

NORTHEAST OHIO AGRI-CULTURE NEWSLETTER

Your Weekly Agriculture Update for
Ashtabula, Portage and Trumbull Counties

July 5, 2022

The NE Ohio Extension family is growing! Trumbull County 4-H Educator Ashlee Meardith welcomed daughter Layla into the world on June 23rd. Congratulations Meardith family!



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Hello Northeast Ohio Counties!

I hope the rain found its way to your corner of NE Ohio today. It is much needed with corn and other crops starting to show signs of stress. Vegetable and fruit crops are also struggling, and blossom end rot may be a common issue this summer for our veggies.

We're gearing up for the Trumbull County Fair next week! Stop out to the fair to see the animals, rides, exhibits, and vendors. If you're looking for a great way to support 4-H youth, be sure to attend the livestock auction on May 16th. You can read the full list of events in the 2022 Fair Book here:

<https://trumbullcountyfair.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-Fairbook.pdf>

Lee Beers	Andrew Holden	Angie Arnold
Trumbull County	Ashtabula County	Portage County
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Dianne Shoemaker signs off on a career filled with constant change

By Dianne Shoemaker

Source: <https://www.farmanddairy.com/columns/dianne-shoemaker-signs-off-on-a-career-filled-with-constant-change/724376.html>



After more than 30 years with Ohio State University Extension, Dianne Shoemaker, field specialist in dairy production economics, is retiring June 30. (Farm and Dairy file photo) “What a cool job Dan Cowdrey has!” I thought as I left the Highland County Ag Extension Agent’s office in 1982.

He had reviewed the ration I calculated for the herd of 60 Holsteins I had just started to manage. Four years later, I walked into the Columbiana County Extension office on Saltwell Road in Lisbon to start my own really cool job as the agriculture agent. This job was a gift in many ways, as it also brought Steve and I close to his family in Stark County and an opportunity to begin our own dairy farm.

At that time Ohio’s dairy landscape was crowded with dairy farms milking a few cows to 100 or so cows. In April of 1986 there were 388,000 dairy cows in Ohio that produced

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421 million pounds of milk that month. Many cows were still housed in bank barns, some with attached sheds or in shorter, solid-sidewalled pole barns. Time went on

We learned more about managing cows and farms. Milk markets changed, and herd sizes grew. One of the best things that happened to many of those bank and pole barns was the older generation finally going on vacation. During those vacations more than one of those barns “lost” siding as the benefits of ventilation and unimpeded airflow at cow level were better understood. The younger generation got tired of waiting for the older folks to jump on board and just opened things up.

Change

If I had to choose two words to describe the dairy industry over the past 36 years, “constant change” would be my pick. Many changes were relatively easy and made sense, some were hard to see the whys or the benefits, especially when we had little control over the change and had to adapt or figure out what opportunities might materialize.

A few changes that pop to mind:

Tiestalls to freestalls;
Upright silos to bags to bunkers;
Small square to large square bales;
“Mixing” in conveyors to stationary then portable feed mixers;
Whatever light there was to added and controlled lighting;
No ventilation to open sidewalls, ridge vents, fans and sprinklers;
Variable speed milk compressors — saved the hearing of many;
Milking robots from clunky to practical;
Manure: waste to nutrient;
Calf management from surviving to thriving;
Age at first calving from 30 to 36 months to 24 and under;
Raise every heifer to beef crossbreeding and selecting heifers for replacement;
Milk prices set by local markets to international influences;
Many milk cooperatives, processors, buyers to few;
Growth of animal welfare, environmental impact and consumer input issues;
Taking a milk price to pricing and risk management options;
No computers to computers and apps for farm and animal management;
Many input sources consolidating into fewer with less competition;
Continuously increasing herd sizes.

The consolidation of Ohio’s dairy industry has been hard. Hard for the families that no longer milk cows, hard for the many small ag businesses that no longer support the dairy industry. Both of these losses are felt in communities across the state.

Milk pricing is a mess and frustrating for all involved. Can it be fixed? It can certainly be changed with that goal in mind, but it will be a long and tiring process with neither producers nor processors completely satisfied in the end. Compromise will be needed on both sides, but an understandable, transparent system will go a long way toward building a system that could work for the next 30 years.

In April of this year, Ohio had 250,000 cows that produced 460 million pounds of milk; 35% fewer cows produced 9% more milk than in 1986. Advancements in genetics, management and markets drove that change.

