Congratulations to Portage and Trumbull County ANR Educator Angela Arnold and her husband Jonathon on the birth of their little boy! Baby Titus made it just in time for tax breaks like a true farmer.

Hello Northeast Ohio Counties!

This is the final ag newsletter of 2020!

If your New Year’s resolution is to attend more educational programs, you're in luck. Check out today's newsletter for details about this winter's online programs and updates. Continue to keep an eye out for more program announcements in the coming weeks!

Happy New Year!

Lee Beers  Andrew Holden  Angie Arnold
Trumbull County Extension Educator  Ashtabula County Extension Educator  Portage County Extension Educator

In This Issue:

- The new COVID relief bill: what’s in it for USDA?
- Yes, your poinsettia can survive after the holidays
- Register Now for OSU Extension’s Online Winter Programs!
- Farm Office Live Winter Edition
- Ohio legislation updates laws for agricultural societies
The new COVID relief bill: what’s in it for USDA?

By: Peggy Kirk Hall
Source: https://farmoffice.osu.edu/blog/tue-12222020-357pm/new-covid-relief-bill-what%20%E2%80%99s-it-usda

Just in time for Christmas, Congress delivered quite a package this morning by passing new COVID-19 relief legislation. President Trump is expected to sign the bill soon. Buried in the 5,593 pages of the legislation is an allocation of nearly $11.2 billion dollars to the USDA. A large portion of the USDA funds will provide additional payments for agricultural producers under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). Benefits for food processors, energy producers and timber harvesters are also in the bill, as well as funding for several other USDA programs and studies. We’ve categorized, compiled and summarized where the USDA funds are to go below.

Crops
- Supplemental CFAP payments of $20 per eligible acre for the 2020 crop year, for eligible “price trigger crops,” which includes barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton and wheat, and eligible “flat rate crops,” which includes alfalfa, amaranth grain, buckwheat, canola, cotton, crambe, einkorn, emmer, flax, guar, hemp, indigo, industrial rice, kenaf, khorasan, millet, mustard, oats, peanuts, quinoa, rapeseed, rice, rice, sweet, rice, wild, rye, safflower, sesame, speltz, sugar beets, sugarcane, teff, and triticale but excludes hay, except alfalfa, and crops intended for grazing, green manure, or left standing.
- $100 million in additional funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

Livestock, poultry and dairy
- Supplemental CFAP payments to livestock or poultry producers (excluding packers and live poultry dealers) for losses from depopulation that occurred due to insufficient processing access, based on 80% of the fair market value of depopulated livestock and poultry and including depopulation costs not already compensated under EQIP or state programs.
- Supplemental CFAP payments to cattle producers for cattle in inventory from April 16 to May 14, 2020 according to different payment formulas for slaughter cattle, feeder cattle and all other cattle.
- Supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage payments for eligible operations with a production history of less than 5 million pounds whenever the average actual dairy production margin for a month is less than the selected coverage level threshold, according to a specified formula.
- $1 billion for payments to contract growers of livestock and poultry to cover not more than 80% of revenue losses from January 1 to December 22, 2020.
- $20 million for the USDA to improve animal disease prevention and response capacity.
• Establishment of a statutory trust via the Packers and Stockyards Act that requires a dealer with average annual purchases above $100,000 to hold cash purchases of livestock by the dealer in trust until full payment has been received by the cash seller of the livestock.

General payment provisions
• In determining the amount of eligible sales for CFAP, USDA must include a producer’s crop insurance indemnities, non-insured crop disaster assistance payment and WHIP payments, and may allow a producer to substitute 2018 sales for 2019 sales.
• USDA shall make additional payments under CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 to ensure that payments closely align with the calculated gross payment or revenue loses, but not to exceed the calculated gross payment or 80% of the loss. For income determination, USDA shall consider income from agricultural sales, including gains, agricultural services, the sale of agricultural real estate, and prior year net operating loss carryforward.
• USDA may take into account when making direct support payments price differentiation factors based on specialized varieties, local markets and farm practices such as certified organic production.

