OSU EXTENSION

NORTHEAST OHIO AGRI-CULTURE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER
Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Spring is officially here (well at least by the calendar!). We had a really nice dairy banquet this past Saturday night at the Lenox Community Center. Congratulations to Calla Mazzaro who was selected as the 2015 Ashtabula County Dairy Princess. I am also very proud that three of our local dairy herds were ranked #1 for 2014 in the state for their breed in milk production. Congratulations to Alfa-Creek Brown Swiss Farm of Andover Township for being the 1st place Brown Swiss herd in Ohio, Alfa-Creek Farms of Andover Township for being the 1st place Holstein herd in the State and Ringbyre Jersey Farm for being the 1st place Jersey herd in the State. Area Beef Producers will want to make sure they take time to attend the April 8, 2015 Beef Clinic. We are very pleased that Dr. Lyda Garcia will traveling up to present on the science of producing high quality meat cuts. Hope to see many of you there. Have a good week!

David Marrison, AG Educator

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The Science of Producing High Quality Meat Cuts” Workshop to be held on April 8

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association would like to invite Northeast Ohio beef producers to attend “The Science of Producing High Quality Meat Cuts” workshop on Wednesday, April 8, 2015 from 7:00 to 9:00 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.

This workshop will focus on understanding the science behind producing high quality meat cuts. Learn more about how cattle breeds affect carcass quality, leanness, and quality grade. Learn more about beef carcass anatomy and the procedures for beef carcass grading and awarding premiums. Learn about beef palatability and how various cuts, grades and technologies may affect the eating experience of consumers. Attendees will also learn the factors affecting beef palatability and sensory evaluation.

This program will feature Dr. Lyda Garcia, OSU Extension Meat Science Specialist and Assistant Professor. Dr. Garcia joined the Department of Animal Sciences in February 2015. Prior to joining the Buckeye Family, Dr. Garcia was a Visiting Assistant Professor at Texas Tech University where she taught an undergraduate meat science course. At OSU, Dr. Garcia is responsible for teaching
undergraduate courses in meat science, advises undergraduate Animal Sciences students, and supervises the Meat Judging Team.

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. A programs flyer can be found at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events

65th Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet Successful
The 65th Annual Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet held on Saturday, March 21 at the Lenox Community Center was a great event with 100 persons in attendance. The participants were treated to a wonderful meal catered by “Up Scales Eats” and to a wide range of activities to celebrate a super year in our local dairy industry. During dinner, the crowd was treated to milk from the Rowdy Cow Creamery (Hastings Dairy in Geauga County).

We were pleased that Scott Higgins, Executive Director of the American Dairy Association-Mideast was the guest speaker for the event. Mr. Higgins gave an update on the ways the dairy check-off dollars are being leveraged with industry partners to increase milk consumption. He also spoke about the benefits of the Ohio Dairy Producers’ Association.

Once again this year, we had a couple of our Ashtabula County herds recognized for being Ohio Elite Herds. Congratulations to Alfa-Creek Brown Swiss Farm of Andover Township for being the 1st place Brown Swiss herd in Ohio, Alfa-Creek Farms of Andover Township for being the 1st place Holstein herd in the State and Ringbyre Jersey Farm for being the 1st place Jersey herd in the State. The most improved herd rotating trophy was awarded to Pine Grove Jersey Farm of Sheffield Township and the top Energy Corrected Milk (ECM) Herd Award went to Alfa-Creek Farms of Andover Township. Wilson Dairy Farm of Jefferson Township won the 2014 Low Somatic Cell Milk Quality Award.

Four farms were recognized for having top cows in Ashtabula County by breed and age. Alfa Creek Brown Swiss, Alfa Creek Farms, Ringbyre Jersey Farm, and Bossy’s Way were each recognized for having high producing cows in 2014. Congratulations to Bossy’s Way Farm for having the county’s top producing cow in 2014. Their aged Holstein cows gave 47,232 pounds of milk; this is almost 5,500 gallons of milk!

