize top funding concerns, including risk management tools such as federal crop insurance and Title 1 commodity programs.
5. Ensure programs are complaint with World Trade Organization agreements.

The AFBF board also passed along a few farm policy recommendations based on these goals:

- Let farmers choose the higher value – either the five-year Olympic Average yield for ARC-CO, or a simple 10-year average yield.
- Increase the reference price used as a floor for ARC-CO by 5% for corn, soybeans, wheat, sorghum and other minor crops.
- Designate cottonseed as an “other oilseed” so it is eligible for Title 1 commodity support programs, or support a cotton lint program.
- Improve the Dairy margin Protection Program with a handful of new provisions.
- Increase the annual cap on livestock insurance products from \$20 million to \$75 million.

AFBF president Zippy Duvall says U.S. farmers and ranchers need a strong farm bill now more than ever.

“Because of low commodity prices, many of America’s farmers and ranchers are struggling,” he says. “The risk management and safety net provisions of farm bills are most important in times like these.”

## ***Weather Outlook***

By Jim Noel

Source: <https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-23/weather-update>

The wet period continued into July. Rainfall in Ohio the last 30-days has ranged from about 4-13 inches. This is 100-350% of normal. This will go down as one of the wetter periods on record in Ohio. You can see the latest rainfall totals at the Ohio River Forecast Center Briefing Page at: <http://w2.weather.gov/ohrfc/FloodBriefing>

The other big news the last few weeks has been the high dew points and relative humidity in Ohio and surrounding areas. This has resulted in increase fungus risk at many days have seen mean relative humidity above 85%.

Week of July 25 outlook:

Temperatures will be near normal this week with near normal rainfall mostly contained in one event about Thursday. New fungus risk will relax some this week with lower dew point levels.

Temperatures - near normal -1F to +1F

Rainfall - about normal - 0.50 to 1.50 inches mostly late July 26 into July 27 heavy rain event coming.

Northeast Ohio Agriculture

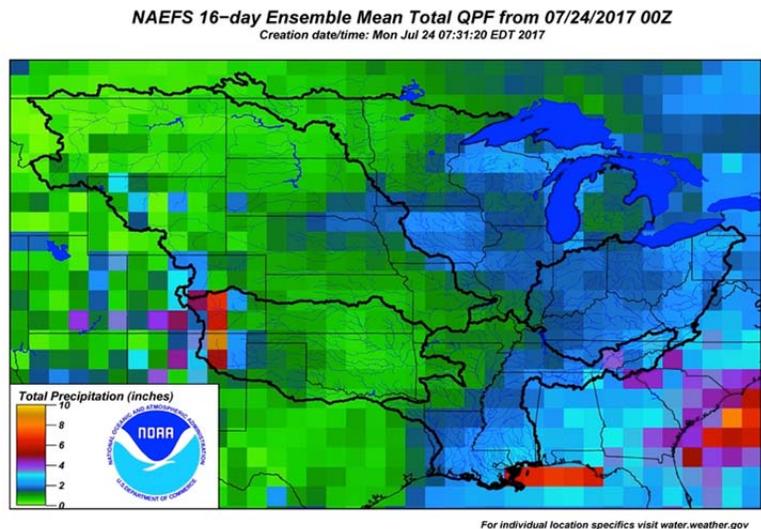
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  
Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties

Relative Humidity - daily average 70-80% below 80-85% fungus threshold except 85-90% July 27

Week of July 31 outlook:  
Temperatures will remain near normal next week with rainfall generally below normal. Fungus risk will not be as high as in recent weeks.

Temperatures - near normal -1F to +1F

Rainfall - below normal - 0.10-0.50 inches



Relative Humidity - daily average 70-80% below 80-85% fungus threshold

August Outlook:  
Near normal temperatures and not as wet is what is expected for August.

Fall Harvest Outlook:  
Confidence is high we will have above normal temperatures and delayed freeze risk this fall. Wetter than normal soil moisture will mean night time minimum temperatures will be held up some resulting in normal to 1 or 2 week delays in freezing temperatures. Confidence is low in the harvest rainfall outlook. It appears any drying from August into September could be replaced by wetness sometime in October and November.

