What a great weekend we enjoyed here in Ashtabula County! Best of all, the wonderful weather has continued into this week. What a difference from the snowy start to April. I see a lot of farmers taking advantage of the weather by planting oats. It is no doubt that we will be back up in the Top 5 for Ohio Oat production for 2016. The great weather was ideal for the 19th Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer and Heifer Show. Congratulations to the Cattlemen Director’s for another job well done.

I would also like to remind area farmers to be extra careful when burning as spring time is when we see most of our local grass fires. Some people think that the hot dry days of summer are the highest time for most grass fires. However, spring time actually outpaces the summer for grass fires due to exposed dry grasses and other vegetation left from the previous fall. The old vegetation increases the chances for grass fires in the spring. Just this past weekend, I was reminded how quickly a small burn pile can get out of hand (see photo evidence). Luckily, it was contained before it made its way into the pole barn where all our hay equipment is stored. Take time to think how you can prevent a fire! Do you have working fire extinguishers at the ready? I found a nice article on Grass Fires from Red River Mutual Insurance which has some great reminders in it in today’s issue.

David Marrison, Ashtabula County Ag & NR Educator

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19th Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show a Success
This past Saturday, the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association held the 19th Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds. This show was started in 1998 to give youth under the age of 21 to practice showing their beef heifers and steers which they will ultimately show at the county fair later in the summer.

At this year’s event, 41 youngsters from 3 states exhibited 54 animals at this day long show. There were 24 youth from Ohio, 11 from Pennsylvania, and 6 from New York. From Ohio, we had youth from Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Portage, Huron and Summit
counties who participated. Levi Richards from Wayne, Ohio served as this year’s judge.

Jackson Mattocks from Guys Mill, Pennsylvania showed both the Grand Champion and Reserve Heifer. He had two really nice heifers at this show. Addie Shaffer from Painesville, Ohio showed the Champion Steer and Josh Schmidt from Conneautville, PA exhibited the Reserve Champion Steer. We had a nice class of Ashtabula County youth showing their steers. Congratulations to Zane Neczeporenko from Pierpont whose steer won the County Class.

The youth were also able to practice their showmanship skills with Libby Kelkenberg from Clarence Center, New York winning the 17-21 year old division and Addie Shaffer from Painesville, Ohio winning the 13-16 year old class. However, the showmanship class which spectators enjoy the most is the 12 and younger showmanship class. Congratulations to Hannah French from Wakeman, Ohio for winning this class.

This show would not be possible if it was not for the support of local businesses in Northeast, Ohio. The Champion and Reserve Champion Awards were sponsored by Clemson Towing, Country Creek Cattle, Roll’n B Cowboy Café LLC, Countryside Vet Clinic, Ferguson Show Cattle, and Bortnick Tractor Sales. Additional sponsors of the event included: Andrews Auctioneering, Andover Bank, Ashtabula County Ag Society, Cherry Valley Processing, Easton Culligan Water Conditioning, Highland Livestock Supply, Jefferson Milling Company, North Coast Animal Bedding, Linde’s Livestock Photos LLC, Northwind Farm, Piper Processing, Attorney Katherine Riedel, Rome Feed, Ruck Cattle Company, Stackhouse Construction, Thomas Fence Company, and Valley Feed Mill. Thanks to each of our sponsors for their support of this event.

Thank you to the Cattlemen Directors, Bob Brown, David Nye, Bart Kanicki, Zach Ward, and Tyler Brown for all their hard work in putting on this show. There is a lot of behind the scene work with has to be accomplished to make the show run smoothly. Additional thanks are extended to thank Kristen Brown, Dr. Bryan Elliott, Mindy Hamilton, Sara Ward, and Garret Jerome for their help with the event.

ATECH Horticulture Program Expanding Curriculum
The ATECH Horticulture program is a two year hands-on technical program that focuses on knowledge, skills, and training for a variety of green industry careers. Ken Noble, ATECH Horticulture Instructor, has announced that ATECH will be expanding their curriculum for the 2016-17 school year to include Ag, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) in the junior year; and Parks and Recreation Management (PRM) in the senior year.

