OSU EXTENSION

NORTHEAST OHIO AGRI - CULTURE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER
Tuesday, January 19, 2016

The Lake Effect machine rolled into town this past weekend and provided lots of snow across the county. I know most of us have well over a 1 ½ feet of snow on the ground. Even with our piles of snow and area cancellations, we will still be hosting the state-wide Beef Webinar tonight at our office beginning at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Livestock Marketing Specialist, will kick off the program with his insight into the beef cattle market outlook. Sam Roberts of United Producers Inc. will offer suggestions on market risk management and capturing profitable pricing opportunities in the coming year. We had a great pesticide re-certification and fertilizer certification session on Friday in Williamsfield with over 50 producers in attendance. I have provided details in today’s newsletter on our Agronomy School which will be held on February 23 in Williamsfield, Ohio. There are a lot of changes coming down the road and this school will help keep you up-to-date. Have a good and safe week (especially with all our snow!)

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Northeast Ohio Regional Agronomy School to be Held on February 23, 2016
By David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator

The OSU Extension offices in Northeast Ohio are pleased to be offering the “2016 Northeast Ohio Agronomy School” on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 from 9:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Williamsfield Community Center in Williamsfield, Ohio. Join OSU Extension as we host our annual Agronomy School for crop farmers in Northeast Ohio. With profit margins decreasing it will be vital for crop producers to get the biggest bang from the dollars they invest in land rental, seed and fertilizer, technology, chemicals, and crop protection.
During the program, Les Ober, OSU Extension ANR Program Specialist from Geauga County will help producers learn more about spray additives and how improper measurements may be costing your operation valuable dollars. In today’s world of modern agricultural technology pesticides are chemical wonders in a small bag or bottle. Each one has the potential to do the job but getting the most out of each product depends on what you add and how you handle the chemical. When you add an adjuvant what does that mysterious other ingredient really do? Have you ever considered the level of concentration and the precision of measurement that it takes to meet the labeled requirements?

Dianne Shoemaker, OSU Extension Field Specialist for Dairy Production Economics, will review how the Finpack BENCHmark reports can help producers take a good look at the profitability of their crop enterprises. With corn and soybean prices dropping over the past year and low margins predicted for the 2016 cropping year, it is crucial that crop farmers examine their financial numbers closely.

Dr. Mark Loux, OSU Extension Weed Specialist will then share what is new in weed control for agronomic crops. Learn about the new corn and soybean premixes and the status of the Enlist and Xtend herbicide programs. Mark will share management details for controlling weed resistance weeds as Marestail has exploded in Northeast Ohio and Palmer Amaranth was discovered in Mahoning County in 2015. Learn more about overlapping residual and strategies to use to keep other weeds from becoming resistant in your crop fields.

Dr. Andy Michel, OSU Extension Entomologist, will share tips for dealing with insects in your field crops. Producers will learn more about soybean aphids, stinkbugs, and Western Bean Cutworm. Learn the thresholds for each of these bugs and the control measures for each. Andy will provide insight on future control measures such as RNAi. Dr. Kelley Tilmon, OSU Extension’s new field crop entomologist will also be on hand to discuss her multi-state research on soybean seed treatments.

Lee Beers, OSU Extension Educator for Trumbull County, will share how farmers can use the new Ohio Nutrient Management Record Keeper (ONMRK) mobile app to comply with the new recordkeeping requirements created by Senate Bill 1 and Senate Bill 150. This APP was developed by Knox County Farm Bureau and Knox County Soil and Water Conservation District.

And to wrap up the day, David Marrison, OSU Extension Educator, will provide updates on the proposed changes to the private and commercial pesticide re-certification process, new Worker Protection Standards, and on the newly formed Northeast Ohio Phosphorus Task force.

As always, a hearty farmer lunch prepared by Lahti Catering means you will not go away hungry! This lunch is sponsored by W.L. Miller & Sons of Farmdale, Ohio. Each of our program sponsors will provide a short industry update during lunch. Pre-registration is required by Monday, February 15, 2016. Registration fee is $10.00/per person. Registration includes morning 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. CCA and Private & Commercial Pesticide Credits have been applied for. Weed control guides will be on sale for $15 at the workshop. A registration flyer can be found at: [http://go.osu.edu/ne-events](http://go.osu.edu/ne-events) If you have any questions please call 440-576-9008.