In 2000, the Ashtabula County Dairy Service Unit Board of Directors established an award entitled, “The Ashtabula County Farm Family of the Year.” This award is presented annually to a farm family that simply does things right. Milk production, genetics, herd health and community service are all factors that are considered. This year’s award winner was the John & Bev Struna Family from Williamsfield, Ohio. Congratulations to John, Bev and their daughters Andrea & Katie.

An additional highlight of the banquet was the crowning of the 2015 Ashtabula County Dairy Princess. Congratulations to Calla Mazzaro, daughter of Tom & Charity Mazzaro who was selected as the 2015 Dairy Princess and to Katie Stokes, daughter of Ken & Tammy Stokes as the runner-up. The Stuart Struna Memorial 4-H Extra Effort Award was also presented at the banquet. This award is given in the memory of Stuart Struna and is given to a 4-H member who shows dairy cows who goes above and beyond to help out during the Ashtabula County fair. Finalists recognized were: Kadi Scafuro and Joshua Butler from the Demark Pioneers 4-H Club; Aubrey Hane and Bailee Mazzaro from the Williamsfield Dairyaiders 4-H Club; and Tyler Britton from the Kids ‘n Cows 4-H Club. Congratulations to Bailee Mazzaro was the selected as overall winner for this award.
Congratulations are also extended to Joel Baldwin, Jason Brinker, and Lisa Kalas for being elected to serve a two-year term on the Dairy Service Unit Board of Directors. Thanks to Dave Priester who is retiring from the board after 6 years of service to the board.

We are extremely grateful to the following businesses who supported this year’s banquet. These supporters included: Ashtabula County Holstein Club, Barton, Keifer & Associates, Dean Dairy Products Company, Commodity Blender’s, Countryside Veterinary Clinic, Ohio DHI, Hoffman Milk Cartage, Western Reserve Farm Cooperative, Pine Grove Jersey Farm, Dairy Farmers of America, COBA Select Sires, Cold Springs Milk Cartage, Don Mihoci, Farm Credit, JR Hofstetter, Ashtabula County Holstein Club, Bortnick Tractor, Brinker Dairy, CAT, Cherry Valley Processing, Conneautville’s Farm Exchange, Hills Supply, Krulic Family, Krystowski Tractor Sales, Lenox Equipment, Marcy Equipment, Jaime Marrison, Pine Grove Jersey Farm, Matt & Olivia Springer, Paul Robinson & Company, Pezzuolo Insurance, Piper Processing, Ringbyre Jersey Farm, Rowdy Cow Creamery, Springer Dairy Farm, and Westford Milling.

**Ashtabula County Extension Office looking for Summer College Student Assistant**

OSU Extension in Ashtabula County is looking for a Summer College Student Assistant to assist with the summer 4-H Youth Development program. The purpose of this county based extension internship program is to provide an opportunity for a college student to gain workforce preparation skills to prepare them for success as they enter the first position of their professional careers. This summer position provides valuable pre-professional experience for educational and community based careers.

The Student Assistant will be provided with a variety of county-based Extension workforce experiences. Job responsibilities include but are not limited to: assisting the County Staff with Summer Youth Camps, Summer School Enrichment programs, and Junior Fair activities.

Applicants must have completed one year of college and have evidence of successful leadership experience in 4-H, school and/or community organizations. Candidates should be self-motivated, possess strong organizational skills and must be available to work a flexible schedule including occasional nights and weekends.

This student will be employed for a maximum of 15 weeks with proposed hourly wage is $9-$11 per hour depending on qualifications. Reimbursement for official job travel will be provided according to Extension travel policy. Pay will be on a bi-weekly basis. The successful applicant will be required to pass a criminal background check. Interested individuals should submit an employment application and resume (complete with reference list) to the Ashtabula County Extension Office. **The application deadline is April 15, 2015.** Please contact the Ashtabula County Extension Office at 440-576-9008 for more information.

