Hello, Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties!

We got to share the work of our CAUV and Phosphorus Task Forces at the OSU Extension Annual Conference today in Columbus. Our colleagues are interested in how we, as an Ag Community, are being proactive in response to the changing world we live in. We are also very excited that the Northeast Counties of the Ohio Farm Bureau will be receiving the Friend of OSU Extension Award tomorrow at the conference!

It looks like some snow is on its way this week, so please be careful as you are out and about. Have a good and safe week!

David Marrison  
Extension Educator  
Ag & Natural Resources  
Ashtabula County

Lee Beers  
Extension Educator  
Ag & Natural Resources  
Trumbull County
Northeast Ohio Phosphorus Task Force Seeking Farmers to Help Track Data for Pilot Project
By David Marrison

The Northeast Ohio Phosphorus Task force is seeking farmers to track the winter weather conditions in Northeast Ohio. The committee met on November 21, 2016 to review the data collected from the winter of 2016 and voted to continue the data collection this winter.

We are asking farmers to monitor the weather & soil conditions which are present each day from January through the end of March. We are asking for cooperators to track two questions each day; these being: #1: Is your ground snow covered or frozen and #2: Is the top two inches of the soil saturated. According for the new legislation from Senate Bill 1, no manure or fertilizer can be applied (without incorporation) if these conditions exist in Northwest Ohio. While we are not under these restrictions in Northeast Ohio, we might be in the future. We are completing this research to be proactive.

This research will allow us to determine the percentage of days in our watersheds where it would be acceptable for manure or fertilizer application if these restrictions were in place (like we did this past winter). Our goal is to have at least one cooperator from each township in Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake or Trumbull County to track this data for us. Attached to the back of this newsletter are the December and January tracking sheets.

Farmers interested in tracking should contact David Marrison at 440-576-9008 or marrison.2@osu.edu so that your name is added to our cooperator list. Thanks for helping us to be proactive.

Northeast Ohio Agronomy Report for December
By: Les Ober CCA

The issue of resistant weeds and how to deal with them is a topic that will get a lot of attention at the winter meetings throughout Ohio. What we know is that resistant weeds are real and they are a problem. We also know that the numbers of tools available to deal with the problem are limited. Going into the crop season of 2017 we will know more about the availability of certain chemicals but the extent of their use will remain uncertain. Now the question becomes, will you be dealing with the problem directly or will be relying on someone else to get the job done?

I recently read an interesting article in the popular press from Farm Journal Media. It was the response to a research study that they put out to farmers on the internet. They asked farmers who did not own a sprayer, “Why did they not own a sprayer?” Here is what the respondents had to say.
1. “57% said the contracting the job done was both easier and cheaper”.
2. “55% found sprayer selection to be a challenge”.
3. “29% said the cost”.
4. “14% had little or no experience operating a sprayer.”
5. “13% said the liability.”

This got me to thinking about all of the farmers that we instruct annually in pesticide recertification. How many of them own a sprayer and if they do, how many contract at least a portion of the work out for various reasons. We know for a fact that once you get a pesticide license you do not want to lose it. You had to pass a test to get it. You do not want to take that test again and just like your driver’s license you renew it every three years. If you were to asked local farmers, who do not currently own a sprayer, why they do not, the main reason would probably be the same as the 57% in the above survey. It would be the cost of ownership and lack of time to run the machine.

Cost of ownership is a big consideration. It may be better to put your time and money to work somewhere else in the operation. Looking at various machinery publications it is apparent that a good, gently used self-propelled sprayer is going to cost between $150,000 and $200,000. A new pull type is approaching $40,000 to $50,000 dollars. There are cheaper ones out there but a used sprayer is only as good as the maintenance program of the previous owner. Many things can go wrong with a machine that is operated at relatively fast speeds and also sits out in the weather. Booms can be damaged after hitting a solid object like a fence posts or trees. Constant jarring can fatigue metal parts and result in a breakdown. Valves and boom plumbing are made of plastic and rubber and ultra-violet light can attack and weaken these parts. Electronics are always subject on wear and breakdown even on new machines. It is easy to see that additional money may have to be invested after you purchase the machine. This quickly adds to the base price. Can you really afford a sprayer or is it cheaper to hire the work done?

Farmer A runs 1000 acres of row crops making at least 2 chemical applications across the acreage. The cost of hiring the job done, at the local coop is $9.50 per acre or $19,000 annually. Farmer A decides he is better off owning his own self-propelled sprayer. He buys a used one for $150,000. After inspection he makes $2,000.00 in repairs. He also adds an electronic guidance and control system for $10,000. His totals investment is $162,000.00. He puts $20,000 down and finances 142,000 dollars for 72 months with interest that is over $2000.00 per month or $24,000 to $25,000 a year. You can easily see that owning a sprayer will not pay in the short run if this is all the acreage this machine will see in a year. If the machine stays in service for 10 years it will come closer to paying for itself. However, the big concern is additional repairs to keep it in operation. Farmer B also runs 1000 acres but he likes to apply fungicide and maybe insecticide which calls for another application per year, spraying at least 3000 acres annually. If he hires the job done it will cost $28,500.00 per year. Now you can see that farmer B would be further ahead owning his own machine.

