Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!

We hope you all had a wonderful and safe Easter weekend! It was nice for Mother Nature to provide some nice weather to dry up the soil a bit. Some farmers in SW Ohio took advantage of the warm weather and planted corn over the holiday weekend. We aren't there yet in NE Ohio, but it won't be too long.

When you pull the planter out of the shed don't forget the basics of speed, depth, and soil temperature. "Floppy corn" was an issue in Ohio last year resulting from shallow planting depth in wet soils. Don't let your corn be floppy in 2017.
Ashtabula County Women in Agriculture: Conversations and Crafts
The Ashtabula County Women in Agriculture Program will be hosting their next event on Saturday, April 29, 2017 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Last Resort Bed and Breakfast located at 4373 Cork Cold Springs Road in Geneva, Ohio. The Ashtabula County Women in Agriculture program was started this winter and OSU Extension invites any lady involved in agriculture in Ashtabula County (or surrounding counties) to join this group.

This Saturday’s program will focus on how other women in agriculture are able to balance their farm and personal life while providing effective leadership to their business. During this gathering, a panel of successful women in agriculture will share their experiences and answer questions. After the panel, we will continue the conversations while we make a burlap wreath. Supplies will be provided. Participants can stay after the program to feast on homemade pizza made in an authentic pizza oven. There is a $5 fee to attend this event. Please call the O.S.U. Extension Office (440-576-9008) or email Abbey Averill (averill.10@osu.edu) to register by Tuesday, April 25, 2017. A registration flyer can be found at: https://ashtabula.osu.edu/news/women-agriculture

Portage County Pasture Walk
Portage County NRCS, SWCD, and OSU Extension will be offering a pasture walk at the Goodell Family Farm in Mantua, OH on May 9th from 6-8:30pm. The Goodell Family Farm is an organic grazing dairy farm with an extensive pasture system. Come join us for an evening of learning about effective pasture management with Rory Lewandowski from OSU Extension in Wayne County. Rory has extensive experience with forages and grazing management and is considered an expert in the state of Ohio. A Q&A session will follow the pasture walk with refreshments provided by Organic Valley.

The event is free to all participants, but we request that you pre-register by calling Kara MacDowell by calling 330-297-7633 or emailing kara.macdowell@oh.usda.gov.

Clearing the Fence Row and Trimming Back Overhanging Branches
Written by: Chris Hogan, Law Fellow, OSU Agricultural & Resource Law Program

Farmers are gearing up for spring and preparing to plant crops and graze livestock. Part of spring-cleaning may involve clearing partition fence rows at the edge of fields and trimming back overhanging branches above the fence. Overgrown tree branches can affect crops and pose a hazard to agricultural equipment. Removing trees that obstruct the fence row, noxious weeds tangled in the fence, and other unwanted vegetation is a serious matter for Ohio farmers. Ohio law provides for ways to clear a partition fence shared between two neighboring properties. Ohio law also cautions against damaging trees when trimming overhanging branches.

Clearing the fence row

This section only applies to the removal of vegetation in the fence row. Clearing overhanging trees above the fence is a separate matter discussed further below. A partition fence is a fence that follows the division line between adjoining properties of two owners. The term “fence row” refers to the strip of land that is on either side of the fence. In order to keep a fence in good condition, owners should occasionally clear the fence row of obstructions caused by vegetation. Clearing a fence row keeps noxious weeds, brush, briers, and other vegetation from spreading onto a neighbor’s property. Ohio law provides several methods for a landowner to clear the fence row legally.
The easiest way to clear the fence row is to ask a neighbor to clear his or her side of the partition fence. Ohio law creates a duty for owners on either side of a partition fence to clear brush, briers, thistles and other noxious weeds in a strip four feet wide along the line of the fence, after a landowner gives notice to a neighbor asking them to do so. It is best to be polite, patient, and clear when speaking with a neighbor about when you would each like to clear the fence row. A landowner and a neighboring owner should try to establish a timeline to clear each side of the fence row.

