The rollercoaster month of April continues. What a surprise to wake up this past weekend to 6 inches of snow! Now, we have forecasts of 60 degree temperatures for this weekend. Up, down and all around! There has been a lot of squawking since the USDA’s release of planting expectations on what will happen to corn and bean prices this year. I found a couple of articles this week which demonstrate how global the pricing of these commodities have become. There are a lot of factors which play into our global prices, so it is important to keep you ears open to not only what is happening in the Midwest but also China and South America.

Thanks to everyone who supported our 4-H Camp Counselors by attending the Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Ashtabula County 4-H Committee this past Sunday. This support of the counselors is so very much appreciated. Many folks don’t realize how much time the 35 counselors put into their training and planning for our Ashtabula County Camp Week. These amazing kids volunteer their time to be the camper’s “parents” for the week and still have to pay the camp fee! The efforts of the 4-H Committee are really appreciated for helping these youth pay for their camp week to make sure that our 165 campers (ages 8-14) have the safest and best camp experience!

David Marrison, Ashtabula County Ag & NR Educator

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Weather Outlook
Author(s): Jim Noel
http://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/weather-outlook

After a very warm March with temperatures 5-10 degrees above normal, April got off to a cold start with temperatures running 5-10 degrees below normal. After early week rain and some mid-week temperatures near or just below freezing, a warmer and drier period is in store through about April 19. The week break with lots of sunshine, warmer temperatures and drier conditions should allow for some needed drying.

The next rain chance will come either on April 19 or 20. Rainfall for the remainder of April looks to be mainly under 2 inches which is near normal. April does not appear as warm as earlier thought. It looks like April will go down with slightly below normal temperatures and near normal precipitation.
The risk for last spring freezes appears on track to be about normal which means the last hard freeze occurs in mid April in southern Ohio and closer to late April in northern Ohio. It is not uncommon to see frost in low lying areas into early May.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Outlook</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temperatures</td>
<td>Slightly Below</td>
<td>Slightly Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainfall</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Slightly Below</td>
<td>Slightly Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeze</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Slightly Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 inch soil</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Slightly Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evapotranspiration</td>
<td>Slightly Below</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soil Temperatures Went the Wrong Way!
Author(s): Anne Dorrance

This was more for my own curiosity to see what has happened to the soil temperatures in the state following 2 weeks of cold, snowy weather. Our temperatures went down in almost all of the locations. From the weather stations at the OARDC branches, these are the soil temperatures at 2.5 inches, from March 21 and April 11:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Research Branch</th>
<th>Temperature (F)</th>
<th>March 21</th>
<th>April 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piketon</td>
<td>Piketon</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huron</td>
<td>Muck Crops</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashtabula</td>
<td>Ashtabula</td>
<td><strong>36.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.6</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>Wooster</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

April Snow Showers Bring Frozen Flowers

Following the warmest winter on record and a record warm March, the weather has finally turned decidedly more winter-like in a month when we normally expect warmer weather. The first full week of April is on track to trend the coldest in 7 years for the Corn Belt and the 1st or 2nd coldest in 25+ years in the Northeast. The forecast doesn’t improve as we head into next week either. The out-of-sync weather pattern is not only a shock to our system, but also a shock to early-sprouting plants and eager-to-plant farmers teased by recent warmth.

Much of the northeastern U.S. saw record cold temperatures this week with lows dipping into the teens. Across the Great Lakes, temperatures dipped well below zero making it feel more like mid-February than April. The cold weather is thanks to the Polar Vortex (bet you haven’t seen that word since the winter of 2014/2015!) which has brought a couple of bursts of Arctic air across the East. It’s too early to fully assess the damage, but it’s likely that many plants have already been damaged by the extreme cold, and we’re not even done with the Arctic air yet. Freeze damage has already been reported in parts of the wheat...
region, including in central Oklahoma, and more is expected as another wave of cold weather blasts across the eastern half of the country this weekend.