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

OSU Extension State Specialists are starting a new summer program in 2015 aimed at providing a rich training experience to undergraduate students in a wide diversity of disciplines related to agronomic crop research. These Agronomic Crop Research Experience (ACRE) Interns will support on-farm research throughout the state, by being placed in strategic locations or hubs of on-farm research. **We are excited that one of the summer interns will be based out of the Ashtabula County Extension office for and will work in Ashtabula, Trumbull & Geauga Counties.**

The primary responsibilities of the ACREs 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. The ACRE program will last approximately 12 weeks, allowing some limited flexibility of the student to take a week off for vacation. A mandatory 2-3 day training will occur in Wooster starting on May 18 and the program will finish around August 14,
2015. College students interested in this program, should contact Steve Culman at culman.2@osu.edu. Applications are due by April 17th.

Deadline Nears for ARC/PLC Decision for Farm Bill
A reminder that March 31, 2015 is the last day for producers to make several important choices on federal safety net programs that could make a big difference for their farms through 2018. Producers need to finalize their decisions by March 31 on updating crop yield histories and reallocating base acres for new safety net programs as well as deciding which program – ARC or PLC – is the right one for their operation. If you don’t make a decision by the March 31 deadline, then you will be assigned Price Loss Coverage, the default program, and lose payments for losses incurred in 2014. However, if you complete your ARC or PLC election by the deadline, you will be protected against 2014 price or revenue losses. Avoid that end-of-the-month rush and make an appointment today with the Farm Service Agency.

Fertilizer Certification Session to be held on April 7 in Geauga County
Agricultural fertilizer applicator certification is now required for farmers who apply fertilizer to more than 50 acres of agricultural production grown primarily for sale. This requirement was signed into law in June, 2014, and also requires certification for commercial agricultural applicators. Farmers who have their fertilizer applied by co-ops or custom applicators are not required to be certified. Farmers and applicators need to attend a training course offered by Ohio State University Extension to become certified. Those who have a pesticide applicator license need to attend a two-hour fertilizer certification. If an applicator does not have a pesticide license, they will be required to attend a three-hour fertilizer certification.

The next three-hour certification program offered by the Northeast Ohio Extension offices will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2015 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Geauga County Extension office at 14269 Claridon-Troy Road, in Burton, Ohio. This free meeting will meet the certification requirements for those with and without a pesticide license. Pre-registration is required and online registration is available at http://nutrienteducation.osu.edu. Registration can also be made by calling the Geauga County Extension office at 440-834-4656. Additional sessions will held across Northeast Ohio through 2015.

Fertilizer is defined for the regulation as any substance containing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, or other plant nutrient in a dry or liquid formulation. All application types such as broadcast, side dress, sub-surface, knifing and other are included in the certification requirement. Lime and limestone are not included as fertilizer for the certification and farmers who only use starter fertilizer in their planter boxes are exempted. Applicators who are a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) or Ohio Certified Livestock Manager are not required to attend the training. The agriculture fertilizer certification is not required for manure applications as these are currently regulated.

Applicators who meet the criteria for the certification must attend training by September 30, 2017. The Ohio Department of Agriculture is the agency issuing the certification for agriculture fertilizer applications and information about the new certification can be found at: http://agri.ohio.gov

For more information about this training session or general materials for the agriculture fertilizer certification, visit http://nutrienteducation.osu.edu or call the Geauga County Extension office at 440-834-4656.
USDA Study Concludes Neonics Not Driving Bee Deaths—As White House Set to Announce ‘Bee Revival’ Plan
By: Jon Entine

Even as a special White House created task force is poised any day now to address concerns over supposedly vanishing honeybees, new research suggests that the very premise of the federal investigation may be misplaced.

Last summer, President Obama asked the Environmental Protection Agency to investigate conflicting reports that pesticides, and in particular a class of chemicals known as neonicotinoids, were the probable cause of mysterious bee deaths and declining numbers of beehives.

