Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!

Looks like we will get another reprieve from colder temperatures this week. We may even hit 60F on Thursday! Warm temperatures are a good reminder that planting season isn’t too far away and it may be time to get to those repairs that you have been putting off.

Don’t forget that the NE Ohio Agronomy School is next week on the 21st. It’s not too late to register, call the Ashtabula County Extension office for more information.
“Perils of Farming – Managing for the Unexpected” workshop to be held on Monday, February 26 in Williamsfield, Ohio

It is no secret that farming is a very risky business - full of unexpected events which can impact the viability of your farm business. Being proactive to identify these risks can be the difference between a farm business thriving versus just surviving.

To help farmers plan for unexpected, the Ashtabula County Extension office will be co-hosting a “Perils of Farming – Managing for the Unexpected” workshop on Monday, February 26, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Williamsfield Community Center located at 5920 State Route 322 in Williamsfield, Ohio.

This program is free and open to any farmer in northeast Ohio. Registration will begin at 9:37 a.m. Featured speakers will include: David Marrison from OSU Extension, Dennis Lenhart from HartLen Insurance and Frank Piper from ARMtech Insurance Services.

David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator will help identify the various perils which farm families need to be on the look-out for in 2018. Learn more about protecting your family business through business structure, insurance, and sound planning. Learn more about the new tax legislation, business structure, farm succession planning and how to identify the greatest risks to your operation. Volatile commodity prices, barn and combine fires, drought, excessive rain, tornados, bear damage of crops, drug addiction, divorce, disability, taxes, lawsuits and disability were just a few of the unexpected issues which arose on local farms last year. Learn how to proactively plan for the “Oh-Crap” moments.

Dennis Lenhart from HartLen Insurance and Frank Piper, Ohio Claims Supervisor for ARMtech Insurance Services will teach the basics of reducing crop production risk through various crop insurance platforms. Learn the basics of crop insurance and how to determine what insurance is best for your operation. Learn more about the changes to prevented plant insurance and learn how to protect your bottom line from losses due to hail, vandalism, fire, lightning, or from damage during transportation. Special emphasis will also be given on insuring hay and forage crops. Hay producers will not want to miss this session!

At the conclusion of the meeting, producers will be treated to a delicious lunch catered by Bobbie Lahti Catering. This lunch is being sponsored by HartLen Insurance. There is no fee to attend this program. However, for planning purposes, we are asking that courtesy reservations be made by Thursday, February 22 by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008. This meeting does not constitute an endorsement by OSU Extension for any particular crop insurance product.
Pesticide Container Recycling Available on February 21
If you have a pile of empty pesticide containers, you will have an opportunity to recycle them for free on February 21, 2018 from 8am to 9:30am at the Williamsfield Community Center. GSP Ag Recycling will be there to collect your empty, triple-rinsed containers before the start of the NE Ohio Agronomy School. Only small containers will be accepted, so leave your empty IBC totes at home. For more information call Lee Beers at 330-638-6783.

Ohio Smart Agriculture: Solutions from the Land Initiative
The Ohio Smart Agriculture: Solutions from the Land initiative is seeking your input! The goal of this project is to construct a strategy and action plan for making Ohio agriculture more sustainable and resilient to face the challenges ahead.

Based on a holistic and integrated approach to land management, the project leaders are seeking to identify, build and incubate value chains that support the sustainable production of food, feed, fiber, energy and ecosystem services, and the delivery of these goods and services up the food chain all the way to the most vulnerable consumers.

While some initiatives have largely been designed to increase farm production yields, the focus of this project goes beyond this important dimension to include getting food on tables. In embracing the vision of Ohio agriculture helping to “feed the world,” this effort recognizes that we need to start with feeding our neighbors in Ohio.

The Ohio Smart Agriculture initiative is being implemented in close collaboration with The Ohio State University’s Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation (InFACT) and is being led by a Steering Committee composed of respected Ohio agricultural, food systems and conservation experts.

The leaders have been meeting for several months and have formulated a draft vision for mid-century Ohio agriculture along with solution pathways through which this vision can be realized. Before going any further, the leadership team is seeking input and guidance from a cross section of Ohio agriculture and value chain partners. They specifically are seeking early feedback on their preliminary findings and recommendations, along with other suggestions they should consider for keeping Ohio agriculture vibrant and relevant.

Your experience, knowledge and insight into Ohio agriculture is important. You are invited to an information sharing/listening session scheduled below to learn more about this exciting initiative, and to share your views and recommendations.

Location: Fisher Auditorium, North Exhibit Area, OARDC Campus, Wooster, OH
Date: March 15, 2018
Time: 1:00-4:00

If you are able to attend, please RSVP to latham.47@osu.edu by February 23, 2017, so that we know to expect you. If you want to know more about the initiative or have additional questions...
about the community conversation, please visit the website at: http://www.sfldialogue.net/files/OSA_Project_Synopsis.pdf or call Angela Latham at: 614-354-7641.

How to Ask for Help
By Christine Gelley, Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator- Noble County

It sounds like a simple task to say, “Excuse me. Could you please help me?” But, sometimes it is incredibly difficult to do. Often that is because people fear that asking for help implies or confirms weakness, neediness, or incompetence.