What if a landowner asks a neighbor to clear the fence row on their side of a partition fence and they refuse? Once a landowner asks a neighbor to clear a fence row, that neighbor has ten days to do so. If a neighbor does not clear it within ten days, the landowner can ask the local board of township trustees to arrange for the fence row to be cleared.

After a landowner notifies the trustees that a neighbor refused to clear the fence row within ten days, the township trustees must view the property to determine if there is just cause for the complaint. Next, if there is a cause for the complaint, the trustees will enter into a contract with a third party to clear the fence row and certify the associated costs to the county auditor. The county auditor will bill the neighboring landowner for the work to clear the fence row. The auditor will assess these costs against the neighboring landowner by adding these costs to his or her property tax bill.

Trimming back overhanging branches

Landowners have the right to trim vertically and remove overhanging obstructions from above their side of the fence. Ohio courts recognize this privilege to remove obstructions, but not without limitations. Ohio courts do not permit landowners to cause harm to the other side of the property line. A landowner should be careful not to damage the neighbor’s trees or trespass on to the neighbor’s property when trimming overhanging branches. Landowners may be liable to a neighbor if they recklessly damage a neighbor’s tree when removing overhanging branches.

Landowners should review their rights and responsibilities to maintain fences prior to clearing the fence row this spring. For more information on line fence law, visit the Ag Law Library at https://aglaw.osu.edu/our-library/line-fence-law

Facts About Early Season Wheat Diseases
By Pierce Paul OSU Extension Plant Pathologist
Source: https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-09/facts-about-early-season-wheat-diseases

It has been cool, wet, and very humid so far this spring - perfect conditions for early season diseases like Septoria tritici blotch and powdery mildew to develop. Both of these diseases usually become established in the fall, thus getting an early start in the spring, particularly if winter conditions are mild. Here are a few more facts about Septoria tritici blotch and powdery mildew.

Septoria:
Symptoms first appear on lower leaves (those close to the soil) as irregularly-shaped lesions with a tan center and yellowish margin. Under favorable conditions,
Lesions spread up the plant, taking on more of a rectangular appearance on upper leaves, without the clear yellowish margin. Stems may also be affected.

The presence of distinct black dots or specks in the center of the lesions is the easiest way to tell Septoria apart from other diseases like Stagonospora leaf blotch and tan spot.

Septoria is favored by cool, humid weather, with frequent rainfall (every 2-3 days). Rain splashes spores of the fungus from lower to upper leaves or to nearby healthy plants, causing the disease to spread quickly (within 7-14 days).


Powdery mildew:
As the name suggests, powdery mildew develops as white, powdery lesions (called pustules), beginning on the surface of lower leaves and stems. As the plant and lesions mature, pustules take on a grayish appearance, with distinct brownish-black dots. Powdery mildew is favored by cool, humid weather, and high nitrogen.


Yield loss and management:
The highest yield losses (due to small, light-weight grain or reduction in the number of heads in the case of powdery mildew) are seen in Ohio when susceptible varieties are planted and conditions remain cool and humid during grain development. Warm weather slows both powdery mildew and Septoria down.

Resistance is the best approach for managing Septoria and powdery mildew, but if your variety is susceptible, a fungicide application between flag leaf and head emergence will provide very good control. Most of the available fungicides are equally effective against both diseases. But scout fields before applying a fungicide to see if lesions are moving up the plant – in most years unfavorable hot, dry late-spring conditions provide the best control of Septoria and powdery mildew in Ohio, saving you the money.

Applications Being Accepted for Summer Master Gardener Training Program
The Ashtabula County Extension office is taking applications from Ashtabula County residents for the 2017 Summer Ashtabula & Lake County Master Gardener training program. If you have a strong interest in gardening and enjoy helping others, you are invited to apply to become an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener volunteer for Ashtabula County.