The latest headline on farmers’ critical pollinator? The numbers of beehives are actually growing, continuing a multi-year improvement—gradually repairing the damage wrought by the 2006 mass bee die off known as Colony Collapse Disorder. The Department of Agriculture announced late last week that honey production, which had been disrupted after CCD devastated the bee population nine years ago, continues to improve, up 14 percent. The total number of hives also increased again, by 100,000 or 4 percent, as it had increased the year before and the year before that. More to the point as to the acrimonious debate over whether and how much neonicotinoids are impacting bee health, the total number of beehives today is higher than it was in 1995 when neonics as they are often called had just come on the market.

The report also comes just days after a USDA-sponsored study concluded that widely promoted claims that neonics are the primary driver of been health problems seriously distort the scientific explanation as to why bees have struggled over the past decade.

Simple or ‘simplistic’ explanations for bee deaths?
Here are the data for the number of managed beehives in North America, showing the stabilizing situation even before last week’s 4 percent increase:

Sources: USDA and Statistics Canada

After a rocky few years as the CCD crisis unfolded, beehive numbers stabilized and then began a gradual improvement—and now stand at 20-year highs in North America and worldwide, having the eruption of CCD and the subsequent fall-off in over wintering bee hive counts has prompted understandable and justifiable concern. But–
while mainstream scientists warned against politicizing a complex and developing situation, advocacy groups coalesced around one rather simple—entomologists called it simplistic—explanation: bee deaths were caused by the growing use of neonicotinoids.

Neonicotinoids are a class of insecticides introduced in the 1990s precisely because they were thought to be less harmful to beneficial insects and humans than the aging chemicals they gradually came to replace. They are most often used by farmers who coat them on seeds, which then grow into plants that systemically fight pests. Even as the CCD’s concerns faded—scientists now believe it was a short-lived phenomenon that has occurred numerous times over the past few centuries—environmental groups continued to post thousands of blogs and stories citing one out-of-context study or another as the ‘definitive’ explanation for a mystery that most mainstream experts say is complex and not easily reducible to the kind of black hate/white hate kind of narrative that so appeals to advocacy groups.

The real cause of bee health problems is gradually coming into sharper focus. In the latest in a string of studies looking at the relationship of pesticides found in pollen to honey bee colony health, independent researchers, publishing in PLOS ONE, politely slammed many past studies that hyped pesticides, neonic in particular, as the likely driving cause of declining bee health.

The scientists—all independent and working in a cooperative agreement with the USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory—found that many past researchers often based their experiments on extremely high amounts of pesticides—far more than a bee would normally encounter in its life. They looked instead at field realistic doses of pesticides, although always testing at the high end of what bees might actually experience.

They deliberately fed honeybee colonies the neonic pesticide imidacloprid in a dose-response experiment based on real-world pesticide levels: 5 and 20 µg/kg doses are in the reported high range of residues present in pollen and nectar in seed-treated crops. They also included a 100 µg/kg dose as a worst-case exposure level, representing imidacloprid applied to flowering crops. (That level caused a large kill of bumblebees in a 2013 Oregon incident.) Bee exposure occurred over weeks—longer than bees are usually exposed to neonic.

What did they find? Even at the highest dose of pesticide exposure, the researchers found no difference in the performance of the treated and untreated hives. They found no evidence that imidacloprid affected foraging activity during and after exposure in their experiments.

Directly contradicting claims by advocacy groups whose complaints prompted the forming of the White House task force, the longer the time period the less pesticides were found. “Bee Death Study Clears Bayer’s Insecticide as Sole Cause [of CCD],” concluded Bloomberg in its summary analysis. “A widely used insecticide developed by Bayer AG and tied to deaths of honeybees isn’t the main cause of the fatalities, University of Maryland researchers said in a study that may weaken arguments used by environmentalists seeking to ban the chemical.”

