In less than 48 hours we will close out the year of 2014. We are planning a lot of great programs for this winter. This winter will see two new programming efforts- these being Farm Bill and Fertilizer Certification programs. We will be offering multiple sessions of each of these programs across the region for your benefit. I hope to see many of you at these and the other programs we will be offering this winter. To start the year….I would like to offer the following quote from Edith Lovejoy Pierce who stated, “We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day.” I hope each of you have a safe and prosperous 2015!

David Marrison, AG Educator

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A Look Back at 2014

By David Marrison

As we begin 2015, I would like to pause and reflect on the major news stories of 2014. Some of the top stories included the Ebola epidemic, the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, racial and police tensions, the emergence of the Islamic State, midterm elections, and the implementation of the new health care act. The year will also be remembered for millions taking the ice bucket challenge to raise awareness for ALS and for the loss of Robin Williams and Joan Rivers who made generations get their belly laugh.

Agriculturally speaking, it was a year of many challenges and new legislative programs. Today, I would like to share my top five agricultural news stories for 2014:

Polar Vortex: The term “polar vortex” became part of our vocabulary last winter when historic cold weather froze the nation and Ohio. The first arctic blast smacked us on January 6-7 and continued with close to ten occasions where our area received sub-zero temperatures during the winter. The polar vortex was devastating to our local grape industry with most wine vineyards losing their entire 2014 crop. The damage across the grape region was the worst in our history. Many growers had to rip out their vines and will replant in 2015. The total loss of vines and grapes in our county alone was at least $15 million. 2014 is definitely one which area grape growers would like to forget!
Wet, Wet, Wet - Adding insult to the Polar Vortex, the 2014 growing season mimicked 2013 with “wet” being the word of the summer. The snowy winter was followed by an extremely wet growing season. While the rest of the state is talking about nice yields, our crops were all over the place. I have heard corn yields ranging from 40 bushels per acre up to over 175 bushels per acre. Anyone who was trying to make hay this year will remember a summer which had very few stretches of 3 days or more without rain. Making hay in 2014 was really tough.

2014 Farm Bill – The farm bill was finally passed and signed in February 2014. While it's called the Farm Bill, in truth, it's more of a food bill. It sets five years of eating and farming policy in the United States. Of the $99 billion which is allocated each year in the farm bill, $79 billion is dedicated to the nutrition program (food stamps) and $6 billion goes to farm production programs. The new farm bill dramatically changes the federal farm program. Guaranteed payments have been eliminated and more money has been given for crop insurance subsidies. Additionally, the bill creates a new dairy program and three new crop programs. Dairy farmers have just completed their election on the new Dairy Margin Protection Program and crop farmers will select this winter between the Ag Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC).

CAUV Taxes - At the end of August, we held a public meeting at the Ashtabula County fairgrounds in which over 400 people attended. This meeting warned farmers and landowners of a property tax increase which will hit them hard when it comes time to pay their tax bills this year. Landowners who have land enrolled in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) program will see their taxes increase 250-300 percent. The CAUV rates are updated every three years and the formula has hit a perfect storm which pushes rates to an all-time high. Our Ohio House of Representative, Dr. John Patterson, has been working since August with a local CAUV Taskforce to take ideas to Columbus to help make the CAUV formula work better in the future.

Water Quality in Ohio - The passage of Ohio Senate Bill 150 in April created the first commercial farming fertilization certification program in the country. The program aims to reduce the amount of phosphorus going into Ohio’s streams and into Lake Erie. This legislation requires farmers who apply nutrients on 50 acres or more to become state certified. OSU Extension will be providing the training over the next three years for farmers to obtain their certification. Expect more regulations and requirements as this issue moves forward.

2015 Ag Day Sponsors Sought
On May 8, 2015 Ashtabula County will be hosting an Agriculture Day for nearly 1,200 members of the class of 2026 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds. The goal of program is to educate first graders on where their food comes from and to showcase the different types of agricultural commodities which are being grown in Ashtabula County. OSU Extension is currently seeking sponsors for this year’s event.

During this interactive day, students will be able to get up close and personal with farm animals, crops, fruits, and vegetables at twelve interactive stations relating to our county’s agriculture. They will learn about dairy cows, sheep, horses, beef cows, goats, pigs, alpacas, chickens, ducks, and turkeys. Each student will make their own home-made butter and tried their hand at milking a cow. The youth will also learn how seeds are planted to give us an array of tasty fruit and vegetables and how they are processed into foods that we enjoy. For instance, how cucumbers are transformed into pickles and how tomatoes are turned into ketchup, salsa and spaghetti sauce. They will learn about root crops like carrots and potatoes and the importance of bees in agriculture.