To become an OSU Extension Master Garden volunteer, you must attend 11 training sessions held from June through August 2017 and volunteer 50 hours of horticultural service to the community through Extension educational programming after the training. Such service could include teaching adults and...
youth about gardening, planting and maintaining Extension demonstration gardens, answering gardening
questions from the public, judging flower and vegetable projects at local fairs, or assisting community
garden participants.

As a benefit of becoming a Master Gardener, you will increase your knowledge and understanding of
such varied horticultural topics as best cultural practices for growing flowers and vegetables, house plant
care, plant disease, lawn care, and insect pest identification and control and much, much more. Course
topics include: history of OSU Extension, plant physiology, soils, composting, fertilizers, herbs,
houseplants, plant propagation, plant pathology, diagnostics, entomology, integrated pest management,
vegetables, lawns, woody ornamentals, fruits, landscape maintenance, and making effective
presentations.

An information meeting will be held Monday, May 1, 2017 from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. in the downstairs
meeting room of the OSU Extension office at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson. Specifics with regards to the
application process, training schedule, course fee, and fingerprinting requirements will be shared at this
meeting. It is not mandatory to attend this session if you are applying.

The dates for this year’s training program are: June 7, 15, 21 & 28; July 12, 19, & 26, and August 2, 9 &
30. This program is taught in conjunction with the Lake County Master Gardener program. Five of the
sessions will be taught at the Ashtabula County Extension Office in Jefferson and five will be taught in
Lake County. All courses will be taught from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. There is a $210 course fee that
covers course materials, refreshments, and speaker travel costs. Registration is limited and all
applications are due by May 10, 2017. Interviews for the class will be held on May 15, 2017. Please call
the Ashtabula County Extension Office at 440-576-9008 for more information or for a complete
application packet.

Ashtabula County Agricultural Scholarship Applications Being Taken
OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Agricultural Scholarship Committee are pleased to announce
the scholarship committee will be presenting a minimum of fourteen scholarships for the 2017-2018
school year to Ashtabula County students enrolled in either an accredited full four year college or an
accredited two year technical institute. Scholarships awarded this year will include:

- Up to $5,000 will be awarded from the Ashtabula County Agricultural Scholarship Fund to
  Ashtabula County students enrolled in agriculture, natural resources, family & consumer
  sciences, or environmental sciences.
- Two $1,000 Ashtabula County Holstein Club Scholarships shall be awarded to deserving
  Ashtabula County students from a commercial dairy farm family enrolled in two year technical
  institute or full four year college. Or this scholarship may be awarded to a student studying
  animal science.
- The $1,000 Allan C. Jerome Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to an Ashtabula County
  student enrolled in agriculture, natural resources, family & consumer sciences, or environmental
  sciences. It is the wish of the donors that first preference be given to graduates of the
  Pymatuning Valley School District.
- The $1,000 Kellogg Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to a student who has at least
  completed their freshmen year of a two year technical or four year undergraduate college
  program in the study of production agriculture, dairy science, or farm management. This
  scholarship is given in the memory of W.H., David W., and Pauline Kellogg.
- The $1,000 Lester C. Marrison Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to a deserving Ashtabula
  County student enrolled in agriculture, natural resources, or family & consumer sciences.
Secondary preference will be given to a student pursuing a degree in education.