Many people take pride in being persistent, tenacious, competitive, independent, or determined. I think this is especially true in the farming community. You have to be those things to survive. When a challenge comes along, these folks are the ones who step forward to encounter the issue with a “can do” attitude. Well, when the realization comes that the solution is harder to come by than expected, it can be difficult to admit they aren’t succeeding alone.

These struggles may be visible, like a tractor stuck in the mud, an unruly animal or child out of control, or a physical disability. Or they may not be visible, like a drug addiction, depression, or financial distress.

Everyone needs help sometimes. There is no shame in asking for help. Asking for help and expecting help are very different. Asking for help doesn’t make you dependent on assistance, it simply reveals that you are human and can’t accomplish every task alone.

The critical point of asking for help usually comes when you have tried all the ways that have worked in the past on an issue, but they haven’t worked yet. Proceeding alone might make the challenge manifest into a calamity, so, now what?
1. Identify someone who has experience with the challenge you are facing. If they don’t have the tools to help, they know someone who does.
2. Admit the flaws in your plan and allow the person to guide you or assist you without surrendering your responsibility for completing the task.
3. Express gratitude genuinely.

Expressing gratitude can also be intimidating. Depending on the situation a simple word, handshake, high five, or hug may be the perfect thank you. Sometimes, something more formal may be appropriate such as a card or gift. If the service was hired, the perfect (and expected) thank you is cash. Be sure to make your gratitude clear and genuine.

On the flip side, many people have experienced the sting of admitting too many flaws to someone who used them against you or used a time that they helped you to their advantage. Those experiences are real, but usually rare.
Remember that most people are kind and enjoy helping people. Remember that you are human. Don’t forget that Extension is here and willing to lend a hand. We may not have the solution to your problem, but we can happily help you find it.

Pastor Dave Willis has been credited for the idea that S.T.R.E.S.S. is an acronym for “Someone Trying to Repair Every Situation Solo.” Reduce the amount of stress in your life by recognizing the appropriate times to ask for help and graciously accepting it.

2018 ICCA of the Year
By Martha Pings, Public and Science Communications Coordinator for ASA, CSSA, and SSSA

Harold Watters was recently named the 2018 International CCA (ICCA) of the Year. The award is designed to annually recognize a CCA who delivers exceptional customer service, is highly innovative, has shown that he/she is a leader in their field, and has contributed substantially to the exchange of ideas and the transfer of agronomic knowledge within the agriculture industry. Watters, a CCA and CPAg since 1994, has enjoyed a career that unites viewpoints. His experience in industry as well as public service, in Ohio and Ukraine, and views as an agronomist and an environmentalist all blend together.

“I'm a realist. I try to make both sides understand,” Watters says. “I’m a moderate in a world where no such thing exists anymore.”

Moderation has been especially important in Ohio where Lake Erie water quality concerns have peaked. Phosphorus in the lake resulted in algal blooms, making Toledo’s main water source temporarily unusable a few years ago (see http://bit.ly/1wx1nHN). Now, growers with more than 50 ac need to be certified in fertilizer application—a training Watters helped spearhead. Approximately 17,600 producers were trained in four whirlwind years to comply with new Ohio legislation. In addition, employees at more than 40 retail locations were certified in the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Program (right source of nutrients at the right rate and right time and in the right place).

“It's all complicated here in Ohio,” Watters explains. “Until the pipes burst in the basement, you don’t really think about the plumbing. It’s the same with farming. But we’ve had great cooperation from commodity groups and growers. They contributed to laws and regulations that are workable and make sense.”

Watters’ work as an associate professor in Extension at The Ohio State University also puts him at the center of a communication hub. Weekly newsletters, monthly columns, eld days, academic papers, and presentations at various conferences are part of his repertoire.
Experimentation on the 400-ac university research farm (and informally on Watters’ own 200-ac farm) gives growers confidence.

“He continues to incorporate new technology while gaining the knuckle-busting experiences faced by growers on a regular basis,” writes Roger Bender, a CCA who nominated Watters for the award. “His practical, hands-on knowledge of crop production is greatly appreciated by all.”

“The driving force behind Harold’s initiatives has been a desire to bring locally relevant information to the clients he serves,” another nominating CCA, Jonah Johnson, observes. “This starts with listening to the concerns of growers and crop advisers.”

Johnson cites the agronomy plot demonstration area at The Ohio State University’s Farm Science Review as another communication tool for Watters. “Seeing something in class is one thing, but seeing it in the field and getting a chance to hold it teaches you something a lot better.”

For Watters, getting the message out, no matter the method, is key. “Reinforce without repeating! Try to get at different ways to learn things: see, hear, get off the wagon and into the plots, touch it so the learning gets reinforced. I’m looking at my audience, I’m reading their body language, and seeing if they understand what I’m saying. My goal is to help you understand, but we can go at it any way you want,” he explains.

These opportunities don’t stop at the state line for Watters. Over the last six years, he’s taken his agronomic expertise to Ukraine through a USAID program. There, farms are about 10 times the size of those in Ohio with more workers—and more regulations and paperwork. But the need to communicate supersedes all.

“I’ve learned in Ukraine that you’ve got to ask good questions [and] find out what are the limitations. Is it something to do with economics or equipment? It’s made me a better observer here at home,” Watters reflects.

“We’re all in this together. I don’t expect the U.S. alone is going to be able to feed the world. If they have capacity in Ukraine, Argentina, or Brazil, we need to work together and share the knowledge. We all need to do better, including here.”