The cost of hosting this event is over $10,000 (both monetary and in-kind) and without the support of many this program would not have been possible. To help fund the 2015 Ag Day we are offering 5 levels of sponsorship. These are:
- Platinum Sponsorship -$1,000 and over
- Gold Sponsorship - $500 to $999
- Silver Sponsorship - $250 to $499
- Bronze Sponsorship - $100 to $249
- Friends of Ag Day - $1 to $99

We are asking all Ashtabula County farms, agribusinesses, and supporters of Ashtabula County Agriculture to consider making a donation to help us educate our youth about agriculture. Your gift to this program is 100% tax deductible. More information about becoming a sponsor for this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

**Ohio Producer Direct Marketing Survey**
Brad Bergefurd & Christie Welch, Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Direct Marketing Team

OSU Extension is currently conducting the **Ohio Producer Direct Marketing Survey** and are inviting producers who direct market ag products to participate. Please help us identify direct marketing practices, challenges, and plans of Ohio food and agriculture producers. This direct marketing study is conducted every five years. Direct Marketing is the process of selling directly to consumers or wholesale buyers including restaurants, grocery stores, and schools. This year, the survey also includes an optional section on selling to institutions and schools. Below, please find a link to an online survey. Data obtained from this survey will used for Extension education and publications. Individual names, contact information and research records will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary. Producers can complete the survey at: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ohioproducersurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ohioproducersurvey) The deadline to complete this survey is Monday, January 5, 2015.

**Northeast Ohio Agronomy School to be held on February 2, 2015**
OSU Extension in Ashtabula County is pleased to be offer the Northeast Ohio Agronomy School on Monday, February 2, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Williamsfield Community Center in Williamsfield, Ohio. This year’s workshop will focus on keeping crop producers on the front edge of farm policy, technology, weed control, disease management and fertility decisions. With profit margins decreasing it will be vital for crop producers to get the biggest bang from the dollars they invest in land rental, seed and fertilizer, technology, chemicals, and crop protection.

During the school, David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator will share information on the three major decisions which crop producers will need to make as a result of the 2014 Farm Bill. Learn about more about updating your base acre yields and whether or not you should re-allocate your base acres. Learn more about the 3 new crop programs: Price Loss Coverage (PLC), Agricultural Risk Coverage County Option (ARC-CO), and Agricultural Risk Coverage Individual Coverage (ARC-IC). Decide which program fits your farm the best.

John Barker, OSU Extension Educator in Knox County, will share one of the hottest topics in Ohio Agriculture; this being the use of Drone Technology or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Learn more about the different types of UAVs, pros and cons of each, review current regulations and highlight how this technology is being used on Ohio farms. Dr. John Fulton, OSU Associate Professor in Agricultural Engineering, will also share how farm equipment is changing to meet the needs of Ohio agriculture. Learn more about the technology trends forming in agriculture and what equipment will be like in the future.

Dr. Mark Loux, OSU Extension Weed Specialist will share what is new in weed control for agronomic crops. Marestail has emerged as one of the problem weeds in Northeast Ohio and Dr. Loux will teach producers how to control this troublesome weed. Dr. Anne Dorrance, OSU Extension Plant Pathologist, will provide an overall of managing white mold in Northeast, Ohio. This disease exploded during the summer of 2014. Learn how to manage this yield-robbing disease and about soybean disease research which is being conducted in Northeast Ohio.
Dr. Steve Culman will be on hand to discuss getting the most from your fertilizer dollar. Learn more about how phosphorus legislation is changing how farmers operate in Ohio and how the Tri-State Fertility Guide can help producers save money.

As always, a hearty farmer lunch prepared by Lahti Catering means you will not go away hungry! Registration fee is $12.00/per person. A special thank you is extended to WI Miller Sons for helping to sponsor the lunch. Registration includes morning refreshments, lunch, speaker travel expenses, and program handouts. Pre-registration is required by Monday, January 26, 2015. Make checks payable to OSU Extension, Ashtabula County and mail to 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047. If you have any questions please call 440-576-9008. CCA and Private & Commercial Pesticide Credits have been applied for. A registration flyer can be found at: go.osu.edu/ne-events

**Beef Pricing Worksheet for Producers Considering Direct Marketing**
by Jeannine Schweihofer, Michigan State University Extension

Have you ever been asked by one of your customers how much a freezer full of beef will cost? Do you struggle to convert the live animal value to a carcass based price? Michigan State University Extension and the University of Wisconsin Extension have teamed up to develop a new spreadsheet worksheet to answer these questions. Beef prices are record high but consumers have maintained demand for beef.