Marketing and processing
• $100 million for grants under the Local Agriculture Market Program for COVID-19 impacts on local agriculture markets. USDA may reduce and allow in-kind contributions for grant matching requirements. USDA may provide support to processors for losses of crops due to insufficient processing access.
• $60 million for a grant program for meat and poultry slaughter and processing facilities seeking federal inspection status or eligibility for the Cooperative Interstate Shipment program to modernize facilities or equipment, comply with packaging, labeling, and safety requirements and develop food safety processes.
• USDA must deliver a report on possible improvements to the Cooperative Interstate Shipment program that allows interstate shipments of meat and poultry products and on the availability and effectiveness of federal loan and grant programs for meat and poultry processing facilities and support for increasing processing capacity.
• USDA may make recourse loans available to dairy product processors, packagers or merchandisers impacted by COVID-19.
• Until September 30, 2021, USDA may extend the term of marketing assistance loans to 12 months.

Food purchases
• $1.5 billion to purchase and distribute food and agricultural products to individuals in need, and for grants and loans to small and midsized food processors or distributors, seafood processing facilities, farmers’ markets,
producers or other organizations for the purpose of responding to COVID, including for worker protections. USDA must conduct a preliminary review to improve COVID-19 food purchasing, including the fairness of purchases and distribution.

- $400 million for a Dairy Donation Program to reimburse dairy processors for purchasing and processing milk and partnering with non-profit organizations to develop donation and distribution plans for the processed dairy products.

Timber and energy
- $200 billion for relief to timber harvesting and hauling businesses that experienced a loss of 10 percent or more in gross revenue from January 1 to December 1, 2020, as compared to the same period in 2019.
- USDA may make payments for producers of advanced biofuel, biomass-based diesel, cellulosic biofuel, conventional biofuel or renewable fuel produced in the U.S. for unexpected market losses resulting from COVID-19.

Training and outreach
- $75 million for the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach Program for grants for beginning, socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers impacted by COVID-19. USDA may reduce and allow in-kind contributions for grant matching requirements and waive maximum grant amounts.

Farm stress
- $28 million for grants to State departments of agriculture to expand or support stress assistance programs for agriculture-related occupations, not to exceed $500,000 per state.

Nutrition
- $75 million for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, and USDA may reduce matching grant requirements.

We'll keep digging through the legislation to report on other agricultural provisions. Or readers may take a look at H.R. 133, available here. The USDA allocations we summarized are in Subtitle B, beginning on page 2,352.
Yes, your poinsettia can survive after the holidays

By: Alayna DeMartini
Source: https://cfaes.osu.edu/news/articles/yes-your-poinsettia-can-survive-after-the-holidays

Bold when you buy them, poinsettias can wither as winter goes on.

It might be because of how they were treated. If they were exposed to cold drafts or perched by a heat vent, or if they sat in a cold car through too many errands, the leaves could turn yellow and fall off—even before the holidays or not long after. Native to Mexico, poinsettias favor bright light and warm conditions.

“You need to find a location in your house that provides good light. Six hours of bright light are necessary every day,” said Uttara Samarakoon, an assistant professor at Ohio State ATI in The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

The biggest mistakes people typically make are not providing enough light, watering them too much or too little, and keeping them near heating or air conditioning vents, said Samarakoon, coordinator of the Greenhouse and Nursery Management Program at ATI.

After the holiday lights are boxed up and the tree is carried into the attic, poinsettias can still thrive. Given the right care, poinsettias should last at least a couple of months, if not indefinitely.

“Many people ask the question, ‘Can we grow them after Christmas?’ It is possible, but you may not get the bright, showy leaves like those of plants grown in greenhouses,” Samarakoon said.