Watters has been active in the CCA community since first becoming certified. He served on the Ohio and North Central Boards and Continuing Education Committee and as a mentor in the undergraduate Greenfield Scholars program. Ohio State and Wilmington College students may recognize him for his campus visits to promote the CCA program and give pre-exam training seminars.

“One of Harold’s great skills is his ability to connect with young people in the field and guide them in their careers,” Johnson writes. “Harold mentors new extension educators to promote a sense of teamwork with the CCAs in Ohio.”
Continuous and broad learning is a common theme for Watters. “It’s ‘accidental learning,’” Watters remarks. “If something was interesting and I saw a need, I’d jump in and learn. I keep trying to do that for younger people— make sure they understand there are lots of open doors. We try to specialize too much.”

In the end, it comes back to moderation and balance. “I want my children and grandchildren to enjoy a nice environment, and to feed a population, we need to be able to grow crops. The 2050 deadline of 9 billion people on the planet—we’ve got to be prepared for that. It’s coming fast. We grow outdoors and rely on rainfall, so we’re operating in a leaky system. I try to reduce those leaks as much as I can, but we’ll never be able to stop all those leaks. We’ve got to learn some ways to manage it.”

Watters is hopeful about that future and the talent coming up to guide it. “I feel more confident today about the next generation of agronomists. We don’t have enough women in agronomy in general, so it’s been really neat to see young women coming into the classrooms. They are hungry—they want to jump in with both feet. They ask questions and work harder.”

Watters will be recognized at both the Commodity Classic this month and the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) Annual Meeting in November. The ICCA of the Year Award consists of hotel and travel expenses to both meetings, $2,000 honorarium (which Watters has donated to the Greenfield Scholars program), a commemorative plaque, and a one-year membership in ASA. The award celebrates a level of proficiency that belongs to an individual and not to a company.

**Study shows wetlands provide landscape-scale reduction in nitrogen pollution**


In agricultural regions such as the U.S. Midwest, excess nitrate from crop fertilizer makes its way into rivers and streams through subsurface drainage channels and agricultural ditches. High nitrate concentrations in waterways can be harmful to ecosystems and human health, contaminating drinking water and eventually flowing downstream far enough to increase the size of the Gulf of Mexico’s “dead zone.”

A study published today in the journal *Nature Geoscience* by National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded researchers offers new insights into this problem: Multiple wetlands, or "wetland complexes" in a watershed, are extremely effective at reducing nitrate levels in rivers and streams.
Wetland complexes can be five times better at reducing nitrate than the best land-based nitrogen mitigation strategies, the scientists say.

"Agricultural productivity benefits the economy, but is often accompanied by environmental costs," says Tom Torgersen, director of NSF's Water, Sustainability and Climate program, which funded the research. "This study demonstrates that retaining or restoring wetlands in intensively managed agricultural watersheds would reduce nitrate in rivers and improve local water quality, while also reducing nitrate exports to the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic [dead] zone."

Using water samples collected over a four-year period from more than 200 waterways in the 17,000-square-mile Minnesota River Basin (MRB), along with geospatial information on land use in the MRB watershed, researchers isolated the effects of wetlands on stream and river nitrate concentrations.

The research produced a number of significant findings:

- When stream flows are high, wetlands are five times more efficient at reducing nitrate than the best land-based conservation practices.
- The arrangement of wetlands in a watershed is a predictor of the magnitude of nitrate reduction. When wetlands filter runoff from 100 percent of a drainage area, they are three times more effective at nitrate removal than when they filter runoff from 50 percent of a drainage area.
- Nitrate reduction in temporary wetlands and in geographically isolated wetlands (those not connected to a river), such as wetlands that form in agricultural ditches, is largest during high stream flows.

"These are important steps toward recognizing that as we lose wetlands, we also lose the significant benefits they provide in pollution control," says Amy Hansen, a researcher at the University of Minnesota's St. Anthony Falls Laboratory and first author of the journal paper. The contributions of small wetlands are especially important for the future, Hansen says.

Climate forecasts predict increases in precipitation frequency and magnitude -- conditions under which wetlands play a significant role in reducing river nitrate.

"Our work shows that wetland restoration could be one of the most effective methods for improving water quality in the face of climate change and the increasing global demand for food," says paper co-author Jacques Finlay, an ecologist at the University of Minnesota. Other co-authors of the paper are Christine Dolph of the University of Minnesota and Efi Foufoula-Georgiou of the University of California, Irvine.

The results of the research are advancing scientists' understanding of wetlands and their role in pollution control, according to the researchers, and providing guidance on wetland restoration siting and benefits.
Ashtabula County Beekeepers Association to Hold Meeting on February 24
The next meeting of the Ashtabula County Bee Keepers Association will be Saturday February 24, 2018 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office located at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson, Ohio. The meeting will begin with a Pot Luck Dinner at noon. Please bring a dish/dessert to share. The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. with State Representative John Patterson speaking on House Bill 392 and the Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry. A beginning bee keeper class is also being planned for March 10, 2018. Contact Sharon Riccio at sjriccio@yahoo.com or call 440-576-8818 to register or for more information.