Of course both of these farmers could buy a pull type sprayer that is 1/3 the cost and it would easily pay for itself but there are drawbacks. However, you need to dedicate a tractor to spraying. To pull a modern sprayer you need at least a 100 hp. cab tractor with a good air filtration system. It has to be set up to handle narrow rows and it should be able to accommodate precision electronics. Adding another tractor quickly moves you close to what it costs for the self-propelled unit. You will also have more crop damage (wheel tracks) if you have to make a late applications. Another factor is time and labor availability and this weighs heavily on both sides of the decision process. Can you afford to wait for a custom applicator when you have potentially resistant weed growing in your field? On the other hand do have the extra hours it takes to run a machine and do the job correctly? Every operation and weed control program is different.

Here are some other factors to consider. First is the cost of pesticides. Buying from outside sources can save you money. However, if the coop is competitive and if you buy at the right time of the year you can get very close locking in a lower price whether you do the spraying or not. You also have the cost of storing the machine. It needs to be stored inside year round to avoid wear on the plastic and rubber parts. You need to winterize the machine properly. One of the biggest risk factor is the one that the least number of respondents
considered a negative of ownership. Only 13% considered liability as a major concern. Most of the self-propelled machines are 12 feet wide and are at risk on the highway. The risk factor is similar to moving a combine. You need to bring water to the machine not the machine to the water. That is no small deal; it requires extra tanks and a truck to move them. Then there is the risk of application error, resulting in off target movement of chemicals. You need to consider increasing your liability insurance package to cover both. Finally you have to be comfortable handling and applying chemicals. Use the proper safety equipment and read the label and it is not really a problem. However, some people just do not want to deal with it and would rather leave the job to someone else.

In all fairness here are 5 reasons to own and operate your own sprayer.
1. You get the right material on at the right time that is critical.
2. If you have to make a rescue application you can do it without waiting for someone to show up.
3. When you change crops you will know that your machine is cleaned out properly, eliminating the risk of crop damage.
4. You are in charge, you can spray when the environmental conditions are right and the risk of off target drift is minimal. This lowers your liability.
5. You will quickly find out that if you do not make your application on time and end up with lousy weed control you have no one to blame but yourself. No more bashing the other guy.

If you do the math and you make the decision to buy a new sprayer you will find that today’s equipment is very sophisticated and accurate if run properly. Adding electronic and guidance move you to the next level of application accuracy. This really saves you money in long run. Do not be intimidated when it comes to Precision Ag. operation. In many ways it is easier than the hit and miss methods we use to use with the old 500 gallon pull behinds.

Examining Land Values, Rents, Crop Input Costs & Margins in 2017
By: Barry Ward, Leader, Production Business Management

Low crop margins and uncertain land value and cash rental markets will continue to be important themes as we look ahead to 2017 as producers grapple with high per bushel costs relative to crop prices received. Less than ideal weather conditions in parts of Ohio in 2016 compounded financial stress on many crop farms however insurance proceeds and USDA ARC (Agricultural Risk Coverage) and PLC (Price Loss Coverage) 2015 payments delivered in October of 2016 alleviated the potential severe stress on many farms.

According to data from the Ohio Ag Statistics Service, bare cropland value decreased 0.9% in Ohio in 2016. According to this data, bare cropland averaged $5800/acre, down from $5,850/acre the previous year. The Western Ohio Cropland Values and Cash Rents Survey (AEDE) was conducted in January through March of 2016. The projected value for “average” cropland in western Ohio was $7,034 per acre. “Top” cropland in western Ohio was projected to average $8,853 per acre while “poor” cropland in western Ohio was expected to average $5,465 per acre. These values reflect projected decreases of 6.9 to 8.1%.

The Chicago Federal Reserve Bank October 1 survey of bankers found land values of “good” farmland were down 3% from last year with the 3rd quarter showing a 1% decrease in farmland values across the district. In this same survey however, the data revealed a year-over-year 1% increase for “good” farmland in Indiana. This is seemingly at odds with the data summarized by Purdue University.

Purdue University conducted their annual land value survey in June 2016 and found year over year decreases in farmland value that ranged from 8.2 to 8.7% depending on land productivity class. The different survey
timing may explain some of the differences in survey results however the differing results lends further confusion to the direction and magnitude of farmland value change in the eastern cornbelt.