Chensheng Lu’s conclusions discredited
The new study can also be seen as a direct rebuke of the controversial research by Chensheng Lu, a Harvard University environmental scientist who used doses 10-100 times higher than found in the real world to support his claim, accounted before the embarked on his research project, that neonic were the driving cause of CCD. Lu reached folk hero status among environmentalists last May after the Harvard School of Public Health launched a promotional campaign touting his latest, controversial research: “Study strengthens link between neonicotinoids and collapse of honey bee colonies,” a press release claimed.

News of the “definitive” study exploded on the Internet. Many environmental and tabloid journalists painted an alarmist picture based on Lu’s research: “New Harvard Study Proves Why The Bees Are All Disappearing,” “Harvard
University scientists have proved that two widely used neonicotinoids harm honeybee colonies,” and “Neonicotinoid Insecticide Impairs Winterization Leading to Bee Colony Collapse: Harvard Study” are typical examples of hundreds of blog posts.

Scientists now say that the Lu study, published in an obscure pay for play journal, proved only that feeding bees poisonous levels of an insecticide can and will kill them. University of Illinois Department of Entomology Chair May Berenbaum, who headed up the National Academy of Sciences 2007 National Research Council study on the Status of Pollinators in North America, has called Lu’s research “effectively worthless” to serious researchers. The experimental design and statistical analysis are just not reliable. ... He never tested for the presence of pathogens, so his conclusions dismissing other likely causes don’t follow from his data. The whole study just doesn’t hold together. And I’m not being a fusspot here. It’s unfortunate this was presented as a Harvard paper because it gives this credibility that it doesn’t deserve.

Ideology driving federal response?
The buzz that followed the publication of Lu’s 2014 study is a classic example of how dicey science can combine with sloppy reporting to create a ‘false narrative’—a storyline with a strong bias that is at once compelling and wrong. The Lu study was a scientific outlier, albeit one that fit the prejudices of advocacy groups. The eager embrace and promotion of this fatally flawed research illustrates how simplistic ideas get rooted in the public consciousness. And it shows how ideology-driven science threatens to wreak public policy havoc.

Lu is on the board of The Organic Center, an arm of the multi-million dollar Organic Trade Association, a lobby group with strong financial interest in disparaging conventional agriculture, synthetic pesticides and neonics in particular—a conflict of interest that Lu never acknowledges and to my knowledge no other journalist has reported. This latest USDA guided study goes along way to reversing the misinformation that has rippled forth in the year since the Lu “solved” the bee death mystery. Are there any prominent entomologists who endorse Lu’s alarmist findings? I couldn’t find any in months of trying.

A Mother Jones article by controversial activist-journalist Tom Philpott suggesting the Lu had all but solved the mystery of bee deaths quoted Jeffrey Pettis, an entomologist and research leader at USDA’s Beltsville’s Bee Laboratory, as appearing to be supportive. “Pettis told me that he thought Lu’s study ‘adds to the list’ of studies showing that pesticides pose a significant threat to honeybees,” he wrote. I emailed Pettis about that quote: I was trying to be diplomatic when I talked to Philpott but the Lu study should not have been published. It is not good science. I was trying to say that it adds to the list that pesticides and bees don’t mix but it is not a paper that shows that neonics cause problems simply because it was poorly replicated with high dosages used.

Pettis is one of the authors of this latest, far more sober and professionally researched, analysis. The Maryland researchers did acknowledge that neonics are not exactly harmless, but they are far down the list of health challenges faced by bees.

“It contributes, but there is a bigger picture,” they said in a news release. Other factors are thought to include parasites such as Varroa mites and Nosema fungus, a bacterial disease known as foulbrood, viruses, drought and loss of habitat.

Even more surprising, said Pettis and his colleagues, over the course of the experiment, pesticide residues declined, eventually becoming non-detectable within colonies’ beebread and honey. As Wired noted in its analysis, that’s one of the things that makes imidacloprid so popular, as the pesticide is designed to break down quickly. In fact, in one of the three years more “queen events,” or creation of special queen cells, were found in the treated colonies. And while colony overwintering survival did seem to be linked to high doses of the pesticide in one year, the link collapsed
the following year. There was no consistent pattern suggesting reports of harm were anything more than random data noise.