- At least one $1,000 Service-Jerome Scholarship shall be awarded to a student studying agriculture, natural resources, family & consumer sciences, or environmental sciences at The Ohio State University or the Agricultural Technical Institute. It is the wish of the donors that applicants from the Pymatuning Valley School system be given 1st choice; Grand Valley Local Schools, 2nd choice; Jefferson Area Schools, 3rd choice; and all other districts, 4th choice.
- The $1,000 Harold and Dick Springer Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to a deserving Ashtabula County student enrolled in agriculture, natural resources, family & consumer sciences, or environmental sciences. Secondary preference will be given to a student pursuing a degree in education.
- Two $1,000 Centerra Co-op Scholarships shall be awarded to an Ashtabula County student enrolled in either a four year college or an accredited two year technical institute. The family must derive a portion of their income from farming.
- The $1,000 Christopher L. Zaebst Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to an Ashtabula County student enrolled in agriculture, natural resources, family & consumer sciences, or environmental sciences. Secondary preference will be given to a student pursuing a degree in education.
- The $1,000 Prochko Family Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to an Ashtabula County student enrolled in agriculture, veterinarian sciences, or environmental sciences. It is the wish of the donors that first preference be given to graduates of the Jefferson Area School District or for a student whose family derives their income from a dairy farm.
- The $500 Lautanen Family 4-H Scholarship shall be awarded to a student who is or was an Ashtabula County 4-H club member for a minimum of five years. The student must demonstrate outstanding achievement in 4-H project work, outstanding leadership qualities, above average scholastic record, and a record of community service.
- The $500 Jim Baird Memorial Scholarship shall be awarded to deserving Ashtabula County student from a commercial dairy farm family enrolled in two year technical institute or full four year college. Or this scholarship may be awarded to a student studying animal science.

Both graduate and undergraduate students who are studying agriculture, natural resources, home economics, and environmental sciences are strongly encouraged to apply. The scholarships are for a one year period. A student may apply and be awarded a scholarship in three years from the scholarship fund. This is a new change to the scholarship rules. Previously a student could only apply and win in 2 funding cycles.

Application forms with complete instructions for applying are now available and can be received by stopping in at the Extension Office or by calling 440-576-9008. Applications can be accessed at: http://go.osu.edu/agscholarship. The application deadline is May 1 and no late applications will be considered. More information can be obtained about these scholarships by contacting the OSU Extension-Ashtabula County office at 440-576-9008 or emailing ashtabulacountyagscholarship@gmail.com
Cover crops may be used to mitigate and adapt to climate change
By Penn State University
Source: https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2017-04/ps-cc041717.php

Cover crops long have been touted for their ability to reduce erosion, fix atmospheric nitrogen, reduce nitrogen leaching and improve soil health, but they also may play an important role in mitigating the effects of climate change on agriculture, according to a Penn State researcher.

Climate-change mitigation and adaptation may be additional, important ecosystem services provided by cover crops, said Jason Kaye, professor of soil biogeochemistry in the College of Agricultural Sciences. He suggested that the climate-change mitigation potential of cover crops is significant, comparable to other practices, such as no-till.

"Many people have been promoting no-till as a climate-mitigation tool, so finding that cover crops are comparable to no-till means there is another valuable tool in the toolbox for agricultural climate mitigation," he said.

In a recent issue of Agronomy for Sustainable Development -- the official journal of the French National Institute for Agricultural Research, Europe's top agricultural research institute and the world's number two center for the agricultural sciences -- Kaye contends that cover cropping can be an adaptive management tool to maintain yields and minimize nitrogen losses as the climate warms.

Collaborating with Miguel Quemada in the Department of Agriculture Production at the Technical University of Madrid in Spain, Kaye reviewed cover-cropping initiatives in Pennsylvania and central Spain. He said that lessons learned from cover cropping in those contrasting regions show that the strategy has merit in a warming world.

The researchers concluded that cover-crop effects on greenhouse-gas fluxes typically mitigate warming by 100-150 grams of carbon per square meter per year, which is comparable to, and perhaps higher than, mitigation from transitioning to no-till. The key ways that cover crops mitigate climate change from greenhouse-gas fluxes are by increasing soil carbon sequestration and reducing fertilizer use after legume cover crops.

"Perhaps most significant, the proportion of energy from sunlight reflecting off of farm fields due to cover cropping -- calculated for the first time in our review using case-study sites in central Spain and Pennsylvania, may mitigate 12 to 46 grams of carbon per square meter per year over a 100-year time horizon," Kaye wrote.

"Cover crop management also can enable climate-change adaptation at these case-study sites, especially through reduced vulnerability to erosion from extreme rain events, increased soil-water...
management options during droughts or periods of soil saturation, and retention of nitrogen mineralized due to warming," he said.