As described by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), AFNR “is an introduction to Agricultural and Environmental Systems. They will examine principles of food science, natural resource management, animal science & management, plant & horticultural science, power technology and bioscience. Students will examine the FFA organization and Supervised Agricultural Experience programs. Throughout the course, students will develop communication, leadership and business skills essential to the agriculture industry.” AFNR and Greenhouse Management will be combined to make up the junior year.

The senior year curriculum will incorporate Landscape Hardscape construction with Parks and Recreation Management. Integrating these two courses will provide students with the exciting opportunity, as described by ODE, to begin to “design facilities, develop educational programs and manage resources for use in public recreation. Students will maintain and operate equipment for maintaining wildlife habitat and supporting a variety of public recreational activities and facilities. Throughout the course, students will develop marketing and programming skills for park development, apply management practices to park operations and learn the systems required to maintain public safety.”
A-Tech is currently taking applications for both junior and senior year programs. Please contact Ken Noble, Horticulture instructor, with any questions by email at ken.noble@atech.edu, or by phone at 440-576-6015 x 1128.

Got an Old Hay Wagon? Ashtabula County 4-H Needs One!
The Ashtabula County Fair Board, Junior Fair Board and Ashtabula County 4-H is looking a 3-4 ton flat top hay wagon at minimum 8’x16’ for storing and hauling the Junior Fair Booth Boards used in the 4-H Expo Building during Fair. Please contact Tony Feliciaj at 440-474-2145 if you have a wagon to use. Your donation is tax deductible.

Warm Weather Hit in a Big Way This Last Week
By Jim Noel
Source: http://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/warm-weather-hit-big-way-last-week

After a cold start to April the warm weather hit in a big way this last week. Temperatures now for Ohio are running 3-5 degrees below normal for April but will likely be down to a degree or two below normal by late this week for April as the warmth cancels out the early April cold. Also, since March first, temperatures are running 2-6 degrees above normal even with that early April cold stretch so this is going down as a WARM spring.

Rainfall since April 1 is nor normal an inch below normal. The strong El Nino is quickly fading and will likely be replaced by La Nina this summer. La Nina events usually put stresses on Ohio summer crops so this is worth watching. This coming week will remain warm until a storm system brings on average about 0.50 inches of rain late Wednesday into early Friday. If we get far less than 0.50 inches of rain then this could be an early indication of developing dryness. If we get far more than 0.50 inches this could signal continued decent rains into May so this is worth watching closely later this week.

For the remainder of April temperatures will continue above normal with normal to below normal rainfall. Rainfall averages an inch per week so normal rain is 2 inches. We expect 1-2 inches for the rest of April. As for last freeze, as predicted in February and March, it appears the last hard freeze has come about on schedule in April. Indications are we can still expect a few days of frost and light freeze conditions especially north of I-70 but the last hard freeze in the middle 20s and below has probably already occurred. Evaporation rates are above normal right now and likely to overall stay above normal into May. The outlook for May calls for warmer and drier than normal weather.

<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>Below</td>
<td>Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeze</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 inch soil</td>
<td>Normal/Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evapotranspiration</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The latest outlook for temperatures and precipitation for the region from NOAA/NWS into the end of the month can be seen here and it shows warmer than normal along with wetter in the western corn and soybean areas but normal or drier in eastern areas.
Corn and Soybean: What’s in Store for 2016?
Author(s): Laura Lindsey & Peter Thomison

This “spring,” the weather has gone from snow and 24 degrees to sunny and 80 degrees within one week. This unusual weather leaves many of us wondering what’s in store for the remainder of the growing season. In general, unfavorable weather conditions tend to affect soybean yield much less compared to corn yield. In 2012, when we experienced a hot, dry summer, corn yield was reduced by 23% while soybean yield was only reduced by 8% (see the table below). However, under more optimum weather conditions, corn yield gains are much greater compared to soybean. With more ideal weather in 2013 and 2014, corn yield increased 12-14% while soybean yield only increased 2-8%.