“It’s not surprising that higher levels will hurt insects,” said Dennis VanEngelsdorp, a leading bee researcher often credited with identifying and naming the 2006 CCD event. He was not involved in this study. “They’re insecticides after all,” he added. “But this study is saying that neonicotinoids probably aren’t the sole culprit at lower, real-world doses.”

That’s consistent with mixed results of many other experiments with these pesticides. VanEngelsdorp said. In general, pesticides don’t kill bees, but they can make other bee problems worse. But even that statement needs to be put in context. All farming requires tradeoffs and risks. Best practices require striking a reasonable balance between costs and benefits. Farmers necessarily use pesticides; even organic farmers use them, extensively. And all pesticides, even organic ones, result in some collateral damage—the killing of some beneficial insects. The most honest and realistic question therefore becomes: Which pesticides yield the most benefits to farmers while causing the least harm to the environment, including in this case, bees? Demands to neonics because they are ‘part of the problem’ make no reasonable sense, as all pesticides are part of the problem.

Real world impact of ban
If the U.S. government moves to restrict the use of neonics, what would replace them? In Europe, where neonics were banned 15 months ago after a ferocious lobbying campaign by activists, farmers have begun replacing them with older pesticides phased out years ago precisely because they caused too much collateral damage. So the panic solution—an open-ended moratorium on the use of neonics—has actually led to increased bee deaths.

The impact on farm production of the European ban is also coming into sharper focus, and the picture is ugly. Neonics are used most commonly on rapeseed, more commonly known in North America as canola. It’s used primarily to make oil. While rapeseed production has reached record levels in the United States and Western Canada, in places where honeybee hive numbers are hitting record levels, Europe’s farms are in disarray. Figures released earlier this month by European farmer cooperatives reveal regional rapeseed production is expected to fall by as much as 7 percent this year, compared to 2014.

“The situation is very serious, with declines of up to one million tons in rapeseed production estimated in Germany. Some areas have been particularly badly hit, like in parts of the UK where producers lost 40 percent of their production,” said Arnaud Rousseau, chairman of the oilseeds working group.

Why the sharp drop off?
“What makes it worse is that there are no alternative tools [replacing neonics] for crop protection for the spring varieties and crops are being destroyed by flea beetle attacks.” This confirms anecdotal reports that have been mounting for months. As Matt Ridley reported last fall in The Times of London:

All across southeast Britain this autumn, crops of oilseed rape are dying because of infestation by flea beetles. The direct cause of the problem is the two-year ban on pesticides called neonicotinoids brought in by the EU over British objections at the tail end of last year. ... Farmers in Germany, the EU’s largest producer of rape, are also reporting widespread damage. Since rape is one of the main flower crops, providing huge amounts of pollen and nectar for bees, this will hurt wild bee numbers as well as farmers’ livelihoods.

The EU farmers cooperative has called on the EU Commission to do a socio-economic impact assessment to look at the extent of the damage. As the harmful consequences of the precipitous European moratorium deepen, all eyes are turning to Washington. Activists have been trying to jack up political pressure in the United States, just as the surge in bee deaths in the US and Europe appears to have reversed. Last September, a coalition of environmental
groups co-wrote a letter signed by 60 Congressional Democrats urging the EPA to restrict neonicotinoid use citing Lu's work in arguing that “native pollinators” have “suffered alarming declines.”

What’s next? The White House pollinator task force is set to issue its evaluation of the honeybee health “crisis” any day now, and it may include calls to further restrict the use of neonicotins. Here’s the nuanced reality: The uncomfortably high number of bee deaths eludes the kind of definitive but reckless calls for action that could result in precipitous regulations. Science is not a set of results; it is a method. If the method is faulty, as in the case of the Lu study and the simplistic ‘neonics causes bee deaths meme’, the results are useless.