Strong equity positions (relative to pre-2006) together with continued low interest rates continue to lend positive support to land values. Low projected profit margins in 2017 will likely restrict further land value increases and possibly cause another decrease in land values. These competing fundamentals create a continued uncertain picture for land values in 2017 although continued low margins together with the potential for higher interest rates suggest lower farmland values in 2017. One wildcard is how producers choose to spend their USDA ARC or PLC payments. Will they retain this as working capital to insure against future years of low profit margins or will they stay aggressive in the farmland market?

Enterprise budget projections for Ohio’s primary row crops for 2017 indicate the potential for low margins. “Returns to variable costs” (gross revenue minus variable costs) are projected to be $188-$353 per acre for Ohio corn in 2017 depending on land production capabilities. “Returns to land” (gross revenue minus all costs except land cost) for Ohio corn remains low and ranges from -$37 to $116 per acre. Estimates for “returns to total costs” for Ohio corn in 2017 are negative for all three land classes evaluated.

Budget projections for 2017 soybeans show “returns to variable costs” to be $235-414 per acre. “Returns to land” for Ohio soybeans are projected to range from $60-$230 per acre. “Returns to total costs” are projected to be negative for all three land capability classes evaluated however these figures are generally higher than corn return projections for 2017.

Wheat budget projections for 2017 show “returns to variable costs” to be between $123 and $219 per acre. Wheat return projections are generally lower than soybeans or corn at this time however straw returns and double-crop soybean returns (where optional) may significantly improve the economic viability of raising wheat in 2017.

These return calculations assume current prices of inputs and current December, November and September 2017 futures prices, respectively. These projections are based on OSU Extension Ohio Crop Enterprise Budgets available online at: http://aglaw.osu.edu/farm-management-tools
Archived budgets are available online at: http://aede.osu.edu/research/osu-farm-management/enterprise-budgets

Strong equity positions together with higher property taxes will continue to lend support to cash rental rates however low to negative projected profit margins in 2017 will continue to apply downward pressure on rents. These competing fundamentals suggest a flat to slightly lower cash rental market outlook for 2017.

Variable costs for Ohio corn for 2017 are estimated to be 1.7% to 2.8% lower compared to 2016. Variable costs for corn for 2017 are projected to be $319 to $393 per acre. Variable costs for 2017 Ohio soybeans are projected to be 2.9% to 3.4% lower and range from $182 to $196 per acre. Wheat variable expenses for 2017 are projected to range from $154 to $184 per acre, down 9.9% to 13.3% from 2016. Lower fertilizer prices will likely be the primary fundamental driver of lower variable costs in 2017.

Outlook information presented here was developed with data and/or research from OSU Extension, the Energy Information Administration, USDA, USDA ERS, USDA NASS, Purdue University, University of Illinois, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, DTN, futures markets and retail sector surveys. While gauged to the best of this author’s capabilities, forward looking statements contained in this document may prove to be incorrect due to changes in supply and demand and other political and economic related events.
“Scours” Vaccine – Give it Now for Protection in the Spring
By Michelle Arnold, DVM (Ruminant Extension Veterinarian, UKVDL)
Source: http://u.osu.edu/beef/2016/11/30/scours-vaccine-give-it-now-for-protection-in-the-spring/

A scours outbreak in baby calves on a cow/calf operation can be a nightmare in real life. Ask any producer who has been through this ordeal and he/she will tell you it made them want to quit the cattle business. Once the outbreak begins, it spreads quickly throughout all of the youngest calves. Bacteria, viruses and parasites can attack the lining of the calf’s intestine and cause diarrhea and dehydration. Without a healthy gut lining, essential nutrients are not absorbed from milk which leads to weakness and weight loss. During a scours outbreak, each day begins with finding and treating the sick calves, recognizing new cases that are just breaking, and sometimes having to find the remains of a calf scavenged by coyotes or buzzards. Those calves that survive may perform poorly for the remainder of their lives when compared to healthy calves. Scours vaccines are expensive yet very effective in preventing this scenario if combined with proper nutritional management of the cow during her pregnancy and a reasonable effort to keep cattle out of a filthy environment. Although there is not much one can do about rain, mud, and manure, the goal is to keep cow’s teats clean and dry to prevent the diarrhea-causing bugs from entering the calf’s mouth. Fortunately, the scours vaccine prepares the calf to deal with many of these bugs in the likely event they do make it inside the calf.

“Neonatal” calf diarrhea is defined as scours occurring within the first 3 weeks of a calf’s life. Rotavirus, coronavirus, bacteria (E. coli K99; Clostridium perfringens Type C, Salmonella spp.) and the parasite Cryptosporidia are the most common causes of neonatal calf diarrhea. Controlling rotavirus, coronavirus, Clostridium perfringens, and E. coli K99 with vaccines can significantly reduce sickness and death loss due to calf scours. Most beef cows in good body condition produce high quality colostrum but sometimes it does not contain the “correct” antibodies to fight the specific bugs that cause diarrhea. Scours vaccines are formulated to be given to pregnant cows and heifers late in gestation so they will make the correct antibodies as colostrum is being formed.