Despite the benefits, Kaye is not necessarily advocating that cover crops be planted primarily for the purposes of climate-change mitigation or adaptation. Instead, he thinks the most important conclusion from his analysis is that there appear to be few compromises between traditional benefits of cover cropping and the benefits for climate change.

"Farmers and policymakers can expect cover cropping simultaneously to benefit soil quality, water quality and climate-change adaptation and mitigation," he wrote.

"Overall, we found very few tradeoffs between cover cropping and climate-change mitigation and adaptation, suggesting that ecosystem services that are traditionally expected from cover cropping can be promoted synergistically with services related to climate change."

**Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show to be held on Saturday, April 22**
The Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association will be sponsoring the 20th Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Jackpot Show on Saturday, April 22 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds in Jefferson, Ohio. This good old fashion jackpot show will start promptly at noon.

The show is open to all youth under the age of 21 and will begin promptly at noon. An entry fee of $30 per head is required. Cash prizes will be awarded to individual class winners and to the Champion Steer, Reserve Champion Steer, Champion Heifer, and Reserve Champion Heifer. In addition to the open show, a Showmanship class and an Ashtabula County Class will be held. Local residents are encouraged to come out and watch this show. A registration flyer can be found at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events). More information about this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008

**Hydrangea School to be Held on May 3, 2017 in Jefferson, Ohio**
The Ashtabula County Extension office is pleased to be offering a Hydrangea School on Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office located at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson, Ohio from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Join OSU Extension Educator Eric Barrett to discover the world of hydrangeas. Learn about types, care, pruning and bloom times. You'll receive a quick reference chart to take to the garden center and a hydrangea plant to take home. The registration fee for this workshop is $30 per person. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension. Registration includes handouts, light refreshments and a hydrangea plant to take home for your landscape. Please mail completed registration form to OSU Extension, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, Ohio 44047. Due to space limitations, this program will be limited to the first 50 registrants. First come, first served basis. For questions, please call 440-576-9008. A registration flyer can also be obtained at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events).

**Dietary supplement may enhance dairy cattle health and reproductive capacity**
By University of Illinois
Source: [https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2017-04/uoic-dsm041717.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2017-04/uoic-dsm041717.php)

Animal scientist Phil Cardoso knew that milk protein increases when dairy cows are fed the amino acid methionine, but he suspected that the supplement might have additional health benefits.

"I wondered, 'Is that the only thing methionine is doing?'" the University of Illinois assistant professor says. "If I'm eating well, am I just going to put on more muscle, or am I going to be healthier overall? It's
good to look at the protein in milk, but I wanted to see if other things are changing, such as reproduction."

Last year, Cardoso and a team of collaborators discovered that methionine supplementation may increase embryo survival in dairy cows. But he had more questions. For example, can methionine speed up the amount of time between calving and ovulation? And does it affect gene expression in ovarian follicles?

The team measured follicle growth over time, with the idea that follicles that are quicker to reach a certain diameter might release oocytes sooner. However, cows that had been fed rumen-protected methionine did not technically produce bigger follicles faster than cows that were not supplemented with the amino acid. That is, the analysis did not show a statistical difference, but Cardoso saw a pattern.

"Follicles in methionine-fed cows did appear to be a little bigger than the others prior to ovulation. I'd like to repeat the experiment with more cows on a commercial farm to see if the difference would be more substantial," Cardoso says.

What the study did show conclusively was that certain genes were expressed at different rates in ovarian follicles from cows that were supplemented with methionine. Two of those genes stood out. A gene necessary for synthesis of estrogen and other hormones was higher in follicles from animals that received methionine. "If a cow can produce more estrogen, she is going to come in heat faster, and may get pregnant more easily," Cardoso explains.

The team also found evidence that methionine supplementation could make cows and calves less susceptible to disease. A gene associated with inflammation and cancer potential, known as tumor necrosis factor, was lower in the ovarian follicular cells of animals that were supplemented with methionine.

Cardoso says there is more work to do before he would advise dairy producers to use the supplement to speed up cows' ovulation cycles or to avoid inflammation, although he can't point to any negative impacts from using methionine for other reasons.