The out-of-sync weather pattern this year that featured warm, spring-like weather in winter caused fruit trees and vines to blossom and bud several weeks earlier than normal. That would be all fine and dandy if the weather stayed warm, but that has not been the case. Some of the trees and vines in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states are entering or on the verge of entering very sensitive stages in the growth process which makes them very vulnerable to colder temperatures. A brief warm-up at the end of this week will only add insult to injury as plants on the verge of blossoming or budding could be pushed into these sensitive stages before more cold weather arrives.

A weather system moving through the East today (April 7th) will usher in another round of Arctic air just in time for the weekend. In fact, parts of the northern Corn Belt and Mid-Atlantic could see some accumulating snow over the weekend. Not only will this continued cold weather hurt sprouting plants, but corn planting will also be delayed. Early-planted corn will also be negatively affected as sub-freezing temperatures dip down into the Southeast this weekend. There will be a brief warm-up early next week (April 10th-16th) before another round of cooler, but not quite as cold, air arrives. Like the blip of warm weather expected late this week, the brief return of warmer weather early next week could push even more plants into sensitive stages causing damage to a larger percentage of crops.

Like most things in life, the cold weather won’t last forever, in fact, warmer weather will arrive in the eastern half of the U.S., including the Corn Belt, during the second half of April. But be cautious, as the threat for a late season freeze will remain into early May. There is plenty of risk for the corn planting season with colder weather delaying planting and wetter weather also delaying planting. With a rainy U.S. sowing season, acreage previously devoted to corn could be used for soybeans instead. The later the planting is delayed, the more likely it will be that total corn acreage will be lower. As weathertrends360 continues to warn, the risk for corn continues into the summer.

See our Seeds of Success video series of more info:
Seeds of Success Episode 1: http://www.weathertrends360.com/Seeds-Of-Success/Episode/1

Soil Amendment and Foliar Application Product Evaluation Trials Summary
Author(s): Steve Culman

In 2015, the Soil Fertility Lab at Ohio State started offering a third party evaluation of proprietary soil amendments and foliar applications aimed at improving the mineral nutrition and productivity of crops. This new service intends to provide timely and unbiased information on these products for farmers. In 2015, we tested submitted products from the following companies:

AgZyme® by Ag Concepts
AO Crop by Agrarian Organics
Enersol® and Enersol LDG® by AMCOL® Bio-Ag
Liquid Carbon by Monty’s Plant Food

Methods: Corn and soybean trials were planted at three sites on Ohio State University Research Farms: 1) Clark County at the Western Agricultural Research Station in S. Charleston, 2) Wayne County at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, 3) Wood County at the Northwest Agricultural Research Station in Custar.
Data collected include: 1) Complete soil sample analysis prior to planting, 2) Emergence counts at V5 for corn and soybean, 3) Whole plant sampling at V5 for total biomass and complete nutrient analysis, 4) Leaf sampling at R1 for corn and soybean for complete nutrient analysis, 5) Final stand counts at maturity for corn, and 6) Harvest grain yield with complete grain nutrient analysis.

Results: Across all three sites, no consistent trends were found with any of the tested products. No products significantly affected a measured property at more than 1 site. For both corn and soybean, no product treatment yielded significantly greater grain than the control. This was the first year of field data, so interpretations should be made with caution, especially considering the weather encountered in the 2015 field season.

The summary report can be found here: go.osu.edu/SAFA

Will Bearishly High Estimate of Corn Acres Stand?
As farmers continue to shake their heads at USDA’s estimate of 93.6 million corn acres planted this spring, analysts are already wondering how long the unexpectedly high number will last. “I think that number we saw (in USDA’s Prospective Planting report) will be the highest number that we see all year, honestly,” said Angie Setzer of Citizens Grain, speaking on U.S. Farm Report.