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<td>ScourBos® 9</td>
<td>2 ml IM 8-16 weeks prior to calving; Revaccinate with Scour Bos 4 four weeks prior to calving</td>
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<td>Scour Guard® 4KC</td>
<td>2 ml SQ 12 weeks precalving. Booster 3-6 weeks after primary dose</td>
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<td>Scour Guard® 4KC</td>
<td>2 ml IM 3 weeks apart, with 2nd dose given 3-6 weeks before calving</td>
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The 3 most popular vaccines available are ScourBos®9 and 4 (Elanco), ScourGuard®4KC (Zoetis) and Guardian® (Merck). As shown in Table 1, a first or primary dose followed by a booster dose is required the first year any scours vaccine is used (“Year One”). After the first year, just one revaccination is required (“Year Two and Beyond”) every year throughout the cow’s life. Which product you choose often depends on when you plan to work your cattle; generally, Scour Bos® is administered earlier during pregnancy, ScourGuard® is used very late in gestation and Guardian® is in-between these two options. Obviously not all calves will be born the first
week of calving season but plan to give the scours vaccine based on when the first calves of the season are expected. If you have a long calving season (greater than 90 days), consider vaccinating the later calving cows closer to their due date.

It takes some planning to vaccinate correctly; timing is critically important with the different products. Using Table 1, the timing of the different vaccines would be as follows for a March 1st calving season:

1) Heifers (or cows receiving their first dose of Scours Vaccine)
   If using:
   - Scour Bos®9 –Administer first dose between mid-November and first of January
   - Booster dose- Administer Scour Bos® 4 around the first of February
   - Guardian®- Administer the first dose around the first week of December and the second dose during the first half of January
   - ScourGuard® 4KC-Administer first dose within the first half of January and give the second dose 3 weeks later, either towards the end of January or the first part of February.

2) Cows (Annual revaccination)
   If using:
   - Scour Bos®9 –Administer during the last part of December (Christmas) to first of January
   - Guardian®-Administer between end of December and mid-January
   - ScourGuard® 4KC-Administer between mid-January and first week of February

If the cow herd is not vaccinated and calf scours develop, there are vaccines available to administer to newborn calves. These vaccines are given by mouth as quickly as possible after birth, preferably prior to nursing and definitely within the first 12 hours of life. These will provide some immediate protection in the gut but are not nearly as effective as vaccinating the pregnant cows. As seen in Table 2, none of the products for calves protects against all 4 major pathogens (E.coli K99, rotavirus, coronavirus and Clostridium perfringens Type C).

Preventing calf scours involves more than jump starting the immune system of a newborn calf. Excellent cow nutrition during and after gestation, an easy calving process, and environmental management factors all contribute to a successful start. On the flip side, an inadequate quantity and/or quality of colostrum, difficulty calving, poor sanitation, cold, wet weather and overcrowding in calving areas all contribute to a higher risk of disease. Once the calf has received colostrum from the dam, it is still important to prevent the “bad bugs” (pathogens) in the environment from overwhelming the calf’s immune system. Generally, calf scour pathogens build up in the environment as the calving season progresses. Calving in the same area that older
calves are in greatly increases the risk to the newborn calf, especially in wet or muddy conditions as we often see in the spring in KY. If possible, pregnant cows close to calving should be rotated onto clean pastures while cow-calf pairs remain on the old pasture. If calving in a barn or shed, the calving area should be kept as clean and dry as possible with frequent changes of bedding to remove the build-up of organisms. Make every effort to get the cow and newborn calf out of the barn quickly to lessen the chances of infection. Even the best calving management practices will have no effect if the first thing a calf ingests is manure from the calving area. Consult with your veterinarian on the best choice of vaccines for your operation.

The UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory has an excellent test to diagnose the cause of calf diarrhea. A small sample of scours (in a leakproof container) from a calf that has not been treated for diarrhea with antibiotics is needed to run the test. This PCR assay tests for bovine coronavirus, rotavirus, E. coli K99, Salmonella and Cryptosporidium. The test is run on Tuesdays and Thursdays with results generally available within 2 days and costs $60 ($50 + $10 Accession Fee). Visit the website at http://vdl.uky.edu/TestInformation.aspx for more information or call (859) 257-8283.

**Ohio Maple Days on Tap Jan. 19-21, 2017**

Source: [https://ohiomaple.wordpress.com/2016/12/01/789/](https://ohiomaple.wordpress.com/2016/12/01/789/)

This year’s Ohio Maple Days are set for Jan. 19 in Morrow County, Jan. 20 for Wayne and Holmes Counties, and Jan. 21 in Geauga County. The programs, which are the same at each location, offer educational sessions on maple production. They are timed to help producers get ready for the coming season. Both hobby and commercial producers are welcome.