Table 1. Corn and soybean grain yield averages for Ohio compared to the 5-year average (data from USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Corn (bu/acre)</th>
<th>Soybean (bu/acre)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>153 (-1%)</td>
<td>50 (+2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>176 (+14%)</td>
<td>53 (+8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>174 (+12%)</td>
<td>50 (+2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>120 (-23%)</td>
<td>45 (-8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>153 (-1%)</td>
<td>48 (-2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Year Ave.</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soybean Perspective. Despite the weather, the state soybean yield does not tend to fluctuate much. Soybean vegetative and reproductive stages overlap allowing the soybean plant to compensate for short periods of stress (see the figure). In 2012, while plants were stunted and there was an increased number of flower abortion due to hot/dry weather conditions, soybean yield was “saved” in many areas of the state due to rainfall in August and September promoting seed fill. (This was especially true of our later maturing varieties.)
Corn Perspective.

With the weather forecast calling for “slightly-above” normal temperatures and “slightly below precipitation” for the remainder of April and similar conditions for May, this year offers an opportunity to plant corn at optimum calendar dates for yield. The recommended time for planting corns across Ohio is mid-April through about the first week of May. Grain yield and test weight are increased by early plantings, whereas grain moisture is reduced, thereby allowing earlier harvest and reducing drying costs. In central Ohio, yields decline approximately 1 to 1.5 bu/day for planting delayed beyond the first week of May. Early planting generally produces shorter plants with better standability. Delayed planting increases the risk of frost damage to corn and may subject the crop to greater injury from various late insect and disease pest problems, such as European corn borer and gray leaf spot. With earlier planting, vegetative growth is usually complete and pollination initiated prior to the period of greatest moisture stress in July and grain filling occurs during the periods when solar radiation is high which promotes greater accumulation of dry matter in the grain.

No-till corn can be planted at the same time as conventional, if soil conditions permit. In reality, however, planting may often need to be delayed several days to permit extra soil drying. Corn should be planted only when soils are dry enough to support traffic without causing soil compaction. The yield reductions resulting from “mudding the seed in” may be much greater than those resulting from a slight planting delay. Moreover, given the weather projections for drier and warmer conditions than normal, even with such delays, the crop may be planted before the optimum plant date window ends.

There have been occurrences in past years when early to mid-April planting were adversely affected by an abrupt transition from warm, dry conditions to freezing rains and snow. When dry corn seed absorbs cold water as a result of a cold rain or melting snow, “imbibitional chilling injury” may result. Such injury in corn seed can lead to delayed seedling growth and reduced stands so planting right before such large temperature swings should be avoided. Appropriate planting depths for corn vary with soil and weather conditions. There is a perception that shallow planting depths (less than 1.5 inches) are appropriate for early plantings - when soil conditions are usually cool and moist - because seed will emerge more rapidly due to warmer soil temperatures closer to the surface. However, planting shallower than 1.5 inches is generally not recommended at any planting date or in any soil type. Recent Ohio studies that evaluated corn response to seeding depth provide no evidence to support shallow plantings. For normal conditions plant corn at 1.5 to 2-inches deep to provide frost protection and allow for adequate root development. When corn is planted 1.5 to 2 inches deep, the nodal roots develop about 0.5 to 0.75 inches below the soil surface. At planting depths less than 1 inch, the nodal roots develop at or just below the soil surface. Excessively shallow planting can cause slow, uneven emergence due to soil moisture variation, and rootless corn (“floppery corn syndrome”) when hot, dry weather inhibits nodal root development. Shallow plantings increase stress and result in less developed roots, smaller ears and reduced yields.

Mitigation of Cold Damage in Grapevines: Science & Practice Workshop to be held on April 21, 2016

The OSU Viticulture Program would like to invite Ohio Grape Producers to a special workshop titled “Mitigation of Cold Damage in Grapevines: Science & Practice” featuring, Dr. Martin Goffinet, a world-renowned expert on grapevine biology from Cornell University. This workshop will be held on April 21, 2016 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the OARDC Research Building, Room 130, in Wooster, Ohio.