Chili Cook-Off & Family Fund Night to be held on February 23 in Jefferson
The Ashtabula County 4-H Camp Counselors will be holding their 4th Annual Chili Cook Off and Family Fun Night on Friday, February 23 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds in the 4-H Expo building. The event will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and your $5 ticket includes chili, cornbread, dessert and beverage and a vote for your favorite chili. The evening will be full of fun activities for the whole family. There will also be a basket palooza. Pre-sale tickets can be purchased from any Camp Counselor or at the O.S.U Extension Office. Enjoy a variety of chili while helping a group of hard working youth.

Northeast Ohio Winter Grape School Slated for March 1, 2018
OSU Extension and the OARDC Ashtabula Agricultural Research Station are pleased to be hosting the Northeast Ohio Winter Grape School on Thursday, March 1, 2018 from 9:00 until 12:00 noon at St. Joseph Vineyards located at 7882 Warner Rd. Madison, Ohio 44057.

The featured speakers for this event include Dr. Melanie Lewis-Ivey, Fruit Pathologist, OSU-OARDC, Department of Plant Pathology; Andrew Kirk, Research Specialist for Ohio State University, OARDC Ashtabula Agricultural Research Station; and Thomas deHaas -OSU Extension Educator for Lake County. Session topics include Integrated Pest Management Update for Ohio Vineyards, Core Pesticide Safety, Personal Protective Equipment, Sanitation, and Sensors in the Vineyard.

The registration fee for this program is $15.00/per person. Pre-registration is required by Thursday, February 22 with a late registration of an additional $10. Registration includes refreshments, speaker travel expenses, pesticide education credit and program handouts.

Participants can register on-line at: http://www.cvent.com/d/6tqv5l. For those unable to register online: Make checks payable to OSU Lake County Extension, and mail to Lake County Extension office, 99 East Erie Street, Painesville, Ohio 44077. Contact the Lake County Extension office at 440-350-2269 for more information.
Northeast Ohio Agriculture

2018 4-H Carnival to be held March 1st
The annual 4-H Carnival will be held on Thursday, March 1st prior to Ashtabula County 4-H Week at the Expo Building at the County Fairgrounds in Jefferson from 6-8 p.m. This event is open to all to encourage families who are interested in 4-H to come and learn about the programs 4-H has to offer.

The 4-H Carnival will be filled with activities and games for youth to participate in with their family and friends. Fun carnival food, like hot dogs, popcorn, and snow cones will be available by donation for children of all ages. Exciting and interactive activities and games will be offered representing each 4-H program area at the event where questions on projects can be answered by an advisor or species chair that has knowledge in the project area.

If you can’t make it to the 4-H Carnival, stop by a local 4-H Community Encounter. Learn more about 4-H, pet an animal and talk to a 4-H member at one of the local events.

Saturday, March 3 · 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Ashtabula Tractor Supply
Monday, March 5 · 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Ashtabula Library
Tuesday, March 6 · 5:00-6:30 p.m. at Andover Library and 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Henderson Library (Jefferson)
Wednesday, March 7 · 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Conneaut Library and 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Geneva Library
Thursday, March 8 · 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Rome Fire Hall

Ohio 4-H and Ashtabula County 4-H Club information will be available at all events.

For more information on 4-H programs in Ashtabula County, please contact Jenna Hoyt at 440-576-9008 or via email at hoyt.88@osu.edu or visit our website at www.ashtabula.osu.edu and visit the 4-H Youth Development page.

Northeast Ohio Calving Workshop to be held on February 22, 2018 in Jefferson, Ohio
OSU Extension, the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association and the Ashtabula County Dairy Service Unit would like to invite Northeast Ohio Beef & Dairy producers to the “Northeast Ohio Calving Workshop” on Thursday, February 22, 2018 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds located at 127 North Elm Street in Jefferson, Ohio.

Calving issues cause stress and economic loss for many northeast Ohio dairy and beef operations each year. To help producers increase their calving management skills, we have invited Dr. Gustavo Schuenemann (OSU Extension Dairy Veterinarian) to share his calving expertise. This intensive clinic will offer dairy and beef producers calving management knowledge in a face-to-face and hands-on environment. Topics will include: what is normal and what is abnormal in calving, techniques for assisting delivery,
trouble shooting delivery problems, factors causing calving difficulties, post-delivery problems, when to call for professional help, and the post-calving management & health.

The clinic includes about 1 hour of classroom instruction followed by 1 hour of hands-on demonstration. Participants will practice delivery techniques and newborn care management practices using a calving simulator developed by Dr. Schuenemann. This hands-on course is free and open to all dairy and beef producers in Northeast Ohio. 4-H and FFA youth will also gain valuable experience from this workshop.

No registration is required for this event and light refreshments will be served. A program flyer can be found at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events) More information can be received by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008. Do not miss this chance to increase your ability to handle the problem calving situations which challenge us during calving season.

**2018-2019 Ashtabula County Beef Scholarships Applications Available**

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association are pleased to announce they will be awarding two youth beef scholarships for the 2018-2019 school year. One $1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a deserving 2018 High School Senior who will be attending an accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute in 2018-2019. In addition, one $500 scholarship will be awarded to a current College Student who is currently attending an accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute.

Applicants must be resident of Ashtabula County. The first preference by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association is the scholarships be awarded to deserving students who have been involved in the beef industry as a youth. Examples of this could include: working on a family beef operation; involved with a beef project through 4-H or FFA; or works on a local beef farm. The second preference for the scholarship recipients would be awarded to students who are currently or will be studying a beef related field in accredited full four year college or an accredited two year technical institute. Previous winners of the $1,000 High School Senior Scholarship are eligible to apply for the $500 College Scholarship. However, the $500 college scholarship can only be received once by a student during their college career.