**Conservation Reserve Program Sign-up Meetings for Trumbull & Portage Counties**

David, Echols, [david.echols@oh.usda.gov](mailto:david.echols@oh.usda.gov)

The Trumbull, Portage and Summit counties Farm Service Agency offices will be hosting public meetings regarding the Conservation Reserve Programs and the general sign-up that is underway. These will be at the Trumbull County
Ag Center 520 West Main St Cortland Ohio on January 26, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and another meeting will be held at the Portage-Summit FSA office, 6970 SR 88 Ravenna Ohio on February 4, 2016 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. More information can be obtained by calling the Trumbull County FSA office at 330-637-2046 ext 109 or the Portage/Summit FSA Office at 330-297-7633 ext 113.

Dr. Kelley Tilmon joins OSU as Field Crop Entomologist
In January, Dr. Kelley Tilmon joined the faculty of the Department of Entomology as an Associate Professor and State Specialist for field crop entomology. Her extension, research, and teaching programs will focus on the management of insect pests of agronomic crops. She will be based out of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) campus in Wooster. Kelley has an M.S. in entomology from the University of Delaware, a Ph.D. in entomology from Cornell University, and for the past 10 years has served as the soybean entomologist for South Dakota at South Dakota State University, with extension and research responsibilities. Her contact information is 330-202-3529 and tilm1@osu.edu

2015 Northwest Ohio Corn Silage Test
By Rich Minyo, Peter Thomison, Bill Widdicombe, & Allen Geyer

In 2015, 38 corn silage hybrids representing 13 commercial brands were evaluated in a joint trial with Michigan State University (MSU). One Ohio location is combined with Michigan’s two southern (Zone 1) silage locations. The Ohio test site was located in our Northwest Region at Hoytville (Wood County). The two MSU sites were located in Branch and Lenawee counties, which are on the Ohio/Michigan state line. The test results from the three 2015 locations are treated as one region. The plots were planted with 4-row air type planters and maintained by each respective state utilizing standard production practices. The center 2 rows were harvested with MSU’s self-propelled forage harvester. Silage tests were harvested uniformly as close to half milk line as possible. Near Infrared Reflectance (NIR) Quality Analysis was performed by MSU using their current procedures. Silage results present the percent dry matter of each hybrid plus green weight and dry weight as tons per acre. Other data presented include percent stand, the percentage of in vitro digestible dry matter, acid detergent fiber, neutral detergent fiber, neutral detergent fiber digestibility, crude protein and starch. Milk production in pounds per ton and pounds per acre were estimated using MILK2006 (UW-Madison Dairy Science Department).

A complete summary of the Ohio results are available online at: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/silagetrials. More information on procedures and additional 2015 MSU silage test data can be viewed online at: http://www.varietytrials.msu.edu/corn. For more information on Ohio State crop variety testing, visit: http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~perf.

Ohio Grape & Wine Conference to held on February 15-16 in Dublin, Ohio
The Ohio Grape & Wine Conference (OGWC) will take place on February 15 - 16, 2016, at the Embassy Suites in Dublin/Columbus. The conference is jointly organized by the Ohio Grape Industries Committee (OGIC), Ohio State University Extension, Department of Horticulture and Crop Science Viticulture and Enology Programs at OSU-OARDC and the Ohio Wine Producers Association (OWPA). The 2016 conference consists of both general and concurrent sessions covering a wide range of interesting topics for grape growers and winemakers. We are pleased to announce our featured speakers in both enology and viticulture with Dr. James Osborne, Associate Professor, Enology Extension Specialist, Oregon State University; Bill Oliver, Owner/Winemaker, Oliver Winery & Vineyards; Glenn McGourty, University of California Extension Services and John Thull, University of Minnesota Horticultural Research Center. Monday morning will begin with a special half-day workshop in both viticulture and enology combined. This workshop will focus on disseminating important information regarding new or alternative varieties of interest for
commercial grape and wine production. This stems from the possibility of replanting due to the harsh winter conditions received the past two years. The conference continues Monday afternoon with excellent presentations in the general session from several of our featured speakers. Tuesday will consist of full-day concurrent sessions with technical presentations in both viticulture and enology. Complete details about the program can be found at:

Planted Vines and Trees Qualify for Bonus Depreciation
By Paul Neiffer, the Farm CPA

It is not often that I post on orchards or vineyards, but one of the new provisions from the tax extenders bill is the ability for orchards and vineyards to deduct 50% of the cost of trees or vines in the year of planting instead of the year the plant is placed into service. The Income Tax Code normally requires all of the costs of planting an orchard or vineyard where it takes at least two years to reach production to be capitalized. These costs include the plants, all of the direct input costs (fertilizer, chemicals, etc.), indirect costs such as labor, depreciation, etc. These costs are accumulated and once a commercial crop is harvested, the farmer is allowed to start depreciating the trees or vines over 10 years and take bonus depreciation at that time.