Outside of greenhouses, getting poinsettias to turn red again can be a challenge. They start out red when you buy them but eventually turn to green and won’t go red again unless they get enough darkness, because poinsettias require short days for flowers to bud. Starting in mid-September, poinsettias need at least 12 hours of darkness daily, Samarakoon said.

That can be tough with all the lighting in the house and outside at night. On the other hand, indoor light levels can be too low for flowers and bright colors to develop, she said.

Samarakoon offered some other tips for keeping your poinsettia thriving:

1. Place the poinsettia inside where it will have good light, at least six hours of bright light per day, ideally from sunlight.
2. Keep it where the temperature is between 60 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Check if the plant needs water by pressing your finger into the soil about two inches deep. Water only if the soil is dry two inches down.
4. Remove the foil or plastic wrapper, so the poinsettia never sits in water. You can return the wrapper after the plant is no longer draining water.
5. Try to keep your pets away from poinsettias. The milky sap can irritate their skin and mouths.

Register Now for OSU Extension’s Online Winter Programs!

By: Mary Griffith, Amanda Douridas, Laura Lindsey, Allen Geyer
Source: https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2020-41/register-now-osu-extension%E2%80%99s-online-winter-programs

This winter OSU Extension’s Agronomy Team will offer a variety of educational programs for farmers and crop consultants to attend online. The team will offer both traditional programs including a Corn College, Soybean School, and Precision University, as well as focusing on some new hot topic areas. New programs will focus on three areas: Investing in Soil Health, Crop Diversity to Improve Your Bottom Line, and Farming in Weather Extremes. CCA CEUs will be offered at each session. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required for each session to receive log-in information. The schedule with registration information for each program is listed below.

AgCrops Virtual Program Give-aways

Be one of the first 300 people from Ohio to sign-up and attend a 2021 Virtual Winter Meeting hosted by the AgCrops Team and you will receive a set of handouts! Included in the shipment to your door is a copy of the Corn, Soybean, Wheat, and Forages Field Guide, a 2020 eFields Report (2019 pictured), digital soil thermometer, and a 2021 Agronomic Crops Team Calendar (with important marketing, crop insurance and USDA report dates identified). These items were generously funded by the Ohio Soybean Council and the USDA NIFA Integrated Pest Management program.

The Dirt on Soil Health: Investing Below the Surface. In this weekly series, farmers, industry, and academic experts will weigh in on practical steps to improve soil health and measure impact on crop yield and farm profitability. Thursdays, January 14 – March 18, 8am-8:30am. Register: http://go.osu.edu/soilhealth2020
- **January 14 - Does Soil Health Pay?** Farmer Panel, Nathan Brown, Matt Falb, and Les Seiler
- **January 21 - What Can Soil Health Tests Tell You?** Steve Culman
- **January 28 - Can Improving Soil Health Improve Yield?** Jordon Wade
- **February 4 - Cover Crop Management** Hans Kok
- **February 18 - Compaction Solutions** Scott Shearer
- **February 25 - Soil Health in Ohio** Elizabeth Hawkins and Steve Culman
- **March 4 - What's the Return on Investing in Soil Health?** Rick Clark
- **March 18 - Programs and Funding to Support Soil Health**

**Crop Diversity to Improve Your Bottom Line.** This series will look at practices and considerations to successfully incorporate alternative grain crops into your rotation to diversify your operation. Thursdays, January 14 – March 4, 9:00am-10:30am.
Register: [http://go.osu.edu/cropdiversity](http://go.osu.edu/cropdiversity)

- **January 14 – Specialty Small Grains**, Winter Malting Barley (Greg McGlinch), White Wheat (Dennis Pennington), Wet Wrapped Oats (Al Gahler), Triticale (Jason Hartschuh)
- **February 4 – Seed Production**, Corn and Soybean Seed Production (Fred Pond), Cover Crop Seed Production
- **March 4 – Non-GMO Crop Production**, Best Practices for High Yielding Non-GMO Soybean Production (Laura Lindsey), Weed Control (Mark Loux), Insect Management: The Forgotten Corn Pests (Chris DiFonzo)

