Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!

March roared in like a Lion this past week and it appears that our weather will continue to be like riding a rollercoaster.

Our Phosphorus Task Force had a great meeting with Representative Brian Hill (Chairman of House Ag Committee), Senator Bob Hackett (Chairman of Senate Ag Committee), Dr. John Patterson (Ohio House of Representatives-District 99) and Sean O’Brien (Ohio Senate- District 32) on Monday morning discussing the work of our task force and the reauthorization of Senate Bill 1. Thanks to those local farmers who provided their opinions with our legislators!

David Marrison  
Extension Educator  
Ag & Natural Resources  
Ashtabula County

Lee Beers  
Extension Educator  
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**Backyard Chicken Basics**
Join OSU Extension on March 14, 2018 for an evening to learn about how to get started with chickens in your backyard. OSU Extension Educators Tim McDermott DVM, and Lee Beers will discuss breed selection, safe egg handling, chicken health, zoning requirements, housing, nutrition and other topics that will help you successfully raise chickens. Cost for this program is $15/person and includes many handouts and light refreshments. To register for this event, please complete the registration form on the back and mail with payment to OSU Extension, Trumbull County, 520 West Main St., Cortland, OH 44410. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension. Pre-registration is requested by March 7, 2018. Questions? Call OSU Extension at 330-638-6783

**Trumbull Crop Lunch – Harmful Algal Blooms, an Update**
Join us on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 for lunch at the Trumbull County Agriculture and Family Education Center to learn about harmful algal blooms (HAB) and the propositions to prevent the blooms from occurring. Justin Chaffin, PhD, Research Coordinator, Senior Researcher with The Ohio State University’s Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory Ohio Sea Grant will present information on the blooms in the lake in regards to biomass and toxicity. Justin will also discuss what was proposed to stop the blooms. Eric Zamary, Trumbull SWCD Water Quality Specialist, will provide a brief update regarding the chemical water quality monitoring program at the District. Eric will focus on the tests conducted for nutrients and the results obtained thus far. A catered lunch is sponsored by the Trumbull County Holstein Club. Cost to attend is $5.00. On-site payment is available, but please call the Trumbull SWCD office to let us know you will be attending so we have enough food. Call the office at 330-637-2056, opt. 3 or email Amy Reeher at reehera@embarqmail.com to register or if you have questions. Trumbull Crop Lunch is a partnership between The Ohio State University Extension, Trumbull SWCD, and Trumbull County USDA NRCS.

**Tall Fescue and its Endophyte – Implications for your Farm**
By Dr. Jimmy Henning, Livestock Forage Specialist, University of Kentucky

The story of Kentucky 31 tall fescue reads like a soap opera. Found on a Menifee County Kentucky hill side in 1931, it quickly became a rival to Kentucky bluegrass as the most important grass in Kentucky. Its yield and persistence made it look unbeatable, but its animal performance numbers were sometimes poor or worse. The decision by the University of Kentucky to go forward with the release of Kentucky 31 was filled with about as much drama as you will ever find in an academic setting.
We now know the poor animal performance AND the persistence of that early fescue was due to the presence of a fungus inside the plant (the endophyte; ‘endo’ for in plus ‘phyte’ for plant). When the endophyte is present, that plant is said to be ‘infected.’ And when infected plants grow, the fungus produces compounds that result in the poor animal performance. These compounds are known as alkaloids, and ergovaline is the one used to assess fescue toxicity in the laboratory.

Early surveys in Kentucky found the majority of fescue did contain the endophyte of tall fescue. The scope of this problem led to massive amounts of research about the endophyte of tall fescue and how to mitigate its effect on livestock across the fescue belt.

The following is a synopsis of our current understanding of this pasture grass and the toxic endophyte.

- The endophyte grows inside the plant, between the cells, but is never seen externally. There are no visual indicators to tell if tall fescue is infected.
- The endophyte is physically present in the stem bases, but the toxic compounds spread throughout the plant.
- The least toxic portion of the plant is the green, leafy tissue. The most toxic portion is the seed, with stem bases being intermediate. Managing to keep pastures leafy, not overgrazing, and preventing seedhead production are all effective strategies to manage the negative effects of the tall fescue endophyte.
- Ergovaline levels (the indicator of fescue toxicity) fluctuate seasonally and are highly variable year to year. Concentrations are highest in May/June and September/October. Toxin levels drop after the fescue experiences the cold temperatures of late fall and winter. In one Central Kentucky field, ergovaline numbers dropped 80% from October to December.
- Ergovaline levels are lower in hay than the standing forage from which it was made (another very positive thing).
- The toxic alkaloids cause constriction of the external blood vessels in cattle (vaso-constriction) leading to heat stress. Cattle eat less, gain less and breed less. The
negative economic effects of infected tall fescue are significant, totally millions annually across the Southeast.

- Most Kentucky pastures contain tall fescue, but fields are seldom 100% tall fescue. The presence of other species buffer the effects of the endophyte – a very good thing. The diversity of our pastures and our milder summers mean that we suffer somewhat less than states to the south. However, toxic tall fescue is the single biggest agronomic drag on animal performance in Kentucky and must be mitigated for economic viability.
- Interseeding with clovers is the number one way to offset the effect of the endophyte of tall fescue. Clovers improve the protein and energy content of the pasture and will contribute nitrogen to the system from plant decomposition or from the manure and urine deposited from cattle consuming clover.
- Recent research by the USDA-ARS forage research unit showed that clover, especially red clover, will directly reduce the vaso-constriction in cattle consuming infected fescue. Fortunately, red clover is extremely well adapted and relatively easy to establish into existing tall fescue pastures.
- The endophyte is only spread by infected seed. Endophyte-free varieties are available.
- Early endophyte-free tall fescue varieties (such as Kentucky’s