However, the farmer now has an election that they can make at the time of planting to deduct 50% of the plant costs for any plantings after 2015 and before 2020 (2018 - 40% and 2019 -30%). If the farmer makes this election, they are prevented from taking bonus depreciation on all of the other costs that are placed in service in a later year. Therefore, it may be wise to not make the election in the year of planting.

As an example, assume an orchardist plants 100 acres of high density orchard in 2016 and spends $500,000 on plants. Over the next three years, he incurs total costs of $2.5 million on all direct and indirect costs on the orchard. He can elect to expense $250,000 in 2016 and then start to depreciate the remaining $2.75 million ($250,000 remaining plant costs plus the $2.5 million of other costs) in 2019 over 10 years. If he had not made the election in 2016, he would be able to deduct $900,000 in 2019 using 30% bonus depreciation with the remaining $2.1 million being depreciated over 10 years. If the trees were placed in service in 2018, $1.2 million of bonus depreciation would have been available. Also, if bonus depreciation is elected in 2016, the farmer likely would not qualify for Section 179 and in our example, they are not entitled to Section 179 anyway since they are over the $2.5 million (indexed to inflation) threshold.

There are cases where this might be a good election for orchards and vineyards, however, care must be taken to make sure you actually improve your after-tax cash flow.

OSU’s Agricultural Outlook Webinar Provides Insights for 2016
by: Chris Bruynis, Assistant Professor & Extension Educator

What’s ahead for farmers and agriculture businesses in 2016? Ohio State University’s Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Developmental Economics (AEDE) and Ohio State University Extension, both located in the College of Food, Agricultural, Environmental Sciences, will be hosting an agricultural outlook webinar on February 1, 2016, starting at 6:30 p.m. EST. Listen and learn from OSU faculty as they discuss the opportunities and challenges for the agricultural sector, and interpret the impact of recent policy decisions on the agricultural sector. Registration cost is $10/person and can be paid for with a major credit card. Registration can be completed on-line at https://www.regonline.com/AgOutlook2016 and is limited to 200 registrants. Webinar log-in information will be sent to all registrants closer to the event. There will be a period previous to the webinar for participants to test their connections and technology.
Topics that will be covered along with presenters include:

- Examining Land Values, Rents, Crop Input Costs & Margins in 2016 – Barry Ward, OSU Extension Leader in Ag Production Management
- President Obama’s Clean Power Plan and Ohio – Brent Sohngen, OSU Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics
- Grain Markets in 2016 – Matt Roberts, OSU Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics

These presentations will provide excellent information and insights that will benefit farmers and agricultural leaders as they make plans for 2016 and beyond. Direct questions to Chris Bruynis, OSU Extension at bruynis.1@osu.edu or 740-702-3200.

**Agronomic Crop Research Experience (ACRE) Summer Interns Sought for 2016**

The Ohio State University Agronomic Crops Team is continuing a new summer program in 2016 aimed at providing a rich training experience to undergraduate students in a diversity of disciplines related to agronomic crop research. These Agronomic Crop Research Experience (ACRE) Interns will support OSU on-farm research, by being placed in strategic locations or hubs of research throughout the state. They will work to help facilitate better integration of research, education and outreach overall.

Specifically, the ACREs program strives to:

- Provide valuable, hands-on training to undergraduate students in a variety of agronomic crops disciplines to prepare them for careers in extension, research or industry
- Provide a network of research assistants to help collect data from on-farm field trials throughout the state, more effectively expanding on-farm research capabilities
- Enable greater independent research initiatives by county educators

The primary responsibilities of the ACRE interns will be to assist with crop scouting, sample collection, field data collection, laboratory analysis, data entry, field plot maintenance and crop reporting. Other activities related to research, extension and outreach are also likely, including administrative and clerical work. ACREs interns will form a cohort and will meet semi-regularly for trainings and to discuss the work they completed and any challenges faced. These trainings will happen at different locations throughout the state.

The 2016 ACRE location hubs are listed below. Note that there is an office location listed for each hub, but this location may be flexible and an intern could be based at another OSU extension office within that hub.