“Weather-wise, we’re already seeing some slowdowns,” she noted. “Some of the biggest increases in acreage that we saw were in the fringe acres—North Dakota, Kansas—or in the Delta, and right now, the Delta’s already behind in planting progress from where they want to be. We have about two weeks before they’re going to have to make decisions, or they’re going have corn pollinating during the extreme heat of the summer, so I think you’ll see some transitions here.”

For now, though, farmers are stuck with a very unfriendly number for corn plantings. “This acreage number is what the trade has to start with, and without the changes moving forward to see what the weather is going to be and what soybean prices are going to be in the coming months, we’re going to have to start with this number as we move forward in the trade,” said Craig VanDyke of Top Third Ag Marketing, also speaking on U.S. Farm Report.

As planting and growing season progresses, though, these estimates could change significantly—in either direction. “I think realistically, speaking, though, from a corn standpoint that yes, Thursday’s numbers from USDA probably are going to be the most bearish that we see all year,” Setzer said. “At the same time, I’m going to come out and say that the soybean numbers are potentially the most bullish that we’ll see for the year, so we need to keep that in mind. If we do see a switch that may benefit corn prices in the summertime, we’ve got to be aware of what that switch is going to be and how it will impact the other market.”

Could weather be a factor? Yes, but it’s too soon to start banking on that. “It will be the market’s job to try to steer corn acres away and try to build more soybean acres, so if we can get the market moving (in) that direction ... we might start to see some realistic changes in the acreage numbers that will ultimately push corn to the low,” VanDyke said. “Early summer—that’s when you start to look at weather. As of right now, get the weather out of your mind. We don’t know what it’s going to be, and you can’t predict it moving forward.”

USDA Announces Loan Rates for Wheat, Feed Grains and Oilseeds
The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Commodity Credit Corporation announced on April 6 the 2016 marketing assistance loan rates by county for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, soybeans and each “other oilseed” (canola, crambe, flaxseed, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed and sunflower seed). The rates are posted on the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/commodity-loan-rates/index.
Soybeans Dip on China Reforms, Oversupply Forecast
By Debra Beachy

Although soybean acres essentially held steady at 82.2 million acres in USDA’s March 31 Prospective Plantings report, that number could grow as farmers shift from corn to beans. A bumper soybean crop in South America also could add pressure to a market that had been boosted by speculative funds, according to analysts. “Farmers should be concerned about soybean prices over the next growing season and longer term,” said Kevin McNew, president and commodity broker at Grain Hedge in Bozeman, Mt. Not only is there already talk that American farmers could switch corn acres to soybeans this spring, making it likely that soybean acres will climb by summer, but USDA’s agricultural attaché also has predicted record corn and bean crops from South America in 2017, McNew explained.

But he also pointed out the new market environment created by China’s recent announcement regarding corn. “Longer term, the real threat to soybeans is the change in China’s corn policies,” McNew said. That’s because two weeks ago China announced it was abandoning its 15-year policy of subsidizing farmers by stockpiling corn and would begin selling its massive state reserves of 250MMT of corn. “The end result will be China’s farmers will flock in masses to produce the more profitable soybean crop. In the longer term, this will likely cause a reduction in China’s 82 MMT imports from the U.S. and South America,” McNew said.

Also predicting a corn to beans planting shift is analyst Andrew Shissler, partner at S&W Trading in Downers Grove, Ill. “Crop rotations are going to move back to 50/50 in many cases,” he said. “Farmers are going to be reluctant to plant heavy in corn.” He is even recommending that farmers who haven’t been following a 50/50 rotation between corn and beans start doing so. “You don’t want to be on the wrong side of rotation with the market,” Shissler cautioned. “There are many reasons to split your rotation. I just wouldn’t want to go all-corn anytime soon.” Yet another uncertainty is whether “large pools of speculative money” will continue buying soybeans, said analyst Ted Seifried of Zaner Ag Hedge in Chicago. Speculative interest drove the soybean market to new highs, he noted, but “the big question is whether the funds will continue to buy or not.”