The latest two week rainfall forecast from the NOAA/NWS/Ohio River Forecast Center can be seen in graphic above. Generally 2-2.5 inches are forecast on average in Ohio the next 14-16 days which is not far from normal.

## ***USDA Seeks Comments on Regulatory Reform***

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) wants to hear from you. The agency published its “Identifying Regulatory Reform Initiatives” notice in the Federal Register on July 17 seeking “ideas from the public on how we can provide better customer service and remove unintended barriers to participation in our programs in ways that least interfere with our customers and allow us to accomplish our mission.”

The notice derives from the Regulatory Reform Task Force established by President Trump’s February 24, 2017 Executive Order 13777 on [“Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda”](#). The

order requires the heads of federal agencies to evaluate existing regulations and make recommendations to repeal, replace or modify regulations that create unnecessary burdens.

Specifically, the USDA invites the public to evaluate the agency's existing regulations. The agency poses several questions and encourages commenters to respond in detail to the questions:

1. Are there any regulations that should be repealed, replaced or modified?
2. For each regulation identified in question one, identify whether the regulation:
  - o Results in the elimination of jobs, or inhibits job creation;
  - o Is outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective;
  - o Imposes costs that exceed benefits;
  - o Creates a serious inconsistency or otherwise interferes with regulatory reform initiatives and policies;
  - o Is inconsistent with requirements that agencies maximize the quality, objectivity, and integrity of the information they disseminate;
  - o Derives from or implements previous presidential directives that have been rescinded or substantially modified.

The comment process offers the agricultural community an opportunity to draw attention to USDA regulations that create unnecessary or unintended negative impacts on agriculture. Considering the wide range of programs and regulations administered by the USDA in areas such as crop and livestock insurance; Farm Service Agency programs; commodity standards, grading and inspections; animal and plant health; and agricultural exports, it's likely that agricultural producers will have thoughts to share with the agency. To that end, USDA will accept comments for the next year, but will review the comments in four phases. The deadline for the first review is September 15, 2017.

To read the agency's notice and instructions for submitting comments on regulatory reform, visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/07/17/2017-14920/identifying-regulatory-reform-initiatives>

## ***Controlling Pasture Flies on Cattle***

By Rory Lewandowski, OSU Extension Educator, Wayne County

Source: <http://u.osu.edu/beef/2017/07/19/controlling-pasture-flies-on-cattle/>

Horn flies and face flies are the two most common flies that bother cattle in pasture settings. From an economic standpoint, horn flies cause the most damage. Research indicates that a good horn fly control program can result in 12 to 20 pounds of additional weight gain for calves as well as reduced weight loss for nursing cows. The economic threshold for horn flies is generally considered as equal to or more than 100 flies/side or 200 per animal. Face flies do not cause the same type of economic damage and no economic threshold number is available, but they can disrupt grazing and contribute to the spread of pinkeye.

Common control methods include dust bags, back rubbers, insecticide-impregnated ear tags, livestock sprays and pour-on insecticides. A successful fly control program may incorporate one or more of these methods. Dust bags are only effective in situations where cattle must pass under them on a regular basis as they access food and water. The height of the bottom of the bag should force cattle to lift the bag with their head to pass under it. Lifting with the head provides treatment of face flies. As the bag drags along the back of the animal, horn and other biting flies are treated.

Probably the most common and familiar control method is use of insecticide ear tags. These tags provide good control of horn flies and possibly some reduction in face fly numbers when used correctly and when an effective insecticide is available. The primary issue with insecticide ear tags is horn fly resistance to the insecticides impregnated in the tags, especially the pyrethroid insecticides. Insecticides commonly used in ear tags include pyrethroids, organophosphates, abamectin and combination tags that contain both a pyrethroid and an organophosphate. Insecticide ear tags labeled for dairy cattle are limited to the pyrethroids.