Applications must be received by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association by Monday, April 16, 2018 by 4:30 p.m. for consideration for the scholarship. No late applications will be considered. The application can be obtained at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events) Additional information can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

**Northeast Ohio Agronomy School Slated for February 21, 2018**

The OSU Extension offices in Northeast Ohio are pleased to be offering the “**2018 Northeast Ohio Agronomy School**” on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 from 9:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the
Northeast Ohio Agriculture

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 in 2018. A full day of topics with six different speakers has been planned for producers to learn more about the major issues impacting corn and soybean production in northeast Ohio.

Morning Session- Jeff Stachler, OSU Extension Educator for Auglaize County will “ZOOM” in via the internet to help farmers learn how to control troublesome weeds. Learn more about controlling marestail, lambsquarter, common ragweed, redroot pigweed, and grasses. Discussion will also be held on waterhemp, one of Ohio’s newest weeds, which is heading its way east across Ohio. Alan Sundermeier, OSU Extension Educator in Wood County will then help producers learn about Ohio’s Soil Health Initiative. Learn what makes up a healthy soil and how can farmers can measure it. This interactive session will demonstrate water holding capacity, compaction, and biological attributes of soil. Techniques for improving soil productivity will also be discussed. To cap off the morning, David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator for Ashtabula County will help provide tips for making higher profits from your crop enterprise. Learn how to analyze your farm’s financial situation, how to create effective crop budgets and how to examine your cost of production. This session will also examine the new tax legislation and how it will impact agriculture.

Lunch- As always, a hearty farmer lunch prepared by Lahti Catering means attendees will not go away hungry! This lunch is sponsored by W.I. Miller & Sons of Farmdale, Ohio and each of our program sponsors will provide a short industry update during lunch.

Afternoon Session- To kick off the afternoon session, Dr. Scott Shearer, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering will help farmers examine the impacts of soil compaction. Increasing production costs and tighter profit margins are causing many to question the value of new tire or track technologies. This presentation will provide farmers with a foundation for considering the value of these technologies along with field data from studies including grain carts and planters. Dr. John Fulton, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering Technology will then help producers learn how to use precision ag on their small & medium crop farms without breaking the bank. This presentation will cover the basic precision technologies available while discussing potential value. To close out the day, Lee Beers, OSU Extension Educator for Trumbull County will address some of the more volatile issues which producers are sure to face 2018. This presentation will include a discussion on Dicamba and much more.

Sponsors & Credits- This workshop is sponsored by the OSU Extension offices in Ashtabula, Trumbull & Geauga Counties with support from W.I. Miller & Sons, Centerra Coop, Doeble’s Hybrids, King Crop Insurance, Pioneer Seeds & the Ohio Soybean Council. Certified Crop Advisor and Private & Commercial Pesticide Credits have been applied for.

Registration- The registration fee for this workshop is $15 per person and includes refreshments, lunch, speaker travel expenses, and program handouts. 2018 Weed Control Guides will be on sale for $16 at the workshop as well as the Ohio Agronomy Guide for $17. Pre-registration is
required by February 13, 2018. Make checks payable to OSU Extension, and mail to Ashtabula County Extension office, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047. A registration flyer can be found at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events) More information can be received by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

**Growing Shiitake Mushroom Program Slated for March 15**
The Ashtabula County Extension office will be hosting a shitake mushroom growing workshop on Thursday, March 15, 2018 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. During this workshop, participants will learn the basics of growing shiitake mushrooms at home- including the best species of trees to use, log preparation, types of spawn, and inoculation. After a short classroom discussion, participants will drill and inoculate an oak log to take home. Participants are encouraged to bring a cordless drill and a 5/16” diameter bit if they have it, though several will be available to share. The workshop is $25 and space is limited. To register, contact the Ashtabula County Extension office at: 440-576-9008. A complete registration flyer can be obtained at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events).

**Hydrangea School to be Held on April 26, 2018**
The Ashtabula County Extension office is pleased to be offering a Hydrangea School on Thursday, April 26, 2018 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office located at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson, Ohio from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Join OSU Extension Educator Eric Barrett to discover the world of hydrangeas. Learn about types, care, pruning and bloom times. You’ll receive a quick reference chart to take to the garden center and a hydrangea plant to take home. The registration fee for this workshop is $30 per person. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension. Registration includes handouts, light refreshments and a hydrangea plant to take home for your landscape. Please mail completed registration form to OSU Extension, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, Ohio 44047. Due to space limitations, this program will be limited to the first 50 registrants. First come, first served basis. For questions, please call 440-576-9008. A registration flyer can also be obtained at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events).

**Gardening Tasks for Winter**
By: Ashtabula County Master Gardeners

Gardening doesn’t have to stop just because you’re gazing out your window at a foot or two of snow! Here are several garden tasks that will keep you in touch with your inner gardener and help you get ready for the next growing season.

Plan next summer’s garden. Sketch your garden plot on graph paper or otherwise to scale. Select new cultivars and new veggies to replace those that weren’t favorites, and remember to rotate crops from last year. Crop rotation helps reduce the reoccurrence of soil-borne diseases and insects and eases the nutrient demands on each plot of soil. Don’t forget to make space for flowers, paths or that bench you’ve been wanting.
If you’re really not sure your garden soil is as good as it could be, plan to do a soil test. Your local Ohio State University Extension office can supply you with an inexpensive soil test kit and provide a wealth of information for both new and experienced gardeners.