The beauty of Ohio's dairy industry is that there is not a single recipe for success in the midst of this ongoing change. While the trend will continue toward fewer and larger farms, size does not guarantee success. Good cows, good management, good people, good finances, planning and a willingness to accept and adapt to changes we cannot control are all important factors.

It has been an honor and a privilege to work with farm families and industry professionals across Ohio, being welcomed onto farms and into homes, barns and classrooms. A next generation of extension educators and specialists are ready to walk with Ohio's dairy industry into the future. To work together on issues and opportunities. To learn from each other. Wishing you all the best in the future and looking forward to seeing how our industry grows and changes in the next 36 years.

What Was That Early Maturing Grass In My Hay Fields?

By Chris Penrose

Source: <https://u.osu.edu/beef/2022/06/29/what-was-that-early-maturing-grass-in-my-hay-fields/>

Did you notice a very early maturing grass in your hay fields this spring? I have seen it for years and it continues to spread. About the time or just before bluegrass heads out, this grass matures as well. What you really notice is a small, tight clustered seedhead and a stem that is rather short.

For years, I called it cheat grass and for some reason, after I told a farmer what I thought it was, I went back and checked. I quickly realized that it was not cheat grass and I could not figure out what it was. So I did what you are supposed to do – I called a county educator, Clif Little from Guernsey County. When I explained it to him, he quickly told me that it was Sweet Vernalgrass. Then I check out the name and he was exactly right. For 25 years, I have told farmers the wrong name – for that I am sorry, but now I know and I hope you do too.

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After doing some searching on it, it tends to be more prevalent in lower fertility hay fields. It can be a winter annual or a perennial grass. There is mixed information on palatability but my cows have consumed it for years in my hay. In fact, it used to be sold in some hay mixtures. It gives off a fragrant smell when cut or crushed. It gets a couple feet tall, but most of what I cut is just the stems and seedheads, likely making it a much lower quality hay. The thin stem allows it to cure faster but we don't want to rush baling it as improperly cured Sweet Vernalgrass hay can produce dicumarol, the same thing moldy sweet clover produces and can be deadly to livestock.

With all the unwanted plants springing up, this is one that should not be an issue, especially if the hay is well cured. I just think it is a sign that we could most likely be growing something better.



Sweet Vernalgrass. Photo: mt.gov

Scouting Notes From the Wayne County IPM Program

Here are our weekly observations and notes from the fields around Wayne County from the week of June 20-24, 2022.

Vegetable Crops

Now is a critical time to be monitoring your cucurbit crops for cucumber beetles. Early populations may not seem as evident due to the presence of insecticide in treated seed, however, as the efficacy of the seed treatment diminishes, the cucumber beetle feeding will begin to increase. The threshold for beetles while the plants are in the 2-4 leaf stage is 1 beetle per plant. Once the plant is above the 4-leaf stage, the threshold increases to 3 beetles per plant. The greatest chance for impactful feeding damage and bacterial wilt infection via the cucumber beetle occurs during early season feeding.

Also, of note in cucurbits, the excess moisture and warm conditions allowed for development of some phytophthora cases. If you suspect that you have plants infected by this pathogen, avoid spreading it in your fields by removing and destroying infected fruit and plant material. An integrated approach to managing this disease includes practices such as avoiding excess water, sufficient crop rotations and fungicide treated seed. Additional findings in cucurbits included squash bugs being found this week in an early planting of yellow squash.

Continue to monitor onions for thrips populations. The recent heavy rain may have prevented populations from building, however, hot dry weather, combined with the increased size and number of leaves can provide the opportunity for thrips numbers to escalate rapidly.

In tomatoes our scouts noted some observations of early blight and Septoria.

Remember to check your crops for any signs of foliar diseases, especially with the amount of soil splashing that took place in the last few weeks. Bacterial and fungal diseases can be spread on the lower leaves of plants when heavy rains splash soil and pathogens onto the foliage. Overall, stress from high temperatures has been evident in a majority of the crops that we are scouting.



Squash bug found in Wayne County on yellow squash. Cucumber beetles feeding in the background. F. Becker, 2022.

Small Fruit and Orchards

Spotted winged drosophila have been caught in traps around Wayne County. As we move out of strawberry season into raspberries/blackberries/blueberries, the SWD populations will begin to increase leading to possible infestations in ripening brambles and blueberries.