The first key to good control includes knowing whether pyrethroid resistance is present and choosing a tag accordingly. Other keys are: placing tags in animals when fly populations begin to build and approach the economic threshold, follow label directions regarding the number of tags required for control (some require 2 tags/animal, others only 1), and remove the tags at the end of the fly season or before sending an animal to slaughter. Always read the label of tags before using. There may be limits for calves on some product labels that prohibit use for calves under 3 months of age or limit the use to only one tag. Remember, these are insecticide impregnated ear tags. Wear protective gloves when applying and removing these tags.

Back rubbers and oilers are similar to dust bags in that they work best when cattle have to come to them and use them to get access to minerals, water or a new pasture paddock. These devices combine an insecticide with diesel fuel, Number 2 heating oil, or a label recommended mineral oil as a carrier. In general, one gallon of oil solution per 15 to 20 feet of back rubber cable is sufficient for 30 to 40 head of cattle. Do NOT use waste oil or motor oil as the carrier. To increase the effectiveness of oilers against face flies hang strips of cloth at 4 to 6 inch intervals along the length of the device. Check and service back rubbers and oilers weekly. The insecticides labeled for use with dairy cattle is a more restrictive list as compared to labels for beef cattle.

Livestock sprays are available and labeled for both dairy cattle and beef cattle, but again the list of products labeled for dairy cattle is more restrictive. The challenge of using livestock sprays is getting good coverage of each animal and applying the insecticide so that no feed or water is contaminated. Pour-on insecticides are applied along the back line of the animal can also provide effective control of biting flies. Once again, there are more product options for beef cattle than dairy cattle. Some of the beef cattle labeled materials have significant slaughter intervals of greater than 40 days.

Several times in this article, I mentioned the differences in labeled materials for dairy versus beef cattle. Lee Townsend, Extension Entomologist at the University of Kentucky annually

updates a publication entitled “Insect Control for Beef Cattle” and another publication entitled “Insect Control on Dairy Cattle” that contains current labeled insecticides. Those publications are available on-line at <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/categories/pests-cattle>.

One other “control” method not commonly mentioned is genetic resistance. There are some beef cattle producers rating cattle and selecting bulls, at least partially, based on a rating score for low fly numbers compared to peer bulls. Some food for thought.

## ***Changes to Ohio’s Lake Erie Commission will Impact Agriculture and Lake Erie Water Quality***

By Ellen Essman, Law Fellow, OSU Agricultural & Resource Law Program

Source: <https://ohioaglaw.wordpress.com/2017/07/19/changes-to-ohios-lake-erie-commission-will-impact-agriculture-and-lake-erie-water-quality/>

The Ohio legislature recently enacted a bill expected to enhance Ohio’s efforts to address water quality in Lake Erie. Senate Bill 2, a far reaching environmental bill, contains several revisions to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) and Ohio’s Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Strategy.

The purpose of OLEC is to advise on the development, implementation, and coordination of Lake Erie programs and policies and to oversee the management of the Lake Erie Protection Fund. For Ohio agriculture, the most important of S.B. 2’s revisions to OLEC is the expansion of OLEC’s purpose to include “issues related to nutrient-related water quality.” This change reveals a new focus on nutrient impacts on Lake Erie’s water quality and a resulting charge for OLEC to implement the Ohio EPA’s current plan for reducing phosphorous levels in the Lake by 40% by 2025.

Furthermore, S.B. 2 broadens and strengthens OLEC’s role in coordinating and funding policies, programs and priorities related to Lake Erie. Coordination with the federal government is encouraged, as is consideration of the efforts of Ohio and other Great Lakes states and countries, as well as any agreements between those states and countries and Ohio. OLEC must also publish a Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Strategy that describes the commission’s goals and its planned uses for the Lake Erie Protection Fund. Demonstration projects and cooperative research are now acceptable uses of the fund, in addition to the previously established use of data gathering.

S.B. 2 enhances coordination between OLEC and the Great Lakes Protection Fund (GLPF) board by bringing two members of the GLPF’s board onto OLEC’s board, which currently consists of the directors of Ohio’s EPA, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation and Department of Development, along with five additional members appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate. S.B. 2 requires the Governor to select the two GLPF board members who will serve on the OLEC board.