The locations:
- Jan. 19, Morrow County, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Lutheran Memorial Camp, 2790 State Route 61, Fulton.
- Jan. 20, Wayne and Holmes Counties, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Mennonite Christian Assembly Church, 10664 Fryburg Road near Fredericksburg.
- Jan. 21, Geauga County, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Joe J.S. Miller’s Window Shop, 15020 Shedd Road, Burton.

Featured topics include:
- **Food Safety Act and Ohio Department of Ag Updates:** The Food Safety Act contains a mandatory requirement of all maple syrup producers to register their operation. However depending on your operation you may or may not need to register. ODA will cover details and changes regarding sales of maple products and the sugaring operation inspection process.
- **Why Production Numbers Matter:** This session will detail why each producer has an influence on the overall states production numbers. It will cover the myths and false concepts and rumors about doing your due diligence to report your production numbers.
- **Timing Of When To Tap:** The 2016 season should have been an eye opener for many maple producers. Those that got out and tapped early did average and for some a little above average. Producers still tapping by a calendar date or a traditional date did not do very well. Some had a 4 to 6 day season. We will talk about tossing out the traditional dates and paying attention to the weather.
- **Bulk Syrup Prices and Quality Control:** How to get the best price for bulk syrup when selling it on the open market. Covered will be the “Must Have’s Before Selling”. Must be graded, must know quality, must have representative samples to accompany barrels, must know what you have and the volume of what you have. All these and several other points to be covered will increase the prices you can receive for your products.
Featured speakers include:

- Mr. Joe Polak, Owner/Operator Male Hollow Packing Company, Merrill WI.
- Mr. Dan Milo, Food Safety Supervisor, Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Food Safety. Dan a hobby maple producer himself has been working with the federal rulings under the Food Safety Act.
- Dr. Gary Graham, coordinator of Ohio State’s Ohio Maple Program, serves as the Ohio State University Extension Specialist for Ohio’s Maple Syrup Industry.

Also, there will be a trade show; reports from OSU Extension and the Ohio Maple Producers Association; Free testing of hydrometers, refractometers and Vermont Temporary Maple Syrup Grading Kits. (bring them to the program); and a session called “Maple Nuggets” for sharing questions, ideas and information. Pre-registration is required, which includes lunch, refreshments and handouts, costs $30 and is due before Jan. 12. Payment at the door is $35 and doesn't include lunch. Send your name, contact information, which day’s program attending and check or money order (made payable to OSU Extension) to OSU Extension, Holmes County, 75 East Clinton Street, Millersburg, OH 44654. For more information, go to http://holmes.osu.edu/events/2017-ohio-maple-days (with a link to the brochure and registration form) or call Ashley Gerber 330-674-3015.

Stress Less This Holiday Season

If the holidays are supposed to be so great, why is everyone so stressed out this time of year? There are plenty of reasons, said Jim Bates, field specialist in Family Wellness for Ohio State University Extension. OSU Extension is the outreach arm of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences.

“Expectations are high during the holidays, and trying to meet all of those expectations can be exhausting,” Bates said. “We’re expected to travel to visit family and friends or host guests for meals or parties, which means preparing food for everyone. There are a lot of arrangements to make, and if you’re lucky you can take time off work, but that can mean negotiating with supervisors and co-workers. And when school lets out, working parents need to arrange for childcare.

“There’s also financial stress, trying to meet expectations others might have or that we put on ourselves to exchange gifts or spend extra on other things.” But you don’t need to simply keep calm and carry the expectations on your back like an overstuffed sack of Santa’s toys. Bates recommends some tried-and-true techniques for navigating through the holidays:

- Keep “the reason for the season” at top of mind. “Make time in your busy holiday schedule to focus on helping other people. By reaching out to those who are less fortunate or who need assistance, we provide a gift of selflessness, love and concern. Serving others is good for us because we are taking the focus off of our own situation and making others a priority. To get involved in a service opportunity, contact a local nonprofit organization that focuses on an issue you care about.”
- Make sure you’re getting enough rest. Everything seems worse when you’re tired; everything seems brighter when you’re well-rested, Bates said.
- Eat healthfully. “This time of year, it’s very easy to fill up on sweets and junk food,” Bates said. “That can throw us off and make us feel cranky. Remember to balance out what you’re eating with healthy options. Leafy greens, spinach, kale, broccoli – they can really be pick-me-ups. Choose fruit for dessert.”
- Limit exposure to things that cause you stress. “Whether it’s turning off the news or work emails, set what you can aside to focus on relationships and on doing something fun with family and friends.”
• Focus your time and energy on where they can make the biggest difference. “Older people especially can feel isolated at this time of year. Take the opportunity to ask older relatives and friends to reminisce and to make an audio or video recording of them. That can help them feel more connected, and can be precious memories for you later.”