One of the team's next steps will be to complete analysis from uterine samples collected from the same cows, with the aim of learning how cows' ovarian follicles, embryos, and uterine tissues communicate.

**2017-2018 Ashtabula County Beef Scholarships Applications Available**

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association are pleased to announce they will be awarding two youth beef scholarships for the 2017-2018 school year. One $1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a deserving 2017 High School Senior who will be attending an accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute in 2017-2018. In addition, one $500 scholarship will be awarded to a current College Student who is currently attending an accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute.

Applicants must be resident of Ashtabula County. The first preference by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association is the scholarships be awarded to deserving students who have been involved in the beef industry as a youth. Examples of this could include: working on a family beef operation; involved with a beef project through 4-H or FFA; or works on a local beef farm. The second preference for the scholarship recipients would be awarded to students who are currently or will be studying a beef related field in accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute. Previous
winners of the $1,000 High School Senior Scholarship are eligible to apply for the $500 College Scholarship. However, the $500 college scholarship can only be received once by a student during their college career.

Applications must be received by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association by May 1, 2017 by 4:30 p.m. for consideration for the scholarship. No late applications will be considered. The application can be obtained at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

Tri-County Grape Growers 2017 Steak Dinner to be held on Thursday, May 4
The Tri-County Grape Growers Association is pleased to announce they will be hosting their third annual Steak Dinner on Thursday, May 4 from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Harpersfield Community Center. Pre-sale tickets are required with each ticket costing $30.00 per person. The ticket price includes a one-year membership in Tri-County Grape Growers. Please RSVP by April 28 to guarantee seating. All are welcome to attend. Tickets may be purchased from the OSU Extension Office in Jefferson, Ohio (440-576-9008), John Linehan (440-466-3207) or from any active Tri-County Grape Grower Member.

David’s Weekly News Column
Hello Ashtabula County! Can you believe how fast the month of April is zipping by? It won’t be long before our farmers are busy planting thousands of acres of corn and soybeans across the county. I know many of our gardening enthusiasts are also itching to plant their gardens. As we approach May, I would like to invite local gardeners to apply for our summer Master Gardener training program and urge you to hold off mulching for a few weeks.

I am pleased to share with you that OSU Extension is taking applications from Ashtabula County residents for the 2017 Summer Ashtabula & Lake County Master Gardener training program. If you have a strong interest in gardening and enjoy helping others, you are invited to apply to become an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener volunteer for Ashtabula County.

To become an OSU Extension Master Garden volunteer, you must attend 11 training sessions held from June through August 2017 and volunteer 50 hours of horticultural service to the community through Extension educational programming after the training.

As a benefit of becoming a Master Gardener, you will increase your knowledge and understanding of such varied horticultural topics as best cultural practices for growing flowers and vegetables, house plant care, plant disease, lawn care, and insect pest identification and control and much, much more.

Course topics include: history of OSU Extension, plant physiology, soils, composting, fertilizers, herbs, houseplants, plant propagation, plant pathology, diagnostics, entomology, integrated pest management, vegetables, lawns, woody ornamentals, fruits, landscape maintenance, and making effective presentations.

An information meeting will be held Monday, May 1, 2017 from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the OSU Extension office at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson. Specifics with regards to the application process, training schedule, course fee, and fingerprinting requirements will be shared at this meeting. It is not mandatory to attend this session if you are applying.

The dates for this year’s training program are: June 7, 15, 21 & 28; July 12, 19, & 26, and August 2, 9 & 30. We moved the training to the summer so that we could incorporate more hands-on learning during
the training. We also believe that it is a great way for teachers to learn more about horticulture and expand their curriculum. We are excited that some of our local teachers have expressed in interest in the program.

This program is taught in conjunction with the Lake County Master Gardener program. Five of the sessions will be taught at the Ashtabula County Extension Office in Jefferson and five will be taught in Lake County. All courses will be taught from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. There is a $210 course fee that covers course materials, refreshments, and speaker travel costs. Registration is limited and all applications are due by May 10, 2017. Interviews for the class will be held on May 15, 2017. Please call the Ashtabula County Extension Office at 440-576-9008 for more information or for a complete application packet.