Changes in S.B. 2 also call for OLEC to develop public education and outreach programs about their work and issues facing Lake Erie and to expand fundraising efforts to support their programs—namely through the promotion of the sale of Lake Erie license plates. A number of provisions regard the disposal of construction and demolition debris and dredging in Lake Erie.

The revisions in S.B. 2 are likely to better equip OLEC to carry out strategies for improving Lake Erie's water quality. Most notably, the new law will shift some of OLEC's focus to combating water quality problems associated with nutrient pollution, a change that will surely affect Ohio agriculture.

S.B. 2 is available at: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA132-SB-2>. Refer to the first four pages of the bill for the revisions to OLEC. More information about OLEC can be found at: <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov/Home/About.aspx>

## ***Assessing the Success or Failure of Pollination in Corn***

By Peter Thomison, Rich Minyo

Many Ohio corn fields have been subject to excessive rainfall this year. The fields where the Ohio Corn Performance Test (OCPT) were planted are no exception. Extraordinary rainfall accumulation has occurred at nearly all OCPT sites. Rainfall accumulations from May 15 to July 18-19 (and there's been more since then) range from 14.0 to 19.1 inches at test sites in the southwest/west central/central region.

Reports of short, waist high corn tasseling, as well as uneven development and flowering within fields, are not uncommon in parts of the state where heavy rains contributed to extended periods of saturated soil conditions and ponding. Now there are questions as to whether such uneven development will impact pollination and thereby affect yield. There are two techniques commonly used to assess the success or failure of pollination.

One involves simply waiting until the developing ovules (kernels) appear as watery blisters (The R2 or the "blister" stage of kernel development). This usually occurs



about 1 1/2 weeks after fertilization of the ovules. However, there is a more rapid means to determine pollination success, the ear shake technique.

Each potential kernel on the ear has a silk attached to it. Once a pollen grain "lands" on an individual silk, it quickly germinates and produces a pollen tube that grows the length of the silk to fertilize the ovule in 12 to 28 hours. Within 1 to 3 days after a silk is pollinated and fertilization of the ovule is successful, the silk will detach from the developing kernel. Unfertilized ovules will still have attached silks.

Silks turn brown and dry up after the fertilization process occurs. By carefully unwrapping the husk leaves from an ear and then gently shaking the ear, the silks from the fertilized ovules will readily drop off. Keep in mind that silks can remain receptive to pollen up to 10 days after emergence. The proportion of fertilized ovules (future kernels) on an ear can be deduced by the proportion of silks dropping off the ear. Sampling several ears at random throughout a field will provide an indication of the progress of pollination.

Unusually long silks that are still "fresh" period are a symptom that pollination has not been successful. Unpollinated silks continue to elongate for about 10 days after they emerge from the ear husks before they finally deteriorate rapidly. During this period, silks become less receptive to pollen germination as they age and the rate of kernel set success decreases. If you observe unusually long silks in drought stressed field it may be an indication of pollination failure.

Dr. Bob Nielsen, the corn extension specialist at Purdue University, has a good article, ("A Fast & Accurate Pregnancy Test for Corn"), addressing this topic, available online at <https://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/corn/news/timeless/EarShake.html>. There's also a great video available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7DiwD4N0T0>

## ***Farm Science Review Tickets Available***

OSU Extension is pleased to announce that Advance tickets for the Farm Science Review are available at all Ohio State University Extension county offices for \$7. This year's Farm Science Review will be held at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center in London, Ohio on September 19-21, 2017. Tickets are \$10 at the gate; however presale tickets can be purchased at your local OSU Extension for \$7 per ticket through Monday, September 18, 2017. Children 5 and under are admitted free. The review hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on September 19 & 20 and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on September 21.

Farm Science Review is known as Ohio's premier agricultural event and typically draws more than 130,000 farmers, growers, producers and agricultural enthusiasts from across the U.S. and Canada annually. Participants are able to peruse 4,000 product lines from roughly 620 commercial exhibitors and engage in over 180 educational workshops, presentations and demonstrations delivered by experts from OSU Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. More information about the Farm Science Review is at <http://fsr.osu.edu>

## **Western Bean Cutworm Trap Update for Northeast Ohio**

The number of Western Bean Cutworm moths caught across the region declined this week. We will continue to update you weekly on the trap counts we are finding in our corn fields here in the newsletter.

