So who turned up the heat? Wow, it feels like the dog days of August got here early. This week we are pleased to have a full camp at 4-H Camp Whitewood in Windsor, Ohio. Our camp counselors do a great job of leading this camp. We also had a great weed workshop in Farmdale last Thursday afternoon. Mark Loux did a great job talking about Palmer Amaranth and Marestail control. Have a great week! Let’s hope for some cooler weather and some timely showers!

David Marrison, Ashtabula County Ag & NR Educator

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FSA County Committee Nominations Needed
By: Darlene K Freeman, County Executive Director for Ashtabula/Geauga/Lake Farm Service Agency

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to farmers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and producers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs, and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms.

After serving on the County Committee for 9 years, William Hurst, the current representative for LAA2, will not permitted to run due the term limit restriction. To receive a nominating petition or for additional information please contact the FSA Office. The Ashtabula, Geauga & Lake County FSA Committee nomination period began on June 15th. Producers that reside in LAA 2 are encouraged to run for the committee and represent their area’s farmers. LAA 2 consists of the following townships: Andover, Cherry Valley, Dorset, Pierpont, Richmond, Wayne & Williamsfield. Nominations will be accepted through August 1, 2016 and the voting will take place this November with the newly elected person taking office January 1, 2017.
Have and Have Not Across State When it Comes to Rain over the Last Week
By Jim Noel
Source: http://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/have-and-have-nots-across-state-when-it-comes-rain-over-last-week

Ohio is the state of have and have nots when it comes to rain. Scattered areas of very heavy rain next to limited rain occurred over the last week. Rainfall over Ohio the last week ranged from less than 0.10 inches to over 5 inches. Most places experienced 0.50 to 2 inches. Attached is the region’s rainfall for the last 7 days.

The outlook for the next 7-10 days calls for below normal rainfall. Rainfall through July 6 across Ohio will generally be under 0.25 inches so things will be drying out in a hurry into the 4th of July holiday. The last week of June will see near normal temperatures and rainfall generally under 0.25 inches except isolated high totals.

The first week of July will see above normal temperatures return with a heat dome building to the west again. Around this heat dome will be disturbances which brings the risk of storms and localized heavy rain back to the state of Ohio between July 7-13.

Overall, July is forecast to be warmer and drier than normal. However, extreme maximum temperatures above 95 will also be limited which is good news. Pockets of heavy rain will occur into July but the overall patterns favors slightly drier than normal conditions. You can see all the latest NOAA information for the region at: http://w2.weather.gov/ohrfc/DroughtBriefing

How Can the Timing of Stress Affect Yield in Corn?
By: Alexander Lindsey
Source: http://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/how-can-timing-stress-affect-yield-corn

Extreme weather events have begun again in 2016 with renewed force. Frost damage in May impacted early planted corn in parts of the state, with exposed leaf tissue showing extreme necrosis. Alternating periods of wet and dry conditions has also led to some variability in crop stage in some fields. Corn ear development occurs throughout the growing season, and extreme temperature or moisture stress at different growth stages will decrease different aspects of grain yield. Below is a quick summary of the yield component most affected by environmental stress at different growth stages:

- Before V5: The growing point is typically protected from extreme temperature fluctuations below the soil surface, and should be able to overcome early-season leaf damage. Soil crusting may impact ease of emergence, which could result in some stand variability. Uneven or late emergence can impact the yield potential by limiting the light quality received and causing competition with plants that emerged earlier.
- V5-7: Number of kernel rows. Corn plants are determining the number of kernel rows as early as V5 in some corn hybrids. By V7, the number of kernel rows in the primary ear has been determined for most hybrids.
- V9-VT: Number of potential kernels per row (row length). Each potential kernel comes from one floret on the ear (female flower), and as conditions are more favorable for development the plant will initiate more florets. The number of potential kernels on the ear can be set through late vegetative stages (through V16). Stress during this phase can reduce the yield potential of each plant, and can limit overall yield potential of a field. Flex-ear hybrids may initiate more kernels as compared to a fixed-ear hybrid during this stage.
VT/R1: Number of potential kernels that are fertilized. Pollination is a critical stage in producing yield. If the florets are not pollinated, a harvestable kernel will not develop. High temperatures and moisture stress can cause pollen release to occur before silk emergence resulting in poor pollination, and can decrease pollen grain viability. Ear elongation is occurring during R1, and if stress occurs total ear length could be decreased. Yield losses have been estimated up to 13% per day of stress.

R2-R3: Kernel number to be filled. Stress at the blister (R2) and milk (R3) stage can cause fertilized kernels to be aborted due to poor carbohydrate availability. Carbohydrate production will decrease as temperature and moisture stress increase because photosynthesis is reduced. The limited production of sugars will cause the plant to abort kernels, typically those that were the last to be pollinated (at the tip).