The [Freezer Beef Pricing Worksheet](http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/files/2014/10/Freezer-Beef-Pricing-Worksheet-ver-1.0.xlsx) is available to assist beef producers in determining the price of direct marketed beef. This tool also has a video available to give producers additional information in using the worksheet. Although examples are given for current market conditions in September 2014, producers are encouraged to enter actual costs and information based off of their own operation into the worksheet.

Example pricing uses the August, 2014 overall retail Choice beef price of $6.24 per pound. If a carcass price of $2.80 per pound is used, this would create a 23 percent savings for consumers compared to purchasing the beef at retail stores. [Monthly average price values reported by the USDA Economic Research Service](http://www.economictrends.usda.gov/price_information/beef/) can be used to create figures to share with customers for overall savings value when purchasing beef by the whole, half or quarter.

Important considerations when using the worksheet include understanding the type of beef animal being processed (steer vs. heifer and beef breed or dairy breed). These differences influence the dressing percentage and estimated yield grade of the animal. Accurate figures or estimates entered into the worksheet result in more accurate results for overall yield and cost per pound of beef in the freezer. If producers have any historical data from their own animals and previous sales or processing, use those values to customize the worksheet for your own operation. Additional [resources in direct marketing beef](http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/files/2014/10/Freezer-Beef-Pricing-Worksheet-ver-1.0.xlsx) are available from Michigan State University Extension beef program and at the [UW Extension Beef Information Direct Marketing Tools](http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/files/2014/10/Freezer-Beef-Pricing-Worksheet-ver-1.0.xlsx) page.

The Excel worksheet can be found at: [http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/files/2014/10/Freezer-Beef-Pricing-Worksheet-ver-1.0.xlsx](http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/files/2014/10/Freezer-Beef-Pricing-Worksheet-ver-1.0.xlsx)

**Weed Management Resources**
By Mark Loux, OSU Wee Specialist

Reminders about some the resources available to help with weed management and herbicide selection, and resistance issues. The 2015 Weed Control Guide is available for purchase online at the OSU Extension estore ([http://estore.osu-extension.org](http://estore.osu-extension.org)) or local extension offices: hardcopy - $14.75; pdf (searchable with live menu links) - $9.99. A free basic pdf is available on the OSU Weed Science website ([http://u.osu.edu/osuweeds](http://u.osu.edu/osuweeds)), along with the updated version of the marestail control fact sheet and various other resources.
There is a new bulletin from the University of Missouri, “Weed and Brush Control for Forages, Pastures, and Noncropland” that works well for identification and management of weeds in these situations. Probably the best one available currently. Cost is $15 (http://extension.missouri.edu/p/ipm1031).

Information on herbicide resistance can be found at the USB Take Action on Weeds website – http://takeactiononweeds.com

Learn Grain Marketing On-line this Winter
Growers who want to brush up on their grain marketing skills in order to improve their farm operation's profitability can participate in a series of online grain marketing courses this winter. With lower crop prices forecast for next year, grain marketing will be one of the more critical decisions farm managers will have to make this year, says Chris Bruynis, OSU Extension educator. "Grain marketing will be increasingly more important to the future success of the farm business in the next few years due to tighter profit margins associated with lower grain prices," he says.

Farmers can meet the challenge online via a grain marketing courses hosted by Bruynis and taught by experts from Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. "Grain Marketing in Challenging Times," will be provided Feb. 3, Feb. 10, Feb. 17, Feb. 24 and Mar. 3. It will offer farmers and growers proven tips and techniques to improve marketing skills. The marketing webinar will feature Matt Roberts and other OSU ag economists.

Course participants will learn how to use futures and options; make a marketing plan to fit their farm business risk capacity; use crop insurance as a grain marketing tool; and understand financial statement. The webinar series is from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with each course building on information taught in the previous course. Participants can also take part in three follow-up programs: a grain market outlook, a focus on the market after planting, and post-harvest marketing. Each webinar will be recorded and made available to class participants to review either as make-up for missed classes or to listen again to capture the more important concepts discussed.

The registration for the webinar series is $69. A registration form can be found at regonline.com/grainmarketing15. The deadline to register is January, 28, 2015. For more information about the program, contact Bruynis at bruynis.1@osu.edu or 740-702-3200.