	Location	Corn Stage	Weekly Count	Season Total
Ashtabula	Conneaut, OH	R1	16	171
	Kingsville, OH	V3-V4	5	54
	Saybrook, OH	R1	37	333
	New Lyme, OH	V12-VT	9	30
Geauga	Burton	V12	60	154
	Huntsburg	VT	61	220
	Montville	V12-R1	59	330
Trumbull	Mesopotamia	VT	44	205
	Gustavus	V11	23	74
	Fowler	VT	1	19
	Kinsman	VT	23	76

## **Robert Spellman Memorial Program Applications Being Taken**

This program is to help a hardworking 4-H youth or FFA member whom shows strong leadership and pride with their steer project that will be exhibited at the 2018 Ashtabula County Fair. The family of Robert Spellman is sponsoring the program in memory of his strong passion for supporting the beef industry. He served as the chairman of the Beef Cattle Department for 25 years and he worked diligently to attract open class beef exhibitors to participate in the fair. Bob Spellman dedicated his life to helping others and will always be remembered for his hard work and love for the Ashtabula County Fair. He actively served for 28 years as a director. Bob Spellman passed away on October 5, 2015 and he will be long remembered and greatly missed.

The \$400 award can be used by the youth to help purchase their calf or for equipment needed for their steer project. Anyone enrolled in an approved Ashtabula County 4-H Club or is a member of a FFA Chapter in Ashtabula County is eligible to apply. The calf must be exhibited at the fair (not Carcass show). If the youth does not exhibit a steer at the 2018 Ashtabula County Junior Fair show, they agree to pay the \$400 back to the program fund. Interested youths

should have their completed application returned to Robert and Kristen Brown at 5214 Hall Road, Dorset, Ohio 44032 by Monday August 7<sup>th</sup>. Any questions regarding the application can be directed to Kristen Brown (440) 645-9081. The recipient will be announced during the Steer Show at the Ashtabula County Fair. Applications can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office or accessed at: <http://go.osu.edu/ne-events>

## ***David's Weekly News Column***

Hello, Ashtabula County! Can you believe how fast the month of July has zipped by? Wow, where did the month go? Today, I would like to encourage area youth to apply for the Robert Spellman Memorial Assistance program, share details on a new OSU Law bulletin, and provide a recap of two great programs which were held for our ag community last week.

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Through the years I have had the privilege to work with a lot of great members of the Ashtabula County fair board. I have always appreciated the dedication of the entire board of directors in planning and conducting the Ashtabula County fair each year. One of the members who I really enjoyed working with for almost 20 years was Bob Spellman.

Sadly, Bob passed away two years ago. Bob embodied the spirit of the county fair. He served as a director for 28 years and served as the chairman of the Beef Cattle Department for 25 years. He worked diligently to attract open class beef exhibitors to participate in the fair. He dedicated his life to helping others and will always be remembered for his hard work and love for the Ashtabula County Fair.

In honor of Bob, his family started the **Robert Spellman Memorial Steer Assistance Program** in 2016. The purpose of this program is to help a hardworking 4-H youth or FFA member who takes a steer project to the fair. Youngsters can apply now for a \$400 cash award which they can use for next year's steer project. The \$400 award can be used to help purchase their calf or for equipment needed for their steer project. The calf must be exhibited at the 2018 fair. Anyone enrolled in an approved Ashtabula County 4-H Club or is a member of a FFA Chapter in Ashtabula County is eligible to apply.

Applications are now available and interested youths should have their completed paperwork returned to Robert and Kristen Brown by Monday August 7<sup>th</sup>. The recipient will be announced during the Steer Show at the Ashtabula County Fair on August 10. Applications can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office or accessed at: <http://go.osu.edu/ne-events>

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Noxious weed law questions are common in the midst of the growing season and this year is no different. To help with these questions, Peggy Hall from the OSU Ag Law Program recently released a new law bulletin on Ohio's Noxious Weed laws. This is an excellent resource in describing what weeds have been deemed as noxious and whose responsibility it is to keep them in check.