What can farmers do? Seifried’s advice is to sell old-crop soybeans for cash prices and to manage risk with the new crop by selling futures or buying puts. Likewise, McNew recommended farmers should buy $9 puts for new-crop beans and sell $10 calls to get downside protection for about 18 cents. “If we do have a weather problem, it gives you an upside ceiling on the $10 call,” he explained.

ODA Launches 2016 “Ag is Cool!” Creative Expressions Contest
The Ohio Department of Agriculture recently announced it will begin accepting entries for the 2016 “Agriculture is Cool!” Creative Expressions contest. Children enrolled in school or home schooled in Ohio during the 2015-2016 academic year have until June 6, 2016 to capture their personal interpretation of why Ohio agriculture is cool for their chance to win prizes, including tickets to the Ohio State Fair.

“Ag is Cool!” entries, which can include an original video, photograph, drawing, or painting, will be judged in the following age categories. One winner from each age group and category will be chosen:
Grades K-2: Photography, Drawing or Painting
Grades 3-5: Video, Photography, Drawing or Painting
Grades 6-8: Video, Photography, Drawing or Painting
Grades 9-12: Video, Photography, Drawing or Painting

Entries will be judged by a panel that may include representatives from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Office of the Governor, the Ohio Expo Center, and professionals in the areas of video production, photography, drawing, painting and other visual arts. Judging will be based on the student’s visual representation of the “Ag is
Cool!” theme, if it accurately reflects 21st century agriculture, creativity and use of Ohio images, and quality of work. Winners of the art contest will be recognized by the Office of the Governor and other state officials at the Ohio State Fair on July 27, 2016. For additional information about the contest, a complete copy of the rules and entry form visit http://www.agri.ohio.gov/AgIsCool/ or call 614-752-9817.

Direct Marketing Webinar Series Continues
Each month, the OSU Extension Direct Marketing Team is providing a one-hour webinar featuring various types of marketing. These webinars are for anyone wanting to learn more about marketing their business. The webinars begin at 12 noon and are FREE.

Apr. 21 Enhancing Your Web Presence Melissa Carter
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/enhancingwebpresence/

May 26 Product Recall & Traceability Eric Pawlowski
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/productrecallandtraceability/

June 16 Product Labeling Emily Adams
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/productlabeling/

July 21 Celebrate Ohio Local Foods Week Heather Neikirk & Patricia Barker
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/localfoodsweek/

Aug. 18 Produce Auctions Brad Bergefurk
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/auctionsforproduce/

Sept. 15 Pricing Your Products Megan Leffew
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/pricingproducts/

Oct. 20 Cooperatively Marketing Your Products Hannah Scott
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/marketingyourproducts/

Nov. 17 Using Facebook for Your Business Duane Rigsby
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/facebookforyourbusiness/

Dec. 15 Survey Results for Ohio Produce Marketers Direct Marketing Team
http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/surveyresultsformarketers/

This is the third year for the OSU Direct Marketing Team to host these webinars. To view past and future webinars, go to go.osu.edu/DirectMarketingWebinars. For more information on these webinars, please contact Christie Welch at welch.183@osu.edu or Charisa Gardner at gardner.1148@osu.edu.

Tri-County Grape Growers 2016 Steak Dinner to be held on Thursday, May 5, 2016
The Tri-County Grape Growers Association is pleased to announce they will be hosting their second annual Steak Dinner on Thursday, May 5, 2016 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Harpersfield Community Center. All are Welcome - Grape Growers and Wine Makers will be available to answer questions, problems, and/or concerns anyone may be having in their home garden vineyards or basement wine making. Meet and socialize with other growers, buyers, and suppliers of the Regional Grape Industry.
The guest speaker for this event will be: Donniella Winchell, Executive Director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association. Ms. Winchell will be speaking on the history of grape growing in Northeast Ohio and the impact on the region. Donniella Winchell is Executive Director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association and chair of their Vintage Ohio Wine Festival. She is the recipient of several state and national awards and serves on numerous state and national wine, tourism and economic development boards. She contributes wine articles to many regional publications. Donniella graduated from Allegheny College and taught in Ohio public schools. She and her family own a marketing agency and an entertainment complex in Geneva-on-the-Lake. She and her husband have three grown children and eight grandchildren.