At this workshop, Dr. Goffinet will share his wealth of knowledge and research experience on grapevine anatomy and what happens when grapevines are damaged by cold. He will also present research on cane burial as a winter protection method with its pros and cons, followed by hands-on demonstration of assessing buried canes. The topics which will be presented at this workshop include:

- Cold injury and repair: How does the grapevine do it?
- Burying canes to avoid winter damage: What research tells us
- Is cane burial worth the hassle and extra cost?
- Hands-on assessment of damage in canes “buried” in 2015
- Current situation in the vineyard (update by Dr. Imed Dami)

To register, please contact Diane Kinney at kinney.63@osu.edu or by phone at 330-263-3814. Registration fee of $10 (includes handouts and refreshments) is payable at the door by cash or check. More information: workshop flyer (attached) or visit Buckeye Appellation website at: http://ohiograpeweb.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/sites/grapeweb/files/imce/pdf_events/2016%20Mitigation%20of%20Cold%20Damage%20Flier_dk_final%20%202012%20April.pdf

Preventing Grass Fires
Source: Red River Mutual

A grass fire differs from other fires by its extensive size, the speed at which it can spread out from its original source, its potential to change direction unexpectedly and its ability to jump gaps such as roads, rivers and fire breaks. To prevent dangerous grass fires, assess your property to determine its risk. Tall trees, wild grass, shrubs, and any other combustible materials can all contribute to spreading a fire. During drought or extended lengths of dry weather, this vegetation can become perfect fuel for a fire driven by strong winds. Some simple planning will greatly reduce the threat to your home, property and community.

- Do not attempt a controlled burn on your land without contacting the local fire department to check on conditions and precautions.
- Avoid burning grass near plastic culverts as they are flammable.
- Do not throw cigarette or cigar butts on the ground or out of a vehicle. Dispose of them properly and make sure they are completely extinguished.
- Keep a 30 foot “safety zone” surrounding your home. This area should be clear of brush, with grass cut short. Store firewood and other combustible materials at least 30 feet away from any buildings. For homes that sit on a steep slope, the safety zone should be increased accordingly.
- Keep your yard healthy, cut, and watered. It is a natural firebreak.
- Clean up dead leaves and twigs from your yard, roof and gutters. Cut tree limbs within 15 feet of the ground and remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Do not park cars, trucks or recreational vehicles on dry grass or shrubs. Exhaust systems on vehicles can reach temperatures of more than 500°C; it only takes about 200°C to start a grass fire in the summer.
- Use an approved spark arrester on all internal combustion engine power equipment. This special muffler helps ensure that sparks generated by off road vehicles, chainsaws and other equipment don't start grass fires.
- Parents should emphasize to their children the dangers of playing with fire. Children who have no idea how quickly flames can grow and spread start many grass fires.
- Homeowners who barbeque should maintain a 10 foot area free of brush and shrubbery around grills and propane tanks. Never leave a grill unattended.
- Keep a shovel, bucket of water, fire extinguisher or garden hose on hand at any time while burning outside.
- If conducting a controlled burn, have a water hose close by and inform your local fire department before burning.
USDA Expands Safety-Net for Dairy Operations Adding Next-Generation Family Members

WASHINGTON, April 12, 2016 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that dairy farms participating in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) can now update their production history when an eligible family member joins the operation. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, protects participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below levels of protection selected by the applicant.

“This change not only helps to strengthen a family dairy operation, it also helps new dairy farmers get started in the family business, while ensuring that safety net coverage remains available for these growing farms,” said Secretary Vilsack. “When children, grandchildren or their spouses become part of a dairy operation that is enrolled in MPP, the production from the dairy cows they bring with them into the business can now be protected. By strengthening the farm safety net, expanding credit options and growing domestic and foreign markets, USDA is committed to helping American farming operations remain successful.”

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) published a final rule which makes these changes effective on April 13, 2016. Any dairy operation already enrolled in the Margin Protection Program that had an intergenerational transfer occur will have an opportunity to increase the dairy operations production history during the 2017 registration and annual coverage election period. The next election period begins on July 1, 2016, and ends on Sept. 30, 2016. For intergenerational transfers occurring on or after July 1, 2016, notification must be made to the FSA within 60 days of purchasing the additional cows. Each participating dairy operation is authorized one intergenerational transfer at any time of its choosing until 2018.

For $100 a year, dairy producers can receive basic catastrophic protection that covers 90 percent of milk production at a $4 margin coverage level. For additional premiums, operations can protect 25 to 90 percent of production history with margin coverage levels from $4.50 to $8, in 50 cent increments. Annual enrollment in the program is required in order to receive margin protection. The final rule also provides improved risk protection for dairy farmers that pay premiums to buy-up higher levels of coverage by clarifying that 90 percent of production is covered below the $4 level even if a lower percentage was selected above the $4 margin.