Noxious weeds are defined as plants that can injure agricultural crops and livestock due to their invasiveness, toxicity and other harmful characteristics. These weeds include: wild mustard, grapevines, Canada thistle, Giant hogweed, maretail, and Palmer amaranth. The bulletin provides guidance on the laws regarding the cutting of noxious weeds along public highways, railroads, in fence rows, and on private and public lands.

This new law bulletin titled, **Ohio's Noxious Weed Laws**, can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 or on-line at:

<https://ohioaglaw.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/noxious-weed-law-bulletin.pdf>

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We had a beautiful day last Friday, July 21 and we were very pleased that 30 local grape producers attended the **“Wine Grape Disease, Insect and Weed Diagnostic Workshop”** held at the Ashtabula Agricultural Research Station in Kingsville, Ohio. Dr. Melanie Ivey, Dr. Doug Doohan, and Dr. Elizabeth Long did a really nice job teaching producers how to scout, sample and identify various vineyard diseases, insects and weeds. Best of all, each participant received a really nice diagnostic tool kit which will help them with their pest identification. Now our producers are better equipped to recognize issues before they get out of control.



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Congratulations to the Ashtabula County Farm Bureau for holding a very successful **“Grain Bin Rescue Training”** this past Saturday, July 22 at Magyar Elevator in Wayne Township. Over 40 fire fighters participated in the six hour hands-on training. The departments learned and practiced grain bin rescue techniques using Ohio State's Grain Comprehensive Agriculture Rescue Trailer (CART). With so many grain bins being constructed across the county, it is very comforting to know that our first responders are better equipped to handle an emergency if one arose.

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To close, I would like to share a quote from Gilbert K. Chesterton who stated, “To love means loving the unlovable. To forgive means pardoning the unpardonable. Faith means believing the unbelievable. Hope means hoping when everything seems hopeless.” Have a good and safe day.

## ***The County Fair is for Gardeners too!***

Garden Reflections by the Ashtabula County Master Gardeners  
By: Ashtabula County Master Gardeners

Our county fair begins August 8, so gardeners need to think about their floral and veggie entries now! Floral entries must be registered by August 7 and all others by August 1 in the secretary's office. The floral entries themselves must be tagged and brought to the Floral Building by 5 p.m. Monday of fair week for the first show and by noon on Friday for the second.

It's fun, easy and the entry fee is minimal. In fact, if you buy a membership ticket or exhibitor's pass, it's free! All the information you need can be found in the fair booklet, available for download right now at [www.ashtabulafair.com](http://www.ashtabulafair.com) or for pickup at the fairground's office.

While the categories for Floriculture Competition are straightforward and clear, there are some rules to follow. If you disregard them, you'll likely be disqualified. The most important tip, then, is Follow the rules!

For example, entries will not be accepted after the deadlines for the first and second show. The three categories that allow only one entry judged on Monday are Houseplants, Hanging Baskets and Artistic Arrangements.

Be sure your entry labels are matched to your entry. Yellow large marigolds won't stand a chance in competition against orange, multi-colored dwarf marigolds. And you'd probably be awfully embarrassed if you accidentally enter a snapdragon in the petunia category.

Follow directions for numbers of blooms. In the class of Specimen Cut Flowers, most entries are limited to one bloom--two blooms will disqualify you. But when three blooms are called for, you must have three blooms--no more, no less.

Measure twice. Two categories in Class Six call for arrangements no bigger than 5" and judges have rulers. You should also be aware that the tallest gladiolus is judged for the longest set of flowers, from the base of the first bloom to its flowering tip--not the length of its entire stem.

Speaking of gladioli, if you enter a spike in this class, please make sure your vase is heavily weighted. Glads and other tall entries topple easily if breezes blow through the floral building. When the wind picks up, Ashtabula County Master Gardener volunteers cringe as they await the sound of breaking glass.



*This cheerful arrangement of daisies and marigolds won a blue ribbon and Best of Show last year. The judge felt the vase complemented the flowers perfectly.*

Besides following the rules, you might want to keep in mind some tips that will help your entry be more "prizeworthy." Judges of flower shows take in many criteria when it comes to their consideration of individual bloom entries.