In apples, we continued to find strikes of fire blight. Conditions have been ideal for fire blight development, although dryer conditions may hinder further development. This week we continued to find aphids in apple trees. Our IPM program identified populations of green apple aphids in several orchards as well as a case of wooly apple aphids. Both aphid species can cause significant damage at this time of year. Accordingly, diligent scouting is a crucial aspect to not allowing either of these aphid species from getting out

of hand. The heavy rains likely knocked back some of these aphid populations, but it will be important to monitor aphid populations as dry conditions take hold.

We have had sustained catches (over threshold) of both Codling Moth and Oriental Fruit Moth in apple and peach orchards, respectively. Over the last week, both Codling Moth and Oriental Fruit Moth populations have been trending downward, however, numbers have still exceeded the thresholds.

Now is the time to be managing early season diseases in apples. Scab, rust and powdery mildew are the three main diseases of concern at this point in the season.

Once strawberry harvest is over, it is a good time to consider renovation of the patch. The goals in renovation are to reduce plant numbers by narrowing the rows, remove old foliage (reduces diseases), control weeds, and reduce insect pests. After renovation, regular irrigation and weed control are essential. High yields next year depend on having large, healthy, vigorous plants when fruit buds are initiated in late summer. We have started catching grape berry moth in our traps.



An area of yellow squash plants lost due to phytophthora, F. Becker, 2022.

Estate Planning Without Using Wills or Trusts

By Robert Moore

When we think of estate planning our thoughts usually go to a will or trust. However, in some situations, an effective estate plan can be implemented without the use of a will or trust. Using transfer on death or payable on death beneficiary designations, for some people, can be an adequate estate plan.



A transfer on death or payable on death designation can be added to almost any asset with a title. Transfer on death is used more for tangible assets such as land and vehicles while payable on death is used more for intangible assets such as financial accounts and life insurance. Both designations do the same thing – upon death,

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ownership is transfer from the deceased to the designated beneficiary outside of probate. This process of transferring ownership at death is usually simple and relatively easy.

The strategy of using beneficiary designations as the primary estate planning tool is best used when the distribution plan of assets is simple. For example, when the deceased's assets will be divided equally among their children. Distributions plans that include more involved schemes such as unequal distributions, buy outs, leases or rights of first refusals are too complicated to use just beneficiary designations. In those situations, a trust-based plan will likely be needed. Using beneficiary designations as the primary estate planning strategy only fits a narrow band of farmers, but for those farmers and it can be an effective and relatively inexpensive plan.

Consider the following example. Mom and Dad's farming operation is an LLC that holds farm machinery, livestock, and crops. They own 200 acres in their names. Their other assets include a bank account, retirement account and life insurance. At Mom and Dad's death, they want all of their assets to go to their two children equally. Their net worth is \$4 million.

In this example, the first thing to notice is that Mom and Dad are well under the federal estate tax limit. So, their estate plan does not need to be designed around minimizing estate taxes. Second, their plan is simple. Everything goes to their two children equally. Lastly, the assets they own are all titled assets that can include death beneficiary designations.

Mom and Dad can title their LLC ownership transfer on death to the children. Upon their deaths, the LLC ownership interests will transfer to the children outside of probate. The transfer is done with a few pieces of paper. The land can be made transfer on death by recording a Transfer on Death Affidavit. Upon Mom and Dad's death, the children will record an affidavit with a death certificate and title is transferred – again, without probate. The children can be added as the payable on death beneficiaries of the financial accounts and life insurance. After death, the children will file paperwork with the financial institutions and funds will be transferred to them outside of probate. A \$4 million estate has been transferred without the need to use a will or trust and probate has been avoided.

While this strategy does not use a will or trust for the transfer of assets, it is still a good idea to have a will as a backup. In the above example, Mom and Dad execute wills that state all of their assets go to their children equally. The will is there in case a beneficiary designation is in error or an asset is overlooked and must go through probate. The goal is not to use a will but there should be one as a backup just in case Mom and Dad forgot to add a transfer on death designation to the old livestock trailer that they haven't used in five years.

The following assets can all have transfer on death or payable on death designations added to their title: vehicles, titled trailers, trucks, boats, real estate, bank accounts, financial accounts, life insurance, stocks, and business entities. Assets such as livestock, grain, crops and machinery are untitled so a transfer on death designation cannot be added. However, transferring those untitled assets into an LLC is a great way to essentially convert untitled assets to titled assets. After the untitled assets are transferred to the LLC, the LLC ownership can include a transfer on death designation.