R4-R5: Kernel size. At the dough (R4) and dent (R5) stages, carbohydrate accumulation within the kernels will be reduced due to environmental stress. At the start of R5, only 45% of the dry matter in each kernel has been accumulated, leaving half of the starch to be added during R5. However, the kernel contains 90% of its dry matter halfway through the R5 growth stage (milksline halfway down the kernel). Early season frosts during this stage can reduce final grain yields by preventing starch accumulation before maturity (R6).

References


Practice Good Grazing Management During the Summer
By: Rory Lewandowski, OSU Extension Educator, Wayne County
Source: http://u.osu.edu/beef/2016/06/22/practice-good-grazing-management-during-the-summer/

Our recent period of above 80 degree days with no rainfall demonstrates how quickly we can go from saturated soils to looking forward to some rain. For the livestock owner dependent upon pasture growth, our recent weather pattern of 80 degree plus days with no rainfall demonstrated how quickly growth rates of our cool season pasture grasses can be reduced. Looking ahead to summer its likely we will see more of this kind of weather and even hotter and drier possibly. There are management practices that can give the grass plant some advantages during hot, dry periods and help to keep cool season grass pastures productive during summer months. Two big keys are leaf area or residue after a grazing pass and rest period between grazing passes.

The take half, leave half principle must be followed during the summer months. The leaf area that remains after a grazing pass provides a photosynthetic base for plant regrowth, shades the soil to keep the soil temperature cooler, and it helps to reduce soil moisture loss. In addition, research has shown that leaving half of the leaf area on the plant produces a minimal impact upon the plant root system, enabling that plant to continue to absorb nutrients and moisture and recover quicker. Taking off 60% or more of the plant leaf area will cause a significant decrease in the plant root system that will slow down and impede the regrowth of the plant. Do not cheat on this principle during hot, dry spells. It is critical to maintain a 4 inch grass height to get the benefits mentioned. Maintaining this leaf residue provides the grass plant the best opportunity to take advantage of those spotty rain events that are common to hot, dry years, allowing regrow much sooner as compared to overgrazed pasture paddocks.

The second principle that must be adhered to is to provide a rest period that is sufficient to allow plants to grow back to a practical grazing height. Obviously the two principles work hand in hand. The height at which grazing should begin is somewhere in the 8 to 10 inch range for grasses such as orchardgrass, fescue and festuloliums. For bluegrass and perennial ryegrass pastures 6-8 inches may be used. In practice this means that grazing rotations must slow down during hot, dry periods because grass growth and recovery is slower as compared to spring conditions. When pastures are growing fast, rotate fast. When pastures are growing slowly, rotate slowly. Unfortunately it is easy to
do the opposite and I have seen a number of pasture managers get caught in faster rotations during the summer with the end result that pastures become overgrazed leading to even slower recovery and less pasture production.

The only way to increase the number of days between grazing passes in a paddock and provide longer rest periods during the summer months is to have a sufficient number of pasture paddocks or pasture divisions. The number of paddocks needed can be determined by this formula: Days of rest needed divided by days of grazing + 1. For example, let’s say that in the spring of the year it takes 15 days for grass to regrow from 4 inches back to 8 to 10 inches in height. If my livestock stay in each paddock for 5 days I need 15/5 = 3+1 or 4 paddocks. Now let’s say that as it gets warmer and drier it takes 35 days for that same pasture to regrow to an 8-10 inch height after being grazed down to 4 inches. I now need 35/5= 7+1 or 8 paddocks to provide enough rest period. If I have fewer paddocks I am either going to graze down the preceding paddock below 4 inches while waiting for the next paddock to regrow to the 8 to 10 inch height or I will enter the next paddock at a lower height and have less forage available. Either way the end result is overgrazing, slower plant recovery, and less pasture production. Generally between 8-10 pasture paddocks or divisions are needed to manage adequate rest periods during the summer. I know of graziers that have 30 or more pasture paddocks. I have never heard good pasture managers say they have too many paddocks. Summer weather with its hot temperatures and reduced rainfall result in reduced cool season pasture growth. While weather can’t be controlled, how the grass plant is managed during the summer can be controlled by the livestock owner. Good pasture management can result in more productive pastures during the summer.