1. Fulton, Defiance, Williams and Paulding Counties, main office likely in Wauseon
2. Wood County, main office likely in Bowling Green
3. Trumbull, Ashtabula, Geauga and Mahoning Counties, main office likely in Cortland
4. Darke, Miami, Mercer and Auglaize Counties, main office likely in Greenville
5. Madison, Champaign and Fayette Counties, main office likely in London
6. Ross County, main office likely in Chillicothe
7. Knox, Delaware, Morrow and Licking Counties, main office likely in Mt Vernon
8. Wayne and Tuscarawas Counties, main office likely in Wooster
The ACRE program will last approximately 12-14 weeks. A mandatory, 2 day training will be held in Wooster, on May 11-12th and the program will finish around Aug 12th – 19th, 2016. Interested students should be 1) currently enrolled in an undergraduate program, 2) just finishing their undergraduate degree this semester, or 3) planning on starting graduate school this fall. Applicants must be able to work independently. They should be professionally motivated to help farmers make research-based management decisions. Students must have a valid driver’s license, a reliable personal vehicle and must be willing to travel extensively over the duration of the summer. All mileage will be reimbursed at the standard University rate ($0.54 per mile). These internships are paid, full-time positions that will last for 12-14 weeks. Pay will be $11 per hour at 38 hours per week. There should be some flexibility for taking vacation depending on student interest, workload and county educator need. Applications should be submitted by January 29th 2016 as a single pdf file to Steve Culman at culman.2@osu.edu.

A Survey for Ohio Farmers with Grain Storage Bins
Dee Jepsen, OSU Extension, State Ag Safety Leader & Yang Geng, Research Assistant

Managing and marketing crops has become as much an art as it is a science. It is an important skill for Ohio farmers to understand how their stored grain facilities operate for optimum grain quality. Out of condition grain is an economic concern for cash grain operators. Out of condition grain is also a health and safety risk for Ohio farmers.

From the health perspective, grain dust is considered an organic dust. It contains large particles that enter the airway and cause cumulative lung damage. Moldy grain contains various spores and mycotoxins that cause even more damage to the body. Current grain handling practices allow the opportunity for workers to have exposure to grain dust. From the safety perspective, on-farm storage systems present certain dangers for the farm worker. Grain storage systems are unique and vary between their construction type, storage capacity, and drying system. Management practices also vary with these systems, everything from moisture content at harvest, length of time the commodity is held before marketing, seed hybrid, and external air temperature and humidity.

This is a study to help understand Ohio farmers’ on-farm grain storage systems. A portion of this study was funded by the Ohio Bureau of Worker’s Compensation Program to understand the health and safety risks workers face while working around stored grain.

By completing this survey, you will begin to provide information that will be used for future educational programs. Taking part in this survey is totally voluntary and will take approximately 10-15 minutes. You will not be asked to provide any personal identifying information, making your answers anonymous. To take the survey, please paste the URL below into your internet browser: https://osu.ax1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_00cx8atxQIndAfH. A PDF version of the survey is also available by contacting David Marrison at marrison.2@osu.edu

We appreciate your consideration to supply information that will create an accurate picture of the practices used on Ohio grain facilities. Ultimately, this information will be used to develop better training programs for our cash grain commodity.

2016 Ag Day Sponsors Sought
On May 13, 2016 Ashtabula County will be hosting an Agriculture Day for nearly 1,100 members of the class of 2026 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds. The goal of program is to educate first graders on where their food comes from and to showcase the different types of agricultural commodities which are being grown in Ashtabula County. OSU Extension is currently seeking sponsors for this year’s event.

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

The cost of hosting this event is over $10,000 (both monetary and in-kind) and without the support of many this program would not have been possible. To help fund the 2016 Ag Day we are offering 5 levels of sponsorship. These are:

- **Platinum Sponsorship** - $1,000 and over
- **Gold Sponsorship** - $500 to $999
- **Silver Sponsorship** - $250 to $499
- **Bronze Sponsorship** - $100 to $249
- **Friends of Ag Day** - $1 to $99

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

**2016 Ohio Beef Cattle Webinar Series- Watch it in Ashtabula County**
The Ashtabula County Extension office and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association would like to participate in the 2016 Ohio Beef Cattle Webinar Series during the winter of 2016. The free webinar series will be held on Tuesday evenings, January 19, February 2 and February 16, 2016 with each session beginning at 7:00 p.m. The programs will address some of the most important issues currently facing Ohio's beef industry. Rapidly changing forces are constantly shaping the beef industry's landscape and successful producers need to stay abreast of changes to remain competitive.