Ohio Hops Conference in Wooster on February 5-6, 2015
It’s the next big thing in Ohio agriculture as more beverage producers seek Ohio-grown hops for their craft brews. Interest in growing hops in Ohio continues to increase among both established and potential hops growers as well as brewery industry insiders, experts say, and the income potential for hops growers is significant. To help growers and anyone interested in hops learn more about Ohio hops and the Ohio craft brewing industry, a conference and trade show on how to get into the hops business will be held February 5-6, 2015 in the Fisher Auditorium and Shisler Conference Area, 1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, Ohio, on the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) campus.

The Hops Conference and Trade Show will feature detailed information on the ins and outs of hops production, including the latest news in hops production and craft brewing technologies. The event will feature horticulture experts with Ohio State University Extension, OARDC and OSU South Centers. The conference and trade show is being held in conjunction with the Ohio Craft Brewers Conference and will be of interest to beginning, as well as advanced hop growers or anyone interested in the hops industry. The conference features numerous sessions by experts from Ohio State University Extension, OARDC, Ohio State University South Centers, the Ohio Craft Brewers Association, Ohio Hops Growers Guild Association, Cornell University, U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency, Great Lakes Hops, and the Actual Brewing Company. The Ohio Craft Brewers Association
will offer concurrent sessions with additional topics.

The two-day program will be held in the Fisher Auditorium and Shisler Conference Area, 1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, Ohio, on the OARDC campus. The event will also feature the Ohio Craft Brewers and Ohio Hops Social Banquet, February 5 from 7:30 to 10 p.m. at the Shisler Conference Center. Registration for the conference is $200 and includes breakfast and lunch for both days, transportation for attendees between the banquet and conference hotels, a flash drive with the conference presentations, and a conference booklet with vendor, speaker and program information. The banquet is an additional $50 per person. The deadline to register for the conference is January 25, 2015. Contact Charissa McGlothlin at 740-289-2071, ext. 132, for more information or to be a vendor. To register for the conference, go to 2015ohiohopsconference.

**Farm Bill Programs to be Held Northeast Ohio**

OSU Extension in Northeast Ohio will be collaborating with local Farm Service Agency offices to offer meetings to discuss the crop side of the 2014 Farm Bill. The 2014 Farm Bill has instituted major changes to the federal farm programs which require landowners and farmers to make a couple major decisions during the winter of 2015. Landowners will need to decide whether or not to update their property’s crop yields and determine whether or not to re-allocate the farm’s base acres by February 27, 2015.

The new farm bill also eliminated the Direct Payment, Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) programs that were included in the 2008 Farm Bill. These programs were replaced by a choice of three programs that farmers may elect to enroll in for the 2014 to 2018 crop years. These programs are Price Loss Coverage (PLC), Agricultural Risk Coverage County Option (ARC-CO), and Agricultural Risk Coverage Individual Coverage (ARC-IC). Producers need to choose their program choice by March 31, 2015.

OSU Extension Educator, David Marrison and a local Farm Service Agency Representative will share specifics of the Farm Bill. Join us at one of these regional meetings. Please note that additional meetings will be scheduled as demand persists. There is no cost to attend but pre-registrations are requested so that adequate handouts can be made. The following dates have been established.

**Tuesday, January 6, 2015**
Ashtabula County Extension Office
39 Wall Street
Jefferson, Ohio 44047
10:00 to 12:00 noon
To reserve call: (440) 437-6330

**Thursday, January 8, 2015**
Geauga County Extension Office
14269 Claridon-Troy Road
Burton, Ohio 44021
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
To reserve call: (440) 437-6330

**Tuesday, January 13, 2015**
Lorain County Farm Service Agency
42110 Russia Road
Private Pesticide Applicator Re-Certification Session & Commercial Fertilizer Application Certification Sessions to be held across Northeast Ohio in 2015

Does your Private Pesticide Applicator’s License expire on March 31, 2015? If so, OSU Extension in Northeast Ohio has planned four pesticide re-certification sessions for producers. These sessions will be held on January 16 at the Williamsfield Community Center, January 30 at the Geauga County Extension office, February 9 at the Trumbull County Extension office and February 26 at the Perry Community Center.

Each of these sessions will offer 3 credits for pesticide re-certification for CORE and All Categories (1-7). Private Pesticide Applicators are encouraged to choose the session which best fits their schedule the best. Additionally, a special session will be held during the same day and location for private pesticide applicators who would like to complete their Commercial Fertilizer Application Certification. Due to Ohio’s new legislation, any producer who applies commercial fertilizer to 50 or more acres must be certified by no later than September 30, 2017. Attend this session to complete your certification. This session is open only to current licensed private pesticide applicators who wish to become certified.