When considering estate plans, farmers who have relatively simple plans and can add death beneficiary designations to all or most of their assets may not need a complicated will or trust. The beneficiary designations can be the primary estate plan with a simple will as backup. This strategy is effective, minimizes legal costs and avoids probate. As stated above, this strategy is not for everyone, but it should be considered. For more complicated plans or for high-net-worth individuals, a trust may be needed.

Dean's Charity Steer Show partners with Ronald McDonald House at Ohio State Fair

Source: <https://cfaes.osu.edu/news/articles/dean's-charity-steer-show-partners-with-ronald-mcdonald-house-ohio-state-fair>

COLUMBUS—The Dean's Charity Steer Show, an event that benefits Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Central Ohio, returns to the Ohio State Fair in 2022 after a two-year COVID-inspired hiatus. Hosted by The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES), it will be held from 2–4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 2, in the Cooper Arena at the Ohio Expo Center and State Fair.



“This exciting event brings together our community to celebrate agriculture and children, both for our 4-H youth as well as children benefiting from the Ronald McDonald House,” said Cathann A. Kress, Ohio State vice president for agricultural administration and

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dean of CFAES. “Every dollar we raise means families can stay together only steps away from their hospitalized child during one of the most stressful times of their lives.” Each year, more than 82,000 nights of rest are provided to families of seriously ill children by the Columbus Ronald McDonald House, the second largest Ronald McDonald House in the world. The facility provides a home away from home for families facing a child’s illness and hospitalization.

Currently, the Columbus Ronald McDonald House is undergoing a major expansion, more than doubling the size of the facility. Once completed, it will boast 202 guest rooms, a new kitchen and dining facility, new staff offices, and a community event room. It will once again be the largest Ronald McDonald House in the world after the expansion.

To raise funds for RMHC, 11 celebrity exhibitors, most of whom have no livestock experience, will not only show a steer during the Dean’s Charity Steer Show, but will also compete to see who can raise the most money. Most exhibitors will team with a local media personality as well as an experienced 4-H livestock family and their steer, and will practice with them before entering the show ring.

Families and 4-H youth, most from central Ohio, will participate and represent the counties of Clark, Fairfield, Gallia, Geauga, Highland, Muskingum, Stark, Tuscarawas, Warren, and Wayne.

Celebrity exhibitors will include Troy Balderson, public servant; Matt Harper, McDonald’s owner/operator; Tom Feeney, executive chairman, Belron North America; Clark Kellogg, former Ohio State and NBA player and CBS Sports college basketball analyst; Bob Kendrick, anchor, ABC-6 News; Rick Ricart, Ricart Automotive; Jane Scott, executive director, Columbus Metropolitan Club; Ryan Smith, president, University of Rio Grande; Gene Smith, senior vice president and athletic director, Ohio State; Bill Patterson, president, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation; and Kirt Walker, chief executive officer, Nationwide.

Media personalities will include Joe Boxer, host, WCOL radio; Angela An, news anchor, WBNS-10 TV; Matt Barnes, morning co-anchor, NBC-4 TV; Cameron Fontana, entertainment reporter and host, ABC 6/FOX 28/CW, *Good Day Columbus*; Kayla Hanley, morning radio personality, 92.3 WCOL radio; Tim Irr, news anchor, WSAZ-TV News Channel 3, Huntington, West Virginia; Ty Higgins, senior director of communications, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation; and Dale Minyo, farm broadcaster, Ohio Ag Net.

More than 900 spectators attended the inaugural Dean’s Charity Steer Show in 2019, and nearly 8,000 tuned in to watch via livestream on Facebook. Donation amounts ranged from 81 cents to \$15,000, with a total of \$152,000 raised for RMHC.

Located across the street from Nationwide Children's Hospital, the Columbus Ronald McDonald House provides not only lodging, but also meals, a place to rest, laundry facilities, an exercise room, informal gathering areas, and activities for siblings of hospitalized children.

The Dean's Charity Steer Show is coordinated by CFAES, the Telhio Credit Union, and the Ohio Cattlemen's Association, and it is held in partnership with the Ohio Expo Center and State Fair.

To learn more and to donate to your favorite celebrity exhibitor or media personality, visit give.osu.edu/deanscharitysteershow.