Earlier this year, FSA gave producers the opportunity to pay their premium through additional options including via their milk cooperative or handler. This rule facilitates those options and also clarifies that the catastrophic level protection at $4 will always cover 90 percent of the production history, even if a producer selected a less than a 90 percent percentage for the buy-up coverage.

Assuming current participation, had the Margin Protection Program existed from 2009 to 2014, premiums and fees would have totaled $500 million while providing producers with $2.5 billion in financial assistance, nearly $1 billion more than provided by the old Milk Income Loss Contract program during the same period.

The Margin Protection Program was established by the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on USDA’s historic investments in rural America over the past seven years. Since 2009, USDA has worked to strengthen and support American agriculture, an industry that supports one in 11 American jobs, provides American consumers with more than 80 percent of the food we consume, ensures that Americans spend less of their paychecks at the grocery store than most people in other countries, and supports markets for homegrown renewable energy and materials. USDA has provided $5.6 billion of disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; expanded risk management tools with products like to Whole Farm Revenue Protection; helped farm businesses grow with $36 billion in farm credit; provided $ 4.32 billion in critical agricultural research; established innovative public-private conservation partnerships such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program; developed new markets for rural-made products, including more than 2,500 biobased products through USDA’s BioPreferred program; and invested $13.3 billion in infrastructure, housing and
Vaccines might be improved with new strain-specific technology.
relationship with a vet makes it easier for a producer to reach out when they have questions about medications or animal care, explained Zimmerley. Don’t wait until the next December to start forming that relationship with a vet, said Grimes. “When you have your next appointment with the vet, start asking questions.”

**VFD requirements**

In order for a veterinarian to issue a VFD, they must be licensed to practice veterinary medicine and operate in compliance with state-defined VCPR requirements. The VFD (paper or electronic) must contain producer information — i.e. name, location, animals being treated, etc. — and the name of the VFD drug issued. A copy of the VFD should be provided to the producer and the feed distributor, and a copy should be kept on record for two years. The producer may only feed animals based on the VFD label requirements and may not continue to feed the animal with feed after the expiration date listed. The producer must also maintain all VFD records for two years.

A feed distributor may provide VFD feed only if the VFD contains all required information and complies with VFD terms. The distributor is required to provide a one-time notice to the FDA if it plans to distribute VFD feeds and an acknowledgement that it will only sell VFD feeds to producers with valid VFD orders. Feed distributors must also maintain VFD records for two years.

**Thinking outside the box**

“We are going to be limited. We are not going to have the crutch of every antibiotic to deal with disease that we have had,” said Grimes. “We are going to have to start thinking outside of the box instead of saying ‘it stinks that we don’t have this antibiotic anymore’,” said Zimmerley. “Maybe we don’t really need it.” Zimmerly suggests looking into the environment in which the animals live. A disease like foot rot might be solved by taking better care in making sure the area in which the animal lives is clean and dry. “We are going to have to do a better job on the basics; better management practices to prevent diseases,” said Grimes. Taking into consideration barn ventilation and sanitation practices to prevent animal illnesses is one way. “We need to think about prevention instead of rescue,” he added.

**Judicious use**

Veterinarians hope to receive more clarification on what producers can and can’t do in the coming months as this directive unfolds over the next year. “It’s kind of a gray area and not a lot of people really know about it yet. A lot more education needs to be done,” Zimmerly said. “Sometimes, in agriculture, we get caught in saying we are shouldering all the blame. We get in trouble because animals require a larger volume of antibiotics,” said Grimes. “We need to look at how we can make this a win-win.” “Judicious use of antibiotics is something that we as producers need to strive for,” said Zimmerly.

For more information on the VFD visit the Food and Drug Administration [website](http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM052660.pdf).