Make a garden calendar. Use one of those calendars that came in the mail and make a gardening calendar for the whole upcoming year. It could include things like bringing the amaryllis bulbs up from the basement; starting veggie seeds the appropriate amount of weeks before the last projected frost date; pulling back the mulch from the perennial beds; draining and storing the garden hoses; planting fall bulbs; fertilizing the lawn; clean-up in the garden; or whatever you can think of. Those small chores will most likely be on your to-do list anyway, and having them on your calendar just makes it easier to stay on top of them.

Maintain your hand tools. If you didn’t do this in the fall, do it now. Brush off any soil from blades and handles and use fine grit sandpaper to remove rust and clean the blades right down to shiny metal. Then sharpen the blades on the bevel side only. Your local hardware store person can help you select the correct file for the job if you don’t have one.

Run sandpaper over the handles so you don’t have to remove splinters from your hands next summer, and run the sandpaper over the back sides of the blades to remove any burrs from the filing. Finally, apply a light coat of linseed oil to the blades and handles and hang them up.

Check on your stored bulbs, tubers and seeds. They should all be in a dry, dark, and cool place. Look for mold, rot or sprouting, which could be signs of too much warmth, light or humidity. Throw out any bad ones and move the others to a better place. Remember what they say about the rotten apple…

Make the rounds of the garden, orchard, and compost bin. Carefully remove broken branches from fruit trees and inspect tree trunks to make sure they are adequately protected. A loose wrap of chicken wire will prevent deer and rabbits from making winter dinner of tender bark.

Is the compost still cooking, or does it need insulation around the bin? How are the grapevines doing? It’ll be time to prune them before long, definitely before the weather begins to warm. As you work your way through your tasks, remember that the blanket of snow you were bemoaning is fixing nitrogen in the soil, protecting plants’ roots from temperature extremes, and providing moisture for the next growing season. Happy winter gardening to all!

_In 2018, Ashtabula County Master Gardeners will be covering a wide range of topics, indicating special interests among their members. If you would like a master gardener to write about a particular topic, call the OSU Extension Office at (440) 576-9008._
Hello Ashtabula County! Well the furry weather forecaster, Punxsutawney Phil, woke up on February 2 and saw his shadow. According to folklore, this means we can expect six more weeks of winter. This is no surprise for many of us here in Ashtabula County. One a good note, we at OSU Extension have a lot of programs scheduled for the next 6 weeks to keep you busy! Today, I would like to invite you to three of these events. Join us!

Nothing beats the cold weather than a great big bowl of chili! I especially love chili cook-offs as no two pots of chili are the same. I encourage each of you to come and to support the Ashtabula County 4-H Camp Counselors at their 4th Annual Chili Cook Off and Family Fun Night. This event will be held on Friday, February 23 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds in the 4-H Expo building from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. For just $5 you can delight your taste buds on twenty different kinds of chili, cornbread, dessert and beverage. Come vote for your favorite. The evening will be full of fun activities for the whole family. Pre-sale tickets can be purchase at the O.S.U Extension Office. Enjoy a variety of chili while helping a group of hard working youth. Call our office at 440-576-9008 for more details.

Most folks might not realize this but our grape vineyard managers don’t get a break from the snow and cold temperatures as this is the time of year that they are out in the vineyards pruning the vines. We do encourage them to take March 1 off as OSU Extension and the OARDC Ashtabula Agricultural Research Station will be hosting the Northeast Ohio Winter Grape School from 9:00 until 12:00 noon at St. Joseph Vineyards located at 7882 Warner Rd. Madison, Ohio 44057.

The featured speakers for this event include Dr. Melanie Lewis-Ivey, Fruit Pathologist, OSU-OARDC, Department of Plant Pathology; Andrew Kirk, Research Specialist for Ohio State University, OARDC Ashtabula Agricultural Research Station; and Thomas deHaas -OSU Extension Educator for Lake County. Session topics include Integrated Pest Management Update for Ohio Vineyards, Core Pesticide Safety, Personal Protective Equipment, Sanitation, and Sensors in the Vineyard.

The registration fee for this program is $15.00/per person. Pre-registration is required by Thursday, February 22 with a late registration of an additional $10. Registration includes refreshments, speaker travel expenses, pesticide education credit and program handouts.

Participants can register on-line at: [http://www.cvent.com/d/6tqv51](http://www.cvent.com/d/6tqv51). For those unable to register online: Make checks payable to OSU Lake County Extension, and mail to Lake County Extension office, 99 East Erie Street, Painesville, Ohio 44077. Contact the Lake County Extension office at 440-350-2269 for more information.

In March, the Ashtabula County Extension office will be hosting our first ever shitake mushroom growing workshop. This workshop will be held on Thursday, March 15, 2018 from 6:00 to 7:30
Northeast Ohio Agriculture

15 p.m. at our office located at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson, Ohio. Join us for this hands-on workshop!