The school begins on January 19, 2016 with a focus on outlook, marketing and risk management. Dr. Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Livestock Marketing Specialist, will kick off the program with his insight into the beef cattle market outlook. Sam Roberts of United Producers Inc. will offer suggestions on market risk management and capturing profitable pricing opportunities in the coming year. The February 2, 2016 session will address management priorities for profitable beef production. Members of the OSU Extension Beef Team will address important concepts including calving windows, genetic choices, breeding management, crossbreeding and economic traits that will impact profit potential. The series will conclude on February 16, 2016 with a focus squarely on the end product. Dr. Lyda Garcia, Assistant Professor of Meat Sciences at The Ohio State University, will demonstrate carcass fabrication into primal and sub-primal cuts and discuss how quality and yield differences establish beef values.

There is no fee to attend these webinars at the Ashtabula County Extension office. For more information, call the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

**Beef Cattle Pasture Management Workshop to be held on February 25 in Jefferson**

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association would like to invite beef producers to “Beef Cattle Pasture Management” workshop on Thursday, February 25, 2016 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the OSU Extension - Ashtabula County office located at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson, Ohio. Area beef producers and 4-H/FFA youth are encouraged to attend this workshop.

During this program, producers will learn the strategies for effective pasture management and how to control troublesome pasture weeds. Learn the key steps to take in getting rid of profit-robbing weeds. Effective pasture management can lead to increased profitability.
This program will feature Breanna Lawyer, Range & Pasture Sales Trainee: Eastern Vegetation Management District for Dow AgroSciences. Breanna’s duties with Dow AgroSciences includes assist farmers in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio with their pasture management needs. She received her Bachelor’s Degree in Agricultural Business and Management from Purdue University and an Associate’s Degree in Ag Business from Black Hawk College.

This workshop is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. More information about this program can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

Preparation Class for Private Pesticide Applicator License Test to be held on February 4, 2016 in Burton, Ohio OSU Extension in Northeast Ohio will be providing a training session to help farmers prepare for the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Private Pesticide Applicator’s Exam. This class is not required but is a great opportunity for applicators to learn what they will need to study for the test. This class will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2016 from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. This session will be held in Burton, Ohio at the Geauga County Extension office. The registration fee for this program is $35/person, which includes all CORE study materials. Call the Geauga County Extension office at 440-834-4656 to register or for more information.

A Hardier Honeybee That Fights Back By Biting Back
By Lou Blouin is a reporter for The Allegheny Front
Source: http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/01/11/462391470/a-hardier-honeybee-that-fights-back-by-biting-back

Keeping honeybees healthy has become a challenge for beekeepers. One main reason is a threat that has been wiping out bees since the late 1980s: the varroa mite. "It's a parasitic mite that feeds on the blood of adult bees and on the brood. It also transmits virus, and it suppresses the immune system of the bees," explains Penn State honeybee expert Maryann Frazier. It's basically like having a 6-pound house cat attached to your side, sucking the life out of you. These mites wiped out colonies across the world. And treatments were, and still are, pretty limited. In fact, the way most beekeepers treat bees for mites sounds a little crazy: They actually spray bees — which are, of course, insects — with low-dose insecticides. The hope is they'll kill the mites, but not the bees.

"But you can imagine how difficult it is to control a mite on a bee with a pesticide," Frazier says. Still, the strategy has worked well enough to at least give colonies a fighting chance. ut a co-op of about 100 beekeepers stretching from Michigan to Tennessee is trying a different approach. On his farm near Slippery Rock in Western Pennsylvania, beekeeper Jeff Berta lights a smoker to check on one of his all-star queen bees. This queen, he says, could be the future of honeybees in Pennsylvania. "No. 18, there," Berta says, pointing to a queen with a little fluorescent yellow tag on it. "That little disc there with the '18' on it, we call those our NASCAR bees because they have numbers on them."

No. 18 is bit of a science experiment, funded with money from the USDA. This queen's mother is from a Vermont colony that survived disease and cold winters. And then Berta had her artificially inseminated by Purdue University scientists who were raising bees that demonstrated a unique, mite-fighting grooming behavior. "The bees will take the mite and they will bite the legs and will chew on the mite," Berta says. "And if they bite a leg off of the mite, the mite will bleed to death. So the bees are actually fighting back. That's the type of genetic line we're after right now." So now with every egg No. 18 lays, she passes on those leg-biting behaviors — making a colony that can rid itself of mites naturally, with no help from pesticides. It's a huge breakthrough.
Bucking the paradigm in the beekeeping world, beekeeper and breeder Jeff Berta doesn't use pesticides to control mites on his honeybee colonies near Slippery Rock, Pa. Instead, he breeds bees that have natural grooming behaviors that keep colonies free of mites. But the breeding project can't end there. Because Berta can't artificially inseminate every queen, any descendants of No. 18 that turn into queens themselves will most likely just fly off and mate with any old drones within a few miles. That means if Berta's beekeeping neighbors don't have strong bees, too, they can easily dilute his carefully selected lines.