**Tips to Pay Bills When Money Is Tight**

By Lisa Laca at AgWeb

When grain prices get really low and margins get tight, producers are faced with tough decisions. Some might even have a hard time paying their bills this year. What should you do if you don’t have enough cash to satisfy outstanding debts? Who should you pay first? How can you get more time? The short answer: It depends. Financial crises are always unique, so they require customized solutions, says Bob Milligan, a senior consultant with Dairy Strategies. Following a few key steps, though, will help you survive those challenges without robbing Peter to pay Paul.
First, face reality head-on. “When you get into these kinds of situations, you’re pretty frustrated and pretty down,” Milligan points out. “It’s really easy to procrastinate, but you can’t.” In 2009, Milligan says, many dairy farms delayed dealing with their financial problems. By the time they did something about them, it was too late. “Don’t let that happen to you,” he warns. Next, determine if the issue you face is a short-term or a long-term problem. “Are we short on cash because we had a low yield last year or the price is particularly low, or is this a sign that our business isn’t sustainable?” Milligan asks.

One requires a different course of action than the other. In the text below, Milligan and Ryan Bristle, an Iowa corn and soybean farmer and consultant with Russell Consulting Group, contrast the two situations and detail how your farm can stay focused, make payments and take actions necessary to sustain operations amid uncertainty.

Adopt Near-Term Solutions
Lack of ordinary cash flow is one example of a short-term problem resulting from unusually low commodity prices, Milligan says. If you find yourself facing this scenario, take the following steps:

1. Don’t stop paying your bills. You have to continue making payments, Milligan says. It’s also a good idea to openly communicate your situation with creditors. “I don’t think you should ever not pay someone,” he says. “The first thing you should do is talk to them.”

2. Find more cash. There’s still a lot of old-crop owned by farmers,” Bristle says. “The easiest way to generate cash right now is to sell it.” Another option is to sell idle machinery, Milligan says. He recommends farmers develop a list of assets they could sell for quick cash.

3. Talk to your lender. “If this is a short-term problem, the lender may be willing to help convert some loans to interest-only for a (limited) period of time,” Milligan says. The other possibility is to roll short-term loans into medium-term loans, reducing monthly payments.

4. Prioritize your payments. “What are you contractually obligated to pay?” Bristle asks. Pay those obligations first. Then, it’s important to pay down higher-interest debt in the short term. “We really want to look at it from a cash-flow standpoint,” Bristle says.

Restructure Failing Entities
If your money problems involve more than just cash flow, you might need to reconsider the financial sustainability of your business. Milligan and Bristle say these steps can help you restructure:

1. Get some perspective. “Determine if there is some form of the business that is sustainable,” Milligan says. Restructuring isn’t what many farmers want to do, but it could allow them to recover.

2. Set emotions aside. Farmers who find they need to restructure should not let their emotions get the best of them. “Making business decisions from a business perspective rather than an emotional perspective will be better in the long run,” Bristle says.

3. Determine what you can sell. Know which assets are not held by the bank, Milligan says. “A farm we are currently working with to get out of bankruptcy has most of its assets tied into loans, but their young stock isn’t,” he says. “We are using those assets to help them restructure.”

4. Develop a bullet-proof business plan. What you do in the good times reveals itself in the bad times, Bristle
explains. He encourages clients to take a long-term view. “If you are losing money this year, you need to know how, so you can avoid it next year,” he says.

4-H Survey of Youth Hears ‘We Have Weak Leaders’

As the presidential election hoists leadership to the forefront of national dialogue, a new survey asked America’s youth to weigh in on the topic — finding that today’s leaders are believed to have their own agendas and demonstrate weak leadership. Additionally, young people would like better preparation as leaders. Ninety percent (90%) of young people say they are concerned about the future leadership of America, and two-thirds are more confident in the next generation of leaders than in the leaders they see today.

This is according to the 4-H National Youth Survey on Leadership conducted online by Harris Poll among 1,501 9th through 12th grade students. National 4-H Council released the survey findings April 12 at a youth-led rally in Washington, D.C. to kick off the 4-H Grow True Leaders Campaign. More than 1,500 youth nationwide responded to the survey, which revealed:

- Most youth (81%) think leaders today are more concerned with their own agendas than with achieving the goals of their organizations. Seventy-six percent (76%) say leaders are focused on different priorities than what matters most to them.
- Half of youth rate government and political leaders as having weak leadership (51%), among the highest relative to other groups of leaders examined in the survey.
- Overall, weak leadership is related to not accomplishing what is promised (59%); not working collaboratively (56%); and not offering new solutions (53%).
- Most youth (96%) think leadership is important to addressing the country’s most pressing issues; but only one in three young people says they have the skills they need to be prepared to lead.