**Farming in Weather Extremes.** This series will present practices and technology farmers can utilize to adapt to challenging growing seasons with increasing extreme weather events. Thursdays, January 21 – March 18, 9:00am-10:30am.
Register: [http://go.osu.edu/adapt](http://go.osu.edu/adapt)

- **January 21 - Disease Management Options for Today's Weather**, Pierce Paul and Aaron Wilson
- **March 18 - 2021 Growing Season Weather Outlook and Changing Climate Patterns**, Aaron Wilson

**Corn College and Soybean School.** Best management practices and important updates for the 2021 growing season. Speakers include Peter Thomison, Steve Culman, Pierce Paul, Laura Lindsey, Mark Loux, Anne Dorrance, Andy Michel, and Kelley Tilmon. February 11, 9:00am-12:00pm (Corn College) and 1:00-4:00pm (Soybean School). Register: [http://go.osu.edu/agronomyschools](http://go.osu.edu/agronomyschools)
“Farm Office Live” returns virtually this winter as an opportunity for you to get the latest outlook and updates on ag law, farm management, ag economics, farm business analysis and other related issues from faculty and educators with the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University. Each Farm Office Live will start off with presentations on select ag law and farm management topics from our experts and then we’ll open it up for questions from attendees on other topics of interest. Viewers can attend “Farm Office Live” online each month on Wednesday evening or Friday morning, or can catch a recording of each program.

The full slate of offerings for this winter:
- January 13th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- January 15th 10:00 – 11:30 am
- February 10th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- February 12th 10:00 – 11:30 am
- March 10th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- March 12th 10:00 – 11:30 am
- April 7th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- April 9th 10:00 – 11:30 am

**Topics to be addressed this winter include:**
- Outlook on Crop Input Costs and Profit Margins
- Outlook on Cropland Values and Cash Rents
- Outlook on Interest Rates
- Tax Issues That May Impact Farm Businesses
- Legal trends for 2021
- Legislative updates
- Farm business management and analysis updates
- Farm succession & estate planning updates

Who’s on the Farm Office Team? Our team features OSU experts ready to help you manage your farm office:
- Peggy Kirk Hall — agricultural law
- Dianne Shoemaker — farm business analysis and dairy production
- David Marrison — farm management
- Barry Ward — agricultural economics and tax

Register at https://go.osu.edu/farmofficelive
We look forward to you joining us this winter!

**Ohio legislation updates laws for agricultural societies**

By: Peggy Kirk Hall, Associate Professor, Agricultural & Resource Law  
Source: [https://farmoffice.osu.edu/blog/mon-12282020-900am/ohio-legislation-updates-laws-agricultural-societies](https://farmoffice.osu.edu/blog/mon-12282020-900am/ohio-legislation-updates-laws-agricultural-societies)

Written by Jeffrey Lewis, Attorney, Agricultural & Resource Law Program

Ohio’s past fair season was mayhem thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, but some help is on the way. The Ohio General Assembly passed legislation on December 22 aimed at updating laws and regulations governing agricultural societies and local county fairs. Major highlights of the bill include increasing the amount that a county or independent agricultural society receives for operation expenses from a county, removing the cap on the amounts that a county may transfer to an agricultural society for junior club expenses associated with operating fairgrounds, and increasing the total amount of debt that a society may incur. Here’s a more detailed summary of the provisions contained within House Bill 665.

**County payments to county or independent agricultural societies**

For county and independent agricultural societies, H.B. 665 increases, from $800 to $1,600, the max amount that a county treasurer must annually transfer to a society operating within the county. The County Auditor is required to request that the County Treasurer make the transfer if: (1) the society held an annual fair; (2) the society has made an annual report to the Director of Agriculture concerning the fair; and (3) the Director presents a certificate to the County Auditor indicating that the society has complied with the applicable laws of Ohio.