With our nice warm up last weekend, I have noticed a lot of folks working out in their yards and a lot of folks already getting the itch to mulch. I urge gardeners to hold off applying mulch. I never like to see mulching until our soils warm-up and even though we have had nice weather, our soil temperatures are still below 50 degrees.

By mulching too early you will keep the soil wet and cold which could damage the root systems of plants. In addition, the application of heaping mounds of mulch against the tree trunks, often referred to as volcano mulching, can be damaging. When mulch is applied in this manner, moisture captured by the mulch can keep the plant’s bark in a continued state of wetness. This can cause the bark to decay, and lead to insects, fungi, and bacteria feeding on the damaged tissue. Not a good thing!

Mulch put on at the proper time and at the proper depth of 2-3 inches, can have many benefits including the prevention of weed growth, conservation of moisture in the soil, stabilization of soil temperatures, and the addition of organic matter to the soil. My general guideline is that mulch should never be applied before Memorial Day which is still a month away. Remember, patience is a virtue!

To close, I would like to share a quote from May Sarton who stated, “Everything that slows us down and forces patience, everything that sets us back into the slow circles of nature, is a help. Gardening is an instrument of grace.” Have a good and safe day.

Lee’s Monthly News Column
Hello Trumbull County! The warm weather has returned this week and I am reminded of the boost of growth plants are experiencing by the smell of our hyacinths just outside the window. The warm weather also started to dry out the soils and increase the soil temperature spurring some farmers and gardeners to think about planting. We’re not there just yet, so hold on for a couple more weeks (at least). With the continuing march towards planting season I have been receiving calls asking for guidance on soil fertility and fertilizer use.

Answers to this question depends on the fertility you currently have in your soil, and the only way to know this is with a soil test. A typical soil test result will detail the levels of the phosphorus (P), potassium (K), calcium (Ca), and magnesium (Mg) currently in your soil. You can also test for micronutrients if you suspect a deficiency. The recommended levels of P for most crops ranges from 30-80 pounds per acre. That may sound like a lot, but I have seen home garden levels at 500-850 pounds per acre. Gardeners with these kinds of levels have enough phosphorus in the soil to last through their grandkids’ use of that same garden without adding a drop of additional phosphorus in all those years. Excess phosphorus in soil contributes to issues including the algal blooms in Lake Erie and in the Ohio River. We all need to be
concerned about overabundance of nutrients and the runoff this can produce, whether you have a 100-
acre corn field or a quarter acre garden, because the algae don’t care where the runoff begins.

Potassium recommendations are a little vague as it really depends on your soil type, or how much clay is
in your soil. The more clay in your soil, the more potassium you need to add. This information also
comes with the soil test report, so the results can help keep you from guessing.

You will notice that nitrogen (N) is not reported, and for good reason – nitrogen doesn’t stick around very
long and it is hard to measure. If you applied nitrogen to your garden last fall, and you plant in May, you
will have lost most of that nitrogen into the atmosphere in the time that has passed. This is why it is
recommended to place nitrogen on a growing crop just as it needs it – the right place at the right time.
Nitrogen stabilizers are an option to maintain nitrogen levels over a longer period of time and are
commonly used in agriculture. However, they are not a guarantee that the nitrogen will hold, because
you can lose nitrogen through leaching (moving with water), denitrification in warm and wet soils, and
volatilization.

Soil tests are available through several outlets and typically cost $10 to $20. You can get off the shelf kits
from box stores, but for better accuracy, we recommend a test that is sent to an actual lab for results. If
you do use a test that is sent to a lab, it typically takes about a week to get your results back. If you
would like to see an example test report, or if you would like to purchase a soil test, stop into the
Extension office in Cortland.