"So you can't produce a stock and say, 'Now I'm done! And that was it! Now we can sell it everywhere!' " says Penn State bee geneticist Christina Grozinger, who works with Berta. "You have to constantly re-select and constantly have to have people very interested in working as part of this effort." That's why Berta and the co-op of beekeepers happily give eggs from their best colonies to their neighbors and swap queens to try out new genetics. It's all part of shifting the paradigm from a system where beekeepers simply buy new bees every year to a lasting neighborhood of bees that can slowly create real survivors. "There really isn't any bee that laid the golden egg," Berta says. "Genetics with honeybees is more like a river, and the river is always changing."

**USDA: New Avian Influenza Strain Found in Indiana**

By: Alison Rice  

A new strain of the deadly avian influenza virus has been found in a commercial turkey flock in Indiana, according to the USDA. The farm has been quarantined, and officials have already begun depopulating the flock. According to the Indiana Board of Animal Health, there are 65 commercial poultry flocks within a 10-kilometer radius of the affected operation.

"This finding of highly pathogenic H7N8 is unique to Indiana and the nation,” said Indiana State Veterinarian Bret D. Marsh, DVM. “This strain is unrelated to those identified in the Upper Midwest in 2015, nor is it related to the HPAI case identified in a Northeastern Indiana backyard poultry flock that was affected last May.” The previous strain, known as H5N2, resulted in the depopulation of more than 49 million birds, including chickens and turkeys. It is thought to spread via wild migratory waterfowl and has not been detected in a U.S. flock since June 2015.

USDA now has a vaccine for that older strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N2), but U.S. poultry producers have been reluctant to use it; they are concerned that vaccine worries will cause countries to close their doors to imports of U.S. chicken.

Indiana state officials say they are taking this new avian flu outbreak seriously. “Indiana is one of the largest poultry states in America, and I have directed all relevant agencies to bring the full resources of the state of Indiana to bear on containing and resolving the issue as quickly as possible,” said Governor Mike Pence. “Multiple state agencies have been heavily focused for nearly a year on the necessary steps in this type of event, including the State Board of Animal Health, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Department of Homeland Security, Indiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana State Poultry Association, and several private sector partners. Hoosiers can be assured that we are taking all precautions to contain the situation and minimize the effects to Indiana’s robust poultry industry.”

Such disease outbreaks can be financially and emotionally devastating for producers and local economies. Economically, the 2015 bird flu epidemic cost an estimated $1 billion, with Minnesota and Iowa the most significantly affected. According to the Indiana Board of Animal Health, the state's $2.5 billion poultry industry ranks fourth nationally in turkey production, first in duck production, third in eggs, and is a significant producer of broiler chickens. It also employs more than 14,000 people. USDA urged all poultry producers, regardless of whether they manage a small backyard flock or a big commercial chicken or turkey farm, to renew their biosecurity efforts. (Producers can find a [biosecurity self-assessment and more information by clicking here.](#) )
2016 Winter Extension Program Dates
The following programs have been scheduled for Northeast Ohio farmers this upcoming winter. Complete registration flyers can be found at: http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines

Northeast Ohio Pesticide Recertification & Fertilizer Certification Sessions
January 15, 2016 at the Williamsfield Community Center
January 29, 2016 at the Geauga County Extension Office
February 10, 2016 at the Trumbull County Extension Office
February 26, 2016 at the Perry Community Center

State Beef Webinar
January 19, 2016 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office
February 2, 2016 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office
February 16, 2016 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office

2016 Northeast Ohio Agronomy School
February 23, 2016

Northeast Ohio Winter Beef Clinic
February 25, 2016 at the Ashtabula County Extension Office

2016 Northeast Ohio Winter Grape School
March 16, 2016

2016 Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet
Saturday, March 19, 2016 at the Lenox Community Center

2016 Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show
Saturday, April 16, 2016 at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds

PLEASE SHARE...this newsletter with farmers or others who are interested in agricultural topics in Ashtabula & Trumbull Counties. Past issues can be located at: https://go.osu.edu/ag-news. Please tell your friends and neighbors to sign up for the list. CONTACT: marrison.2@osu.edu

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