Most of all, don’t overdo it. “For a lot of people, cooking special dishes or dozens and dozens of cookies is a comfortable and enjoyable activity, especially when you’re doing it with family or friends, but there’s no shame in getting a dish from your grocery’s deli, throwing it into a bowl and serving it to your guests.”

**Penn State to Offer Grain Marketing Learning Opportunity**

By: John Berry, Agricultural Marketing Educator

Pennsylvania Grain Processing, Ag Choice Farm Credit, and Penn State Extension have partnered to offer you a unique grain marketing learning opportunity. Please join grain market expert, Dave Fogel, for a conversation on Managing Risk As We Market Grains. There are two locations which are close for northeast Ohio farmers to attend. These are:

**Monday, December 12—6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.**  
Hoss’s Steak and Sea House  
18817 Smock Highway  
Meadville, PA 16335

**Tuesday, December 13—10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.**  
Bronzewood Golf Course  
9645 Kinsman-Pymatuning Road  
Kinsman, OH 44428

Dave Fogel is a Vice President with Advance Trading, Inc. (ATI). ATI is a forward thinking, non-proprietary commodity brokerage firm providing risk management and market guidance serving domestic and international customers. In addition to producer risk management, they also work with a sizeable cross section of commercial grain companies, the majority of which are co-ops and provide service to the end user market which includes anyone who uses corn, soybeans, and the by-products along with livestock producers, ethanol plants, and the like.

Dave has been with ATI since 1984 and has an understanding of our cash markets through his clientele from Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. He has been a speaker at several national type meetings, including Commodity Classic. Dave believes the challenges producers face today can be daunting and finding the time to monitor, understand, and execute grain marketing has become increasingly difficult. Today’s marketing plan can often appear to be based on logistics and cash flow—not on risk management. However, marketing grain and livestock demands expertise, experience, and constant attention.

This educational event is pre-paid with no fee to participate. To register contact Pennsylvania Grain Processing at 877-880-6589 or Brian Kelly at 814-913-3130 or Nikki Moore at 814-913-3131
OSU Extension is Hiring – 4-H Camp Whitewood Program Manager

Responsible for the overall administration of Camp Whitewood; maintain a positive atmosphere at camp and provide technical assistance in resident camping; manage the operation of Camp Whitewood including full-time staff and seasonal staff; conduct operations in accordance with the mission, policies, and goals of Camp Whitewood Board of Directors; serve collaboratively and foster healthy relationships with the nine counties in the Northeastern Ohio 4-H Camps, Inc (4-H Camp Whitewood) Corporation; operate and maintain the camp under ACA and OSU standards; provide leadership to the process that will result in a growth of revenue for Camp Whitewood; work cooperatively with the Camp Board of Directors for the development and implementation of long-range plans, risk management, marketing and promotion plans, budget preparation, and evaluation of services; responsible for the financial management of the camp including income, disbursements, establishing budgets and fees, investment of funds, implementing control procedures, and assisting with the preparation and presentation of camp financial reports; focus on developing strong public relations and maintain positive working relationships with current groups and potential customers.

Requirements include Master’s degree in Camp Administration, Business Management, Youth Development, Education, or other related field, or an equivalent combination of education and experience; experience and/or ability in working with diverse clientele and organizations; strong written and oral communication skills; ability to supervise staff, interact with clientele, and coordinate a team effort in delivery of camp services; ability to foster/establish positive working relationships with Camp Board, staff, and clientele; willingness to work flexible hours including evenings and weekends.

For a full description and application instructions, see: https://www.jobsatosu.com/postings/74986

Deadline for application is December 18th. For questions regarding the position, please contact Jacqueline Kirby Wilkins at 330-350-0512.

Northeast Ohio Farm Bureau Seeking a Membership Marketing Assistant

By Amanda Orahood

Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Mahoning and Trumbull county Farm Bureaus are seeing a part-time membership marketing assistant. This person will provide special project and program support in regard to membership marketing to meet the needs of the Farm Bureau membership relative to established organizational goals and objectives. The position is part-time and will be based on applicant’s availability. Flexible scheduling is available, but work may require specific evenings and weekends.

PRIMARY DUTIES:

- Assist Organization Director, office assistants, and counties with membership retention and recruitment efforts with consumers and farmers in an effort to grow membership
- Assist with phone calls and mailings
- Make calls to non-members to discuss Ohio Farm Bureau Federation membership benefits
- Assist members with questions and concerns
- Provide support for membership operations, as needed, to include but not limited to accounting, member correspondence, Nationwide agency support, member service and membership marketing.
- Implement tracking system to monitor campaigns.
- Collect and track data and information on members and prospects
- Provide regular status reports on marketing efforts
- Other duties as assigned by Organization Director.
MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE QUALIFICATIONS
- High School diploma
- Degree or pursuing a degree in marketing and/or communications is preferred, but not required