There are a few events coming up that you should put on your calendar. On April 20 the Trumbull County
Master Gardeners will be hosting a workshop on composting from 10am to 12noon at the Trumbull
County Ag Center in Cortland. We will be discussing how to compost your kitchen and yard waste safely
and effectively to harvest nutrients that can be returned to your soil. Cost for attendance is $15/person
and pre-registration is requested.

Trumbull County Master Gardeners will be bringing back their popular Wednesdays in the Gardens
series for 2017. The first event is scheduled for April 26 and the topic will be “Cold frames and their uses”
followed by “Backyard Tomatoes and Veggies” on May 10. All Wednesdays in the Gardens events are
free to the public and start at 6pm at the Trumbull County Ag Center in Cortland. Please bring a lawn
chair!

For more information or to register for any of these events call the OSU Trumbull County Extension
Office at 330-638-6783 or visit trumbull.osu.edu. Don’t forget to check out and “Like” OSU Extension
Trumbull County’s Facebook page for current programs and up to date information.

Upcoming 2017 Spring Extension Program Dates
The following programs have been scheduled for Northeast Ohio farmers this upcoming winter.
Complete registration flyers can be found at: http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-
natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines

Composting: Getting the Most from Your Garbage
April 20 at the Trumbull County Extension Office

2017 Northeast Ohio Grape School – A Focus on Pinot Gris
April 18 at Virant’s Winery
2017 Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show
Saturday, April 22 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds

Hydrangea School
Wednesday, May 3 at the Ashtabula County Extension office

Ashtabula County Ag Day
Friday, May 12 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds

David Marrison
Ashtabula County Extension Office
39 Wall Street
Jefferson, OH 44047
440-576-9008
marrison.2@osu.edu
ashtabula.osu.edu

Lee Beers
Trumbull County Extension Office
520 West Main Street
Cortland, OH 44410
330-638-6783
beers.66@osu.edu
trumbull.osu.edu
Composting: Getting the Most from Your Garbage

Thursday,
April 20, 2017
10am – Noon

Trumbull County Ag Center
520 West Main St.
Cortland, OH 44410

Cost: $15/person Pre-Registration is requested

Call 330-638-6783 for more information

Join us on Thursday, April 20th to learn about proper composting techniques to get the most return for your garden. Trumbull County Extension Educator, Lee Beers, will discuss what will compost, how to manage disease (human and plant), weeds, and nutrient value. We will be outside for a portion of the class to review common composting mistakes, so please dress for the weather.

To register, complete the back side of the flyer and mail with payment to OSU Extension, 520 West Main St, Suite 1, Cortland, OH 44410. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension. Payment can be made at the door on the day of the event, but please call 330-638-6783 to register in advance if you plan to attend.
EVENING PASTURE WALK
MAY 9TH, 2017

Goodell Family Farm
An organic grazing dairy
10220 Peck Rd
Mantua, Oh 44255

Register by May 5th - call 330-297-7633 or email: kara.macdowell@oh.usda.gov
Rain or shine!

6:00 – 6:10pm ...................................................... Introductions
6:10 – 6:30pm ...................................................... Overview & Goals of Farm
6:30 – 8:00pm ..................................................... Pasture Management Training
   Walk pastures with Rory Lewandowski — Wayne County OSU Extension Educator
8:00 – 8:30pm ..................................................... Question & Answers

Refreshments provided by Organic Valley

For Questions or Special Accommodations
Call the Portage NRCS/SWCD office
330-297-7633 x3

Sponsored by:

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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Join us on Thursday, April 27th at the Dickey Community Garden in Warren, OH to learn about soil fertility to promote healthy plants without over applying soil amendments. We will discuss soil pH, NPK analysis, types of fertilizer to use, how to interpret a soil test report, and much more. Gardeners of all skills levels will benefit from attending this workshop sponsored by Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership and OSU Extension Trumbull County.

This event is free to everyone, and registration is not required. Please bring your lawn chair as seating is limited. Please call OSU Extension (330-638-6783) or Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership (330-774-8896) for more information.