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 29th 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.

Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show to be held on Saturday, April 16, 2016
The Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association will be sponsoring the 19th Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Jackpot Show on Saturday, April 16 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 $25 per head if pre-registered by April 7, 2016 and $30 per head thereafter. 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. More information about this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 or by emailing David Marrison at marrison.2@osu.edu.

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PLEASE SHARE...this newsletter with farmers or others who are interested in agricultural topics in Ashtabula & Trumbull Counties. Past issues can be located at: https://go.osu.edu/ag-news. Please tell your friends and neighbors to sign up for the list. CONTACT: marrison.2@osu.edu

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Readers can subscribe electronically to this newsletter by sending an e-mail message to: marrison.2@osu.edu. If you would like to opt-out of receiving this newsletter, please e-mail marrison.2@osu.edu with the words: UNSUBSCRIBE
Tri-County Grape Growers
Annual Steak Dinner
Harpersfield Community Center
Thursday May 5th, 2016
Doors Open @ 6:00pm
Dinner Served around 7pm

Guest Speaker: Donniella Winchell
The history of grape growing in Northeast Ohio and its impact on the region.

Donniella Winchell is the Executive Director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association, chair of the Vintage Ohio Wine Festival, and the recipient of several state and national awards in recognition of her service to the grape and wine industries. Donniella also serves as a board member on numerous state and national committees for wine, tourism and economic development. In her spare time, she regularly contributes wine articles to regional publications.

Donniella is a graduate of Allegheny College and taught in Ohio public schools. Along with her family, she owns a marketing agency and an entertainment complex in Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio. She and her husband have three grown children, eight grandchildren and is proud to call Northeast Ohio her home.

Meet and socialize with growers, buyers, and suppliers of the Regional Grape Industry

This is an open invitation to those interested in Northeast Ohio’s Grape and Wine Industries.

Regional Grape Growers, Wine Makers and Industry Professionals will be available to answer questions, help address problems and/or concerns regarding a home garden vineyard or wine making endeavor.

Pre-Sale Tickets Required: $30/person
Tickets may be purchased from
OSU Extension Office - Jefferson, OH
John Linehan - (440) 466-3207
Any Active TCGG Member

Reservations required to ensure correct count. Please RSVP by April 29th to guarantee seating.

Steak Dinner Provided By Ryan Sheppard
Coffee, Tea & Water Provided
Other Beverages - BYOB

Family Business...
Ryan Sheppard represents a third generation business owner at the Westside Market in Cleveland Ohio. Ryan’s grandfather started Frank’s Bratwurst over 45 years ago. Growing up around the meat stalls has given Ryan the knowledge and contacts to select the best meats available for their catering business.

The Sheppard Family are long time residents of Harpersfield, OH - in the heart of the grape growing region. Richard Sr. was one of the founding partners of Mary’s Diner. Brothers Ryan and Richard cater corporate events, weddings, and other parties. They put their family name on the line to ensure you’ll enjoy your meal.
Tri-County Grape Growers was established by growers in 1958 to serve grower needs.

The group meets on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings include an open round table discussion of topics from the membership in attendance. Some of the topics discussed recently include:

- Help With Contracts
- Disease Control
- Temperature Data
- Over Wintering Practices
- Chemical Cost Control
- Alternative Markets
- Labor Resources
- Growing the Market

Become a member. Help us have a voice in Columbus. Have a say in the future of our industry.