MINIMUM SKILL QUALIFICATIONS
- Background or interest in the agriculture industry highly desirable
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong attention to detail and excellent follow-up skills
- Exceptional project and time management skills and organizational skills
- Capacity to motivate, enthuse and recognize volunteers
- Experience with basic computer skills, Microsoft Office, Google Drive
- Extensive knowledge of social media.
- Self-starter with ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment and maintain deadlines

MINIMUM OTHER QUALIFICATIONS
- Must have and maintain a valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
- Residence or available housing within Ashtabula, Lake, Geauga, Mahoning, or Trumbull counties preferred

COMPENSATION
- Competitive hourly wage
- Mileage reimbursement for personal vehicle use outside of travel to the office
- Flexible scheduling

To apply please submit the following:
- Resume
- Cover letter explaining what you hope to gain from this experience
- A list of 2-3 references
- High school or college transcripts if possible

Submit applications via email to nefarmbu@fairpoint.net or via mail to: Northeast Counties Farm Bureau
8220 State Route 45, Suite B, Orwell, OH 44076. The deadline to apply is Thursday, December 15, 2016.
For further information, questions, or concerns, please contact Organization Director, Mandy Orahood via e-
mail: aorahood@ofbf.org or 440.437.8700.

2016-17 Ashtabula County Plat Books Available
OSU Extension is pleased to announce the arrival of the 2016-2017 Ashtabula County Plat Books. A fundraiser for the Ashtabula County 4-H program, this book makes a great gift for the avid hunter, hiker or bird watcher of the family! Updated full-color Index Maps show each township’s geographic location in detail. A complete index of owners is listed alphabetically by last name in the back of the book. Each plat book is $25 plus tax ($26.69). Call the Extension Office today at 440-576-9008 to reserve your copy. There are also limited 2013 Plat Books still available on CLEARANCE for $15.00 + tax.
Planning for the Future of Your Farm Workshop to be held on January 18, 2017
OSU Extension will be hosting a farm success and estate planning workshop titled “Planning for the Future of Your Farm” on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Ashtabula County Extension office. If you are thinking of how and when to transfer your farm business to the next generation, then this workshop is one which you will not want to miss.

This workshop is designed to help farm families develop a succession plan for their farm business. Attend and learn ways to successfully transfer management skills and the farm’s business assets from one generation to the next. Learn how to have the crucial conversations about the future of your farm. This workshop will challenge farm families to actively plan for the future of the farm business. Farm families are encouraged to bring members from each generation to the workshop. Plan today for the future success of your family business!

The featured speakers for this event will include: Robert Moore, Attorney at Law, Wright & Moore Law Company and David Marrison, Extension Educator for Ashtabula County. The fee for this workshop is $20 per person with a registration deadline of January 11, 2017. This class will be limited to the first 40 registrants. The fee includes lunch and program materials. More information about this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 and a program flyer can be found at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events

David’s Weekly News Column
Published December 7, 2016- Jefferson Gazette and December 11, 2016 -Star Beacon

Hello, Ashtabula County! As we creep closer to the middle of the month, I would like to hit the Christmas Stocking to share information on OSU Extension’s 2017 crop budgets, share the results from the 2016 crop performance trial results, share how producers can access the 2017 Midwest Vegetable Production Guide and give a warning of a pest lurking around area homes once again this Christmas Season!

Barry Ward, Leader, Production Business Management for Ohio State’s Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics recently reported the 2017 OSU enterprise crop budgets for corn, soybeans and wheat have been published. The good news is the forecast for input costs for next year are expected to be even or a tad lower. The bad news is that even with the lower input prices, the expected profit picture looks poor as crop prices are predicted to remain depressed for 2017.

Given this, it is critical for crop producers to pencil out good budgets for next year. Ohio State University Extension has had a long history of developing “Enterprise Budgets” that can be used as a starting point for producers in their budgeting process. The enterprise budgets are compiled on Excel Spreadsheets that allow users to input their own production and price levels to calculate their own numbers. These Enterprise Budgets have color coded cells that allow users to plug in numbers to easily calculate bottoms lines for different scenarios. Detailed footnotes are included to help explain methodologies used to obtain the budget numbers.

Newly updated Enterprise Budgets for corn, soybeans, and wheat for 2017 have been completed and posted at: http://aglaw.osu.edu/farm-management-tools. We also have them at the Ashtabula County Extension, just give us a call at 440-576-9008. Make sure to take time to really push the pencil on your crop budgets for next year!

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As you are deciding what corn and soybean varieties to plant, make sure to take time to check out the Ohio Crop Performance Trials results. The results are published to provide a source of objective information from various locations in Ohio on the relative performance of seed currently available to Ohio farmers on several crops. Results from the 2016 Ohio Corn Performance Test are now available online at: http://oardc.osu.edu/corntrials. The 2016 Soybean Performance Test results can be found at: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/soy2016/. The 2016 Wheat Performance Trials results can be found at: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/wheattrials/ And finally the 2016 Forage Performance Trial Results can be found at: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/forage2016/. It should be noted that we will be distributing hard copies of these results at our 2017 Northeast Agronomy School and 2017 Pesticide Re-Certification sessions.