During this workshop, participants will learn the basics of growing shiitake mushrooms at home—including the best species of trees to use, log preparation, types of spawn, and inoculation. After a short classroom discussion, participants will drill and inoculate an oak log to take home. Participants are encouraged to bring a cordless drill and a 5/16” diameter bit if they have it, though several will be available to share. The workshop is $25 and space is limited. To register, contact the Ashtabula County Extension office at: 440-576-9008. A complete registration flyer can be obtained at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events

To close I would like to share a quote from James Faust who stated, “A grateful heart is a beginning of greatness. It is an expression of humility. It is a foundation for the development of such virtues as prayer, faith, courage, contentment, happiness, love, and well-being.” Have a good and safe day!

**Upcoming Extension Program Dates**

The following programs have been scheduled for Northeast Ohio farmers. Complete registration flyers can be found at: http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines

**Women in Agriculture Programs**
March 17, 2018

Private Pesticide Applicator & Fertilizer Re-certification Sessions
March 9, 2018 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Trumbull County

**2018 Northeast Ohio Winter Agronomy School**
Wednesday February 21, 2018

**2018 Winter Beef School (Calving School)**
Thursday, February 22, 2018

**Perils of Farming – Managing for the Unexpected**
Monday, February 26, 2018 from 10-12 noon

**Winter Grape School**
March 1, 2018 at St Joseph’s Vineyard

**New Pesticide Applicator Training**
Trumbull County Extension Office 1-4:30pm
Tuesday March 13, 2018

Northeast Ohio Agriculture

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties
Backyard Chickens  
Trumbull County Extension Office 6-8pm  
Wednesday, March 14, 2018

2018 Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet  
Saturday, March 24, 2018

21st Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show  
Saturday, April 21, 2018

Hydrangea Workshop  
Thursday, April 26, 2018

David Marrison  
Ashtabula County Extension Office  
39 Wall Street  
Jefferson, OH 44047  
440-576-9008  
marrison.2@osu.edu  
ashtabula.osu.edu

Lee Beers  
Trumbull County Extension Office  
520 West Main Street  
Cortland, OH 44410  
330-638-6783  
beers.66@osu.edu  
trumbull.osu.edu
Join OSU Extension as we host our annual Agronomy School for crop farmers in Northeast Ohio. This workshop is sponsored by the OSU Extension offices in Ashtabula, Trumbull & Geauga Counties with support from W.I. Miller & Sons & the Ohio Soybean Council. The featured presentations will include:

**Controlling the Most Troublesome Weeds in Northeast Ohio Crop Fields**
Jeff Stachler, Agricultural & Natural Resources Educator - Auglaize County

**Soil Health Initiative**
Alan Sundermeier, Agricultural & Natural Resources Educator - Wood County

**Where’s the Money?**
David Marrison, Agricultural & Natural Resources Extension Educator- Ashtabula County

**Lunch & Industry Trade Talks**
Sponsored by W.I. Miller & Sons of Farmdale, Ohio

**Soil Compaction**
Dr. Scott Shearer, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

**Using Precision Ag on Small & Medium Crop Farms without Breaking the Bank**
Dr. John Fulton, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

**Dicamba is Not the Only Volatile Issue for 2018**
Lee Beers – Extension Educator in Trumbull County

Pre-registration is required by February 13, 2018. Registration fee is $15.00/per person. Registration includes refreshments, lunch, speaker travel expenses, and program handouts. Make checks payable to OSU Extension, and mail to Ashtabula County Extension office, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047. If you have any questions please call 440-576-9008. 2018 Weed Control Guides ($16 each) and the Ohio Agronomy Guide ($17 each) will be on sale at the workshop.

Name____________________________________  Phone________________ _____
Address__________________________________  City________________ __ Zipcode________
Email____________________________________
# of Reservations__________________________  $15 per RSVP

_____Yes, pre-order a Weed Control Guide for me
_____Yes, pre-order a Ohio Agronomy Guide
2018 Northeast Ohio Winter Agronomy School
Detailed Agenda

**Controlling Troublesome Weeds in Northeast Ohio Crop Fields**
Jeff Stachler, OSU Extension Educator – Auglaize County
Learn strategies for controlling the most troublesome weeds in soybean fields in Northeast, Ohio. Learn more about controlling marestail, lambsquarters, common ragweed, redroot pigweed, and grasses. Discussion will also be held on Waterhemp, one of Ohio’s newest weeds which is heading its way east across Ohio. 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

**Soil Health Initiative**
Alan Sundermeier, OSU Extension Educator – Wood County
What is a healthy soil and how can we measure it? This interactive session will demonstrate water holding capacity, compaction, and biological attributes of soil. Techniques for improving soil productivity will also be discussed. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Where’s the Money?**
David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator
Low margins are predicted again for 2018. Tips on analyzing your financial situation, crop budgets and cost of production will be shared. This session will examine the new tax legislation and how it will impact agriculture. 11:30 to 12:00 noon

**Lunch & Industry Trade Talks** - As always, a hearty farmer lunch prepared by Lahti Catering means you will not go away hungry! This lunch is sponsored by W.I. Miller & Sons of Farmdale, Ohio. Each of our program sponsors will provide a short industry update during lunch. Lunch & trade talks will be held from 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.

**Soil Compaction**
Dr. Scott Shearer, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering
Farmers are presented with a number of options for managing soil compaction. Increasing production costs and tighter profit margins are causing many to question the value new tire or track technologies. This presentation will provide farmers with a foundation for considering the value of these technologies along with field data from studies including grain carts and planters. 12:45 to 1:45

**Using Precision Ag on Small & Medium Crop Farms without Breaking the Bank**
Dr. John Fulton, OSU Associate Professor in Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering
Technology has become more readily available plus economical in recent years providing small to medium farms to adopt and provide value. This presentation will cover the basic precision technologies available while discussing potential value. 1:45 to 2:45 p.m.