“This is a really complex issue with no quick and easy solutions,” May Berenbaum told me. These papers simplistically fingering neonics are “just not good science.” Jon Entine, executive director of the Genetic Literacy Project, is a senior fellow at the World Food Center Institute for Food and Agricultural Literacy, University of California-Davis. Follow Jon Entine on Twitter @JonEntine

Women in the Outdoors Program to be held on Saturday, May 9, 2015
The Grand River Chapter of the National Wildlife Turkey Federation Women in the Outdoors Committee will be hosting a Women in the Outdoors program on Saturday, May 9, 2015 at the Crooked Creek Conservation Club located at 4323 State Route 534 in Harts Grove, Ohio from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Interactive educational sessions will be held for women 14 and over during the day.

Session topics for the day include: archery, handgun, turkey calling, cheese making, cooking in the wide, rifle, shotgun, flyfishing, geocaching, K-9 training, cooking wild turkey, edible & medicinal plants, wildlife photography, turkey feather wreath making, turkey hunt, crocheted necklaces & scarves, and wilderness survival. More information about the program can be obtained by visiting Facebook at: Facebook.com/GrandRiverWITO or by contacting Leesa Lafferre-Thomas (440) 968-0150 (GrandRiverWITO@gmail.com) or Terri Herbert (440) 298-1636.

Product Safety & GAPS Training to be held on April 16 in Canfield, Ohio
The Mahoning County Extension office will be conducting a “Products Safety & GAPS” Training will be held on Thursday, April 16, from 9:30am-12:30pm, at the OSU Extension, 490 S. Broad St, Canfield. This class meets the standards for the Food Safety Modernization Act for those farmers/growers who are raising produce for sale to the public. Cost of this program is $20. To register, please call 330-533-5538 or go to: http://go.osu.edu/canfieldsafety

Ohio Farm Benchmarking Project
Do you know how your farm is making a profit? OSU Extension’s Ohio Farm Benchmarking Project helps farmers understand their business finances and helps them understand how they compare to similar farm businesses in Ohio and around the country. Input forms and information are available here: http://farmprofitability.osu.edu

Introduction to Forestry Class to be offered on April 18, 2015
ODNR Service Foresters John Kehn and Aaron Kash, covering Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Portage, Summit, and Trumbull Counties will be conducting an “Introduction to Forestry” class on April 18th, 2015 at Punderson State Park Chalet. Space is limited to the first 60 participants.

Service Foresters work with private landowners on all aspects of forest management from tree planting through harvesting. This class does count for Ohio Forest Tax Law credit but does NOT cover the required “Core” class, which will be held in early summer. The two classes will not cover the same material. Major topics covered in this class include how trees grow, property tax reduction programs, the economics of forestry, timber stand improvement, and most importantly, the if, why, when, and how to sell timber.
The class will commence at the Chalet at Punderson State Park at 9:00 AM and conclude at 3:00 PM on Saturday April 18th, 2015. Dress for the weather as we will be going outside rain or shine. Coffee will be provided. Please bring a sack lunch. There is no cost to participate.

To register for the class call 440-564-5883 from 8:00 to 4:30 Monday through Friday. Depending on participation levels, in addition to the “Introduction to Forestry” class, subsequent classes covering specific topics such as “Timber Stand Improvement”, and “Timber Marketing” in more detail will be offered throughout the year in various locations in the northeast counties. Watch for further announcements.

2015 Winter Extension Program Dates
The following programs have been scheduled for Northeast Ohio farmers this upcoming winter. Complete registration flyers can be found at: http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines

Growing Vegetable Crops in Pots
Saturday, April 4, 2015

Fertilizer Certification Sessions
April 7, 2015 at Geauga County Extension Office

Northeast Ohio Beef Clinic
Wednesday, April 8, 2015

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

Trumbull County Fair
July 14-19, 2015

Ashtabula County Fair
August 11-16, 2015

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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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