The 2017 Midwest Vegetable Production Guide is now available for download at http://mwveguide.org. The Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers is a collaboration of land-grant universities from seven states. It provides vegetable production information that is valid in the participating states for the current year. This includes fertility, variety, cultural, and pest management recommendations. It is a great publication and it is great that producers can access it for free online.

I would also like to share a special warning about a terrible pest that you might encounter during this holiday season. Has this pest ever been in your home? The bahum bug, Scroogium bahumbugnis (Dickens), is a bug in the family Pessimistidae and it is found throughout the world. Although the species is widely distributed, most infestations are rare and short lived. The life cycle, from egg to adult, is about one year, but may vary with environmental conditions. The adult bugs are most active in early December, but late, immature stages can be a problem during November.

The bahum bug bites humans, especially adults, causing irritability. The bites cause victims to have a dull, humorless, cranky appearance characterized by a downwardly turned mouth. Chronic victims may exhibit the following traits: stinginess, hoarding and an overwhelming desire for material objects. This pest commonly infests the minds and spirits of scrooges and grouchies. Infestations can be eliminated by using an integrated pest management program which must involve all family members and close acquaintances.

The following control measures are recommended: install Christmas trees and holly wreaths in heated buildings; install mistletoe sprigs in door arches of infested rooms; ingest eggnog or hot apple cider with cinnamon and cloves; and treat all individuals with generosity and good cheer.

I would like to end today’s column with a quote from Marianne Williamson who stated, “The holidays are only holy if we make them so.” Have a good and safe day!

Brush Piles for Wildlife
By: Ashtabula County Master Gardeners

Bird lovers are frequently gardeners and vice versa. As winter inches closer day-by-day, birders who happen to garden might want to consider an eco-friendly and inexpensive way to provide shelter for winged visitors to Ashtabula County. Nothing says come in out of the gale quite like a brush pile. Think of it as a way to practice habitat conservation by recycling materials rather than trucking them off to a landfill. By planning it carefully and building it with birds in mind, homeowners can construct a pleasant, long-lasting addition to their backyard habitat.

Even with careful planning, brush piles are not always the most attractive bird shelter. Choose a location that offers some protection from prevailing winds, yet doesn't become an eyesore to nearby neighbors. If the pile
will be visible from the street, contact city officials to ensure that brush piles are permitted. They might need reassurance that your pile will be a motel of sorts for birds, not temporary housing for vermin.

Another consideration for placement is the proximity of feeding stations and birdbaths. These enticements, as well as shrubs and understory trees, are all welcome signs for birds. Building a sturdy brush pile involves more than just tossing branches into one corner of the yard. You'll want to combine different sizes: larger branches to keep the pile stable and smaller ones for perching spots.

Remember that this isn't a compost pile. You'll need plenty of air spaces for both roosting and insulation. Leaving pine needles on evergreen boughs or leaves on branches will provide not only more security for hesitant birds but better shelter in poor weather. The ideal size for a brush pile is approximately 8-10 feet long and 4-5 feet tall. It can take a great deal of brush to create a pile that large, and using a fallen log, stumps, old wooden furniture or a few well-placed boards can help augment the pile.

Do NOT use easily compostable materials such as grass clippings. As those break down, they heat up. We want to keep the birdies warm, not roast them. Besides, these materials will clog entrances to the pile and make it less attractive to birds. Adding some leaf litter and tiny twigs to the base of the pile, however, can offer ground birds nesting material.

To build the brush pile, start by creating a horizontal frame of thicker logs or branches for stability. Leave openings along the edges of the frame to provide access for ground birds such as quail or pheasants. Next, create a cone shape with large and medium branches, bracing the bottoms of the branches against the solid frame. Small dug holes can help brace the largest branches.

Finally, weave smaller branches into the pile, creating layers of shelter and perching spots. If the pile is not naturally sheltered, use additional branches to create a thicker side to provide protection from prevailing winds.

A brush pile can be made more attractive by planting blooming vines nearby and allowing them to climb the pile over time. To keep the pile attractive to birds, the vines will need to be trimmed periodically so they do not collapse the pile or close off entrances and exits.

Even the most stable brush pile will eventually settle and collapse as its branches slowly decompose. To keep a pile useful as long as possible, periodically trim climbing vines or weeds that stress the pile's support. Adding stronger supports as time passes will also help strengthen a brush pile. While seed, suet and dried fruit are important to stoke the furnaces of our feathered friends, shelter is also vital. Winter roosting boxes can be pricey, so please consider building a brush pile--it's free.