**Dicamba is Not the Only Volatile Issue for 2018**
Lee Beers, OSU Extension Educator – Trumbull County
This session will address some of the more volatile issues which producers are sure to face 2018. 2:45 to 3:30 p.m.
Ever thought about growing shiitake mushrooms? Native to Japan, shiitake mushrooms (*Lentinula edodes*) are becoming increasingly popular for their distinctive nutty flavor and high nutritional content. During this workshop, participants will learn the basics of growing shiitake mushrooms at home— including the best species of trees to use, log preparation, types of spawn, and inoculation. After a short classroom discussion, participants will drill and inoculate an oak log to take home. Participants are encouraged to bring a cordless drill and a 5/16” diameter bit if they have it, though several will be available to share.

Space for this workshop is limited and will fill up fast so register today!

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**Pre-registration is required by March 8, 2018.** Registration fee is $25/per person. Make checks payable to OSU Extension, and mail to Ashtabula County Extension office, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047. If you have any questions, please call 440-576-9008.

Name________________________ Phone________________________
Address_______________________ City________________________ Zip code___________
Email________________________
# of Reservations_______________$25 per RSVP
Do you apply fertilizer to 50 acres or more for crops that are primarily for sale? If so, you are required by Ohio law to attend a training session or take a test to become certified. OSU Extension offices in Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties are offering training sessions (no test) that will meet all certification requirements. Pre-Registration is required a week in advance. Cost for this training session is $35/person and includes training materials, and handouts. To register, complete the back portion of this flyer and mail with check to the location you plan to attend. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension.
2018 Fertilizer Applicator Training
Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties

Name ______________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________
City __________________  State_____  Zip_________________
Phone ____________________Email  ____________________

Number of People Attending: _________ X $35/person __________

____________________________________________________

Please make checks payable to: OSU Extension

Please mail to the location you plan to attend.

OSU Extension Trumbull County, 520 West Main Street, Cortland, OH 44410

OSU Extension Ashtabula County, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047

For questions, contact Lee Beers at 330-638-6783 or by email at beers.66@osu.edu
“Perils of Farming – Managing for the Unexpected” Workshop

Monday, February 26, 2018
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Lunch to follow

Williamsfield Community Center
5920 State Route 322
Williamsfield, Ohio 44093

It is no secret that farming is a very risky business - full of unexpected events which can impact the viability of your farm business. Being proactive to identify these risks can be the difference between a farm business thriving versus just surviving. This program will help farmers plan for unexpected.

**Oh-Crap Planning for 2018** - David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator will help identify the various perils which farm families need to be on the look-out for in 2018. Learn more about protecting your family business through business structure, insurance, and sound planning. Learn more about the new tax legislation, business structure, farm succession planning and how to identify the greatest risks to your operation. Volatile commodity prices, barn and combine fires, drought, excessive rain, tornados, bear damage of crops, drug addiction, divorce, disability, taxes, lawsuits and disability were just a few of the unexpected issues which arose on local farms last year. Learn how to proactively plan for the “Oh-Crap” moments.

**2018 Crop Insurance Update** - Dennis Lenhart from HartLen Insurance and Frank Piper, Ohio Claims Supervisor for ARMtech Insurance Services will teach the basics of reducing crop production risk through the various crop insurance platforms. Learn the basics of crop insurance and how to determine what insurance is best for your operation. Learn more about the changes to prevented plant insurance and learn how to protect your bottom line from losses due to hail, vandalism, fire, lightning, or from damage during transportation. **Special emphasis will also be given on insuring hay and forage crops. Hay producers will not want to miss this session!**

This program is free and open to any farmer in northeast Ohio. Registration will begin at 9:37 a.m.

There is no charge to attend this meeting. However, for planning purposes, we are asking that courtesy reservations be made by Thursday, February 22. Please call the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 to RSVP. This meeting is not just for corn and soybean growers but also for grape, apple, nursery, and forage crop producers! At the conclusion of the meeting, producers will be treated to a delicious lunch catered by Bobbie Lahti Catering. **This lunch and workshop costs are generously sponsored by HartLen Insurance.**
Calving issues cause stress and economic loss for many northeast Ohio dairy and beef operations each year. To help producers increase their calving management skills, we have invited Dr. Gustavo Schuenemann (OSU Extension Dairy Veterinarian) to share his calving expertise. This intensive clinic will offer dairy and beef producers calving management knowledge in a face-to-face and hands-on environment. Topics will include: what is normal and what is abnormal in calving, techniques for assisting delivery, trouble shooting delivery problems, factors causing calving difficulties, post-delivery problems, when to call for professional help, and the post-calving management & health.

The clinic includes about 1 hour of classroom instruction followed by 1 hour of hands-on demonstration. Participants will practice delivery techniques and newborn care management practices using a calving simulator developed by Dr. Schuenemann. This hands-on course is free and open to all dairy and beef producers in Northeast Ohio. 4-H and FFA youth will also gain valuable experience from this workshop.

No registration is required. More information about this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008. Do not miss this chance to increase your ability to handle the problem calving situations which challenge us during calving season.