“America is facing a critical need for more leaders — true leaders — who are prepared with the skills to deal with the problems of today and the challenges of tomorrow,” said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO, National 4-H Council. “This campaign is giving youth a platform to ask for more support in preparing them to lead and to be recognized for their positive contributions.”

What youth want- More than 300 youth gathered at the 4-H Grow True Leaders Rally where they identified specific areas they want more support from adults: hands-on experience in leadership roles, programs to build confidence and regular encouragement to lead. They asked adults to offer positive encouragement of young people by participating in the True Leaders Shout Out online — sharing positive messages and photos or videos using #TrueLeaders to shout out a young true leader. Youth also shared action platforms for the issues identified in the survey as most important to America’s youth: access to college; jobs and the economy; bullying; and the environment.

Famous alumni- They were joined by Grammy award-winning music artist and 4-H National Spokeswoman Jennifer Nettles and 2016 Miss America Betty Cantrell; both are 4-H alumna. Other notable 4-H alumni are participating in activities and voicing their support of the campaign this week, including CNN host Nancy Grace, Facebook executive Andrew Bosworth, U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell, and Weekend TODAY host Craig Melvin.

National campaign- The 4-H Grow True Leaders Campaign is the first of its kind for National 4-H Council — a national, multi-platform initiative that will support the organization’s growth goals of empowering 10 million youth by 2025 (a 67 percent increase). The marketing charge is to break out of the limited view that many still have of 4-H — to show that the organization is still connected to its roots in agriculture, but has also evolved to feature youth development
programming in areas like STEM, healthy living and citizenship. “With impact numbers that are second to none, 4-H has been the best kept secret for far too long,” Sirangelo continued. “We want more people to know that 4-H was founded with youth empowerment at our core, and we are still a youth empowerment organization — with 4-H’ers leading all kinds of positive solutions for the diverse issues our country faces today.”

Spruce - Phomopsis Canker
by Nancy J. Taylor
Source: http://bygl.osu.edu/node/270

Branch dieback in spruce can have many causes such as the generalized dieback we see as roots fail from root rot or various root injuries. Cytospora canker is a very well-known disease of spruce, particularly blue spruce (Picea pungens). A dead branch in a spruce is often attributed to Cytospora but that is not always the case as was evident in a recent blue spruce sample.

Look closely at the dying branch. Trace the dead and dying tissue back to where it transitions to healthy. Carefully scrape the bark at that transition looking for discoloration of the underlying woody tissues. Looking closely at the whorl area you may see a distinctly brown discoloration of the wood with a sharp transition from affected to unaffected tissues. This is evidence of a canker.

If you are taking a sample for laboratory examination, make your sampling cut several inches below the last visibly discoloring tissue so that the transition is included and send samples that have not been scraped as described above. In the lab we look closely at the affected tissues and the intact transition area is critical. It may be necessary to incubate the sample to induce the fungal fruiting structures to become apparent. Then a close examination can reveal the actual spores of the fungus. In this case the fruiting structure did appear, a pycnidium and the spores were characteristic of Phomopsis. Combining the symptoms plus the fungus confirms that this sample showed evidence of Phomopsis canker.

Treatment is problematic. In the recent sample the fungus was close to active sporulation which means that new inoculum will be forming on the dead branch tissues very shortly. Therapeutic pruning could have been initiated during the dormant season if dieback was visible then. BUT, if dieback does not become apparent until spring warm-up keep in mind that pruning during active sporulation could result in additional infections if the spores being extruded from the pycnidia land on a fresh pruning wound.

With Phomopsis canker of spruce the cankers often are visible first at the whorl and then extend down the branch. The pruning cut should be made at least several inches below the cankered area. Prune according to good practices for conifers; do not leave a stub. Depending on the symptoms and extent of the problem it may be necessary to remove entire branches.

Fungicides have been used for Phomopsis tip blight on small trees in nurseries but may not be highly effective in preventing canker formation in large landscape trees. A fungicide containing thiophanate-methyl has been used in nurseries.
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.

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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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