For instance, the color of flowers should be bright and attractive and free of blemish. Avoid entering specimens with defects such as sunburn, water spotting, bleaching or fading.

Flower form itself must be true to type. For composite flowers like dahlias and zinnias, petals in the same ring should be the same length and shape. Double blooms should be deep.

While larger blooms are desirable, form and substance are more important. Size matters more when an entry is required to have three or more blooms. In that case, judges are looking for uniformity in size, as well as color, shape, condition and substance.

Good substance and condition are vital for all entries at judging time. Flowers and foliage should be firm and crisp. Bloom tips and petal margins should show no signs of wilting, fading or browning.

Here are some other tips for entries:

- Make sure your foliage is healthy and characteristic of your entry, especially if the foliage itself is the entry. Start getting rid of those slugs right now if you plan on submitting a hosta leaf or two.
- Pick strong, straight stems for your blooms. You may want to "wedge" some of your entries in their vases so they don't look tipsy.
- Choose appropriate containers that don't distract from your entries. Clear or white vases are recommended for specimens, and a good rule of thumb is that flower stems be 1 1/2 to 2 times the height of the container.

While the condition of blooms in floral arrangements is important, other judging criteria carry more weight. Good color harmony should be evident between the container and arrangement, as well as among the flowers themselves. Each entry should have a definite design with stems arranged to create an attractive effect.

A balance in the volume and color of the plant material is important. A well-balanced arrangement will appear stable and not seem to tilt. Parts of the arrangement, plant materials and their container should be in proper proportion. Foam, wiring or tape used to hold the materials should not be visible.

Flowers and foliage should appear to belong together naturally. While dried flowers may be effectively combined with fresh (and may, indeed, be required in some categories), never ever include plastic or silk flowers in your entries.

Lastly, remember that judges are typically looking for uncommon, out of the ordinary, original arrangements. Let your design be imaginative and unique, without appearing bizarre.

While most of the categories in all classes remain the same this year, all but three of the artistic arrangement classes for adults change every year. The entries that typically appear every year are for fresh or dried arrangements not to exceed 5 inches and Exhibitor's Choice, which allows for ANY fresh floral arrangement.

Among the new categories in 2017 are All the Bells and Whistles, Buttons & Bows, Gone Fishin' and Gone to the Dogs. You might want to honor this year's fair theme with From Soil to Stars or arrange posies in a gravy boat for Good Gravy!

Others are Canoeing the Grand (a water feature), Eat Your Veggies (edibles only), Emoji That (feature your favorite emoji), Full Steam Ahead (a train theme), Green Thumb (shades of green only), Heart to Heart (a Valentine theme), Just a Pinch (herbs), Mac 'n' Cheese (packages for vases) and Waves of grain (or grasses).

New categories in the Boys and Girls entries (for ages 4-9 and 10-15) include Arrrrrr--Pirates! and Fairies. The popular categories of Miniatures and Kids Gone Wild will remain the same.

With over 80 categories to enter, most of them allowing for two shows, you could make big money at the fair. You heard that right. There are monetary awards for first, second and third place winners, as well as Best of Show!

Don't wait any longer. Download your fair book today and plan your entries for this year!

## ***Upcoming Extension Program Dates***

The following programs have been scheduled for Northeast Ohio farmers. Complete registration flyers can be found at: <http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines>

### Fertilizer Certification Sessions

August 17 at Trumbull County Extension Office from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

September 14 at Geauga County Extension Office from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

### 2017 Ashtabula County Beef Banquet

Saturday, November 11, 2017

### Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Sessions

November 16, 2017 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Lake County

January 12, 2018 from 9:00 to 12:00 noon in Ashtabula County

February 2, 2018 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Geauga County

February 9, 2018 from 9:00 to 12:00 noon in Portage County

March 9, 2018 from 9:00 to 12:00 noon in Trumbull County

2018 Northeast Ohio Winter Agronomy School

Wednesday February 21, 2018

21<sup>st</sup> Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show

Saturday, April 21, 2018



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
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