The times and locations for each of the sessions are:

**Wednesday, January 14, 2015**
Trumbull County AG Center
520 West Main Street
Cortland, Ohio 44410
Call for program time
To reserve call: (330) 637-2046 ext 109

**Thursday, January 15, 2015**
Akron University- Medina
Medina County University Center (of Akron University)
6300 West Technology Lane
Medina, Ohio 44256
10:00 to 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Call 330-722-2628 to register

**Friday, January 16, 2015**
Portage County Ag Center
6970 State Route 88
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
Call for times
To reserve call: (330) 297-7633 ext 113

**Tuesday, January 20, 2015**
Trumbull County AG Center
520 West Main Street
Cortland, Ohio 44410
Call for program time
To reserve call: (330) 637-2046 ext 109
Friday, January 16, 2015 at the Williamsfield Community Center in Williamsfield, Ohio.
Private Pesticide from 9:00 to 12:00 noon & Fertilizer Applicator Certification from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Friday, January 30, 2015 at the Geauga County Extension office in Burton, Ohio.
Private Pesticide from 9:00 to 12:00 noon & Fertilizer Applicator Certification from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Monday, February 9, 2015 at the Trumbull County Extension office in Cortland, Ohio.
Private Pesticide from 9:00 to 12:00 noon & Fertilizer Applicator Certification from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 26, 2015 at the Perry Community Center in Perry, Ohio.
Fertilizer Applicator Certification from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. & Private Pesticide from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The registration fee is $35/per person for the private pesticide applicator re-certification. There is no fee for the fertilizer certification session. A hearty farmer’s lunch and refreshments will be provided for attendees for a fee $15/person. Pre-registration is required eight days prior to the session date. An additional late registration fee of $25 per person will be added for any late registration. Make checks payable to OSU Extension and mail to OSU Extension-Geauga County, PO Box 387, Burton, Ohio 44021. More information can be obtained by calling the Geauga County Extension office 440-834-4656.

Preparation Class for Private Pesticide Applicator License Test to be held on February 10 in Burton, Ohio
OSU Extension in Northeast Ohio will be providing a training session to help farmers prepare for the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Private Pesticide Applicator’s Exam. This class is not required but is a great opportunity for applicators to learn what they will need to study for the test. This class will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2015 from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. This session will be held in Burton, Ohio at the Geauga County Extension office. The registration fee for this program is $35/person. Call the Geauga County Extension office at 440-834-4656 to register or for more information.

Private & Commercial Pesticide Applicator Testing to be held by Ohio Department of Agriculture During Winter of 2015
Are you looking to take obtain your private or commercial pesticide license or wish to add an additional category to your existing license? The Ohio Department of Agriculture will be holding testing clinics during the winter of 2015 in Northeast Ohio. Pre-registration is required for each location and can be made by calling the ODA at 1-800-282-1955 (press 3 then 1). Study material can be found at: http://pested.osu.edu/privatestudy.html

Ashtabula County
Date: March 25 (beginning at 10:00 a.m.)
Location: OSU Extension Office
Basement Meeting Room
39 Wall Street
Jefferson, Ohio 44047
For Directions Call 440-576-9008

Geauga County
Dates: February 18, March 18, April 15, and May 20 (all beginning at 10:00 a.m.)
Location: Geauga County Extension Office
Patterson Center Basement
P.O. Box 387
14269 Claridon-Troy Road
Trumbull County
Date: April 1 (beginning at 10:00 a.m.)
Location: Trumbull County Extension Office
520 West Main Street, Suite #1
Cortland, OH 44410
For Directions Call 330-638-6783

2015 Winter 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

Northeast Ohio Farm Bill Training Sessions
January 6, 2015 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office
January 8, 2015 at the Geauga County Extension Office
January 13, 2015 at the Lorain County FSA Office
January 14, 2015 at the Trumbull County Ag Center
January 15, 2015 in Medina County
January 16, 2015 at the Portage County Ag Center
January 20, 2015 at the Trumbull County Ag Center

Northeast Ohio Pesticide Recertification & Fertilizer Certification Sessions
January 16, 2015 at the Williamsfield Community Center
January 30, 2015 at the Geauga County Extension Office
February 9, 2015 at the Trumbull County Extension Office
February 26, 2015 at the Perry Community Center

Northeast Ohio Agronomy School
February 2, 2015 at Williamsfield Community Center

Northeast Ohio Winter Grape School
March 10, 2015 at the Geneva Lodge & Conference Center

2015 Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet
Saturday, March 21, 2015 at the Lenox Community Center

2015 Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show
Saturday, April 18 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds

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
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