Two-Spotted Spider Mite Awareness
By: Kelley Tilmon & Andy Michel

Though we have not received many reports of spider mites in field crops, continued hot dry weather will favor this pest, and scouts should keep their eyes open for mites and their stippling damage. We will provide a more comprehensive article later in the season if reports indicate that spider mites are on the rise. For more information, see http://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-24

Senators Reach Deal on GMO Labeling
Source: https://www.morningagclips.com/senators-reach-deal-on-gmo-labeling

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senators have a bipartisan deal to require labeling of genetically modified ingredients nationally, a week before a labeling law in Vermont goes into effect. The deal announced Thursday (June 23) by the top Republican and Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee would require the nationwide labeling of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, in packaged foods for the first time. But it would be more lenient than Vermont’s law, allowing food companies to use a text label, a symbol or electronic label accessed by smartphone. Vermont’s law would require items to be labeled “produced with genetic engineering.”

The agreement couldn’t become law before Vermont’s law kicks in July 1, since the House is on vacation until July 5. Legislation passed by the House would make the labeling voluntary, but that measure stalled in the Senate earlier this year. Since then, Sens. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., and Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., have worked to find a compromise, saying a national solution is needed in the face of separate state laws.

The food industry has lobbied to block Vermont’s law, arguing that GMOs are safe and the labels could be costly for agriculture, food companies and consumers. The industry’s main lobbying group, the Grocery Manufacturers Association, said it is backing the senators’ deal. The group has opposed mandatory labeling nationwide but advocated for electronic labels in negotiations.
“This bipartisan agreement ensures consumers across the nation can get clear, consistent information about their food and beverage ingredients and prevents a patchwork of confusing and costly state labeling laws,” said Pamela Bailey, president of that group. The Agriculture Department appeared to endorse the legislation, as well, issuing a statement encouraging members of the House and Senate to move quickly on the deal. The bill would give the USDA two years to write the labeling rules.

Two top Vermont officials immediately opposed it. Gov. Peter Shumlin criticized the two-year delay and pre-emption of Vermont law, among other provisions. Sen. Bernie Sanders said he would do “everything I can” to defeat it. “People have a right to know what is in the food they eat,” Sanders said. Genetically modified seeds are engineered in laboratories to have certain traits, such as resistance to herbicides. The majority of the country’s corn and soybean crop is now genetically modified, with much of that going to animal feed. Corn and soybeans also are made into popular processed food ingredients such as high-fructose corn syrup, corn starch and soybean oil. The food industry says about 75 percent to 80 percent of foods contain genetically modified ingredients.

The Food and Drug Administration says they are safe, and there is little scientific concern about those GMO ingredients on the market. But advocates for labeling say not enough is known about their risks. Among supporters of labeling are many organic companies that are barred by law from using modified ingredients in their foods. Those advocates have fought state by state to enact mandatory labeling, with the eventual goal of a national standard. They have frowned on digital labels, saying they discriminate against people who don’t have smartphones, computers or the know-how to use them.

Groups that have advocated labeling criticized the deal. “This proposal falls short of what consumers rightly expect — a simple at-a-glance disclosure on the package,” said Gary Hirshberg, chairman of the advocacy group Just Label It and the organic food company Stonyfield Farm.

David’s Weekly News Column- Western Bean Cutworm & Weed Field Day Recap
By David Marrison, (as published in Jefferson Gazette on June 29 & Star Beacon on July 3)

June 2016 will go down as one of the nicest months of June that we have experienced in quite a few years. What a great month. Our farmers were able to get their crops planted in a timely manner and our first cutting hay harvest has been the best one in the past decade. In fact as we roll into the month of July over 80% of our first cutting hay harvest is complete and a few farmers have already made some excellent second cutting. Compare this to last year when we were just starting to make first cutting hay over the 4th of July weekend. Today, I would like to share information on our Western Bean Cutworm trapping program and recap our great weed identification program.

Last Thursday, I placed out Western Bean Cutworm traps across northern Ashtabula County. This will be the sixth year in which we are part of a state-wide monitoring program for the Western Bean Cutworm. This corn pest just recently has become a concern in northeast Ohio so its biology and economic impact are something we are just learning about.

The western bean cutworm has been historically found in the western Corn Belt, where it was a common pest of dry beans and a sporadic pest of corn. Starting in the year 2000, economic damage from this pest was found on corn in Iowa and Minnesota. Since then, this pest has continued to rapidly spread eastward, reaching Ohio in 2006. The easiest way to monitor the presence of this pest is trapping of the adult moths.
During early July through early August, the adult moths will fly into Ohio and will lay eggs on the upper leaves of the corn plants, and once the eggs hatch, larvae begin feeding on the tassels silks or ears of the corn. Depending on the crop's growth stage, yield losses can be significant.