H.B. 665 also removes the $500 cap on the annual amount that a Board of County Commissioners must reimburse an agricultural society for junior club expenses. Additionally, the $2,000 cap on the amount that a Board of Commissioners must annually appropriate to a county agricultural society has been removed, but only if the society: (1) owns or leases real estate used as a fairground; (2) has control and management of the lands and buildings on the fairground; and (3) requests an appropriation from the Board.

**Debt authorization**

H.B. 665 expands the total amount of debt that an agricultural society may incur. Under the new law, county and independent agricultural societies’ annual payments for debt obligations cannot exceed 25% of the prior three-year average of its annual revenue. However, a county agricultural society must obtain approval from the Board of County Commissioners prior to incurring any debt if the Board pays or has paid money out of the county treasury to purchase the society’s fairgrounds.
Other notable provisions

- H.B. 665 removes restrictions on how proceeds for beer/liquor sales are to be used.
- Any county or independent agricultural society member can sell seasonal tickets or passes for the society’s annual fair and the sale need not be conducted on the premises of the fairgrounds.
- Any property owned by an agricultural society is now tax exempt, so long as that property is “used in furtherance” of the society’s purposes.
- Modernizes the manner in which a county agricultural society must publish its annual financial information.
- If the Board of County Commissioners wish to sell or exchange the fairgrounds, the Board must notify the applicable agricultural society 14 days prior to the sale or exchange.

H.B. 665 modernizes Ohio fair laws and agricultural society laws, some of which have not been updated since the 1950s. Many of the provisions contained within H.B. 665 were set to help out local agricultural societies for the 2020 fair season, and thus many provisions expired on December 1, 2020. However, the modernization and updates to Ohio’s laws will hopefully make next year’s fair season that much better. H.B. 665 now awaits Governor DeWine’s signature.
The virtual Pastures for Profit course will consist of three 90-minute webinars offering a variety of pasture and grazing topics. Once registered, attendees will be granted access to the online course including the webinars and complementary resources. Participants that attend all three webinars will have the opportunity to earn a certificate of completion. Registered participants will also receive their choice of a curriculum binder or USB drive of the traditional course by mail.

**Wednesday, January 13th 7:00 p.m.  Webinar 1:**
Core Grazing Education: Evaluating Resources and Goal Setting, Getting Started Grazing, Soil Fertility

**Wednesday, February 3rd 7:00 p.m.  Webinar 2:**
The Science of Grazing: Understanding Plant Growth, Fencing and Water Systems, Meeting Animal Requirements on Pasture

**Wednesday, March 3rd 7:00 p.m.  Webinar 3:**
Meeting Grazing Goals: Pasture Weed Control, Economics of Grazing, Creating and Implementing Grazing Plans

Cost of the course is $50, which includes the Pastures for Profit manual. Current and new members of the Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council are eligible for a $10 discount on registration. Register by visiting: [https://afgc.org/ofgcwebinar](https://afgc.org/ofgcwebinar).
Stay warm at home and think spring with these great winter Wednesday webinars.

February 3rd

- “Why Native Plants Matter to Bees and Other Wildlife”
  presented by Denise Ellsworth, Program Director of Pollinator Education, OSU

February 17th

- “Invasives-Identification, Eradication, and Native Alternatives”
  presented by Rees Davis, Master Gardener, and Andrew Holden, Educator, Ag & Natural Resources for CFAES Ashtabula County OSU Extension

March 3rd

- “Who are the (Non Bee) Pollinators in Your Neighborhood?”
  presented by Judy Semroc, CMNH Conservation Specialist

March 17th

- “Harvesting and Planting Native Seeds”
  presented by Red Beet Row, Agroecology Education Farm

March 31st

- “Specific Plants for Specific Pollinators”
  presented by Carol Blake, Master Gardener and Encie Moroski, Master Gardener

Register now at go.osu.edu/neops