In our monitoring for western bean cutworm adults, 3 traps were placed in various locations across the region. Thank you to Howard Seavey, Joel Baldwin, and Tony Stocker for allowing me to place traps on their property in Ashtabula County for this research. These traps will be checked weekly during our summer growing season. Last year we found 982 moths in the Ashtabula County traps. These numbers are always significantly higher when compared to other parts of Ohio. So it will be interesting to see the results again this year.

More information about the Western Bean Cutworm can be found at: [http://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-40](http://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-40). This factsheet can also be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

We held an excellent Weed Field Day last Thursday, June 23 in Farmdale, Ohio at W.I. Miller & Sons Farm. This program featured Mark Loux, professor of Horticulture & Crop Science at The Ohio State University. Mark is a great speaker on weeds and really helped the crowd learn more about Palmer Amaranth which the newest weed to be found in Ohio. This is one weed we do not want to see in Ashtabula County!

Palmer Amaranth was found last year in Mahoning County and is very destructive as it is a prolific seed producer. A few plants one year can lead to an absolute explosion the next. This plant is really easy to confuse with Redroot Pigweed which is common around Ohio. Mark did an excellent job showing the 44 producers in attendance how to tell the difference between the plants.

For those who missed the session, our Agronomic Crops Team has put together a great video on the pigweed family identification. The video compares four aspects of pigweed biology that we use to differentiate between redroot pigweed, waterhemp, and Palmer amaranth – pubescence, petiole length, leaf shape, and inflorescence (seedhead) characteristics. You can find it at the OSU weed management website – [http://u.osu.edu/OSUweeds](http://u.osu.edu/OSUweeds). It is well worth a few minutes to watch the video! Stop the spread of Palmer Amaranth before it occurs!

Mark also spent considerable time discussing Marestail which has become increasingly problematic in Ohio especially in soybean fields. I see it all over Northeast Ohio. It can get out of control due to a combination of factors, including its biology, its tendency to readily develop herbicide resistance, and current tillage and herbicide use practices. For producers wanting more information on Marestail, Mark has written numerous articles on our crops website at: [http://agcrops.osu.edu/](http://agcrops.osu.edu/)

To end today’s column, I would like to share a quote from Joel Osteen who stated, “I believe if you keep your faith, you keep your trust, you keep the right attitude, if you’re grateful, you’ll see God open up new doors.” Have a good and safe day!

**Sssssssnakes in the Garden**

**Authored by:** Marne Titchenell

**SSSSSSSSNAKES IN THE GARDEN.** It is not uncommon this time of year to encounter a slithery visitor in gardens, landscapes, and backyards. There are several species of snakes happy to live their lives in backyards, but one of the most common is the eastern garter snake. Named for the 3 light stripes that run along the length of its black, brown, gray, or olive body, the garter snake is sometimes nicknamed the 'garden' snake because that is where
unsuspecting gardeners often encounter them. The stripes running vertically along the length of the snake's body resemble the once stylish sock garters worn by men. While it can be startling to encounter a snake while weeding or planting, if their presence can be tolerated, garter snakes are doing the constant gardener a favor. They feed on worms, slugs, insects, and small mammals that may otherwise be feasting on garden plants and flowers.

Garter snakes are most active during the day and on sunny summer days are often found basking on rocks, sidewalks, decks, or patios. On hot days and when sleeping, they retreat to sheltered areas such as under foundations, rocks, logs, stumps, or porches. There are no repellents that effectively work to keep snakes away. The best approach, aside from sharing the garden with them, is to eliminate denning and sleeping sites (rock or log piles) and shoo them away from basking areas. They are rarely aggressive and habituate to humans easily. Some gardeners find relief using glue traps to capture and remove snakes from around the home.

The common watersnake, on the other hand, is not a snake that should be picked up without the expectation of a strong bite. The coloration of this snake, which prefers streams, creeks, and other bodies of water, can sometimes cause it to be mistaken for a northern copperhead, one of Ohio’s 3 venomous snakes (the other 2 are the timber rattlesnake and eastern massasauga rattlesnake. The northern copperhead has a distinct triangular head that the watersnake lacks, and is not common among well-settled areas. Because of the common watersnake’s preference for water, it is also often mistaken for a water moccasin, a venomous snake that does NOT occur in Ohio.

While it would be rare to encounter a venomous snake while gardening, never disturb or handle a snake without first determining the species and if it is venomous. Other snakes found around the home are the midland and northern brown snake, eastern milksnake, and gray ratsnake (formerly known as the black ratsnake). For help identifying Ohio snakes, see the Division of Wildlife Reptiles of Ohio Field Guide.

For More Info:
- Division of Wildlife Reptiles of Ohio Field Guide
  http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/publications/id%20guides/pub3...
- Division of Wildlife Reptiles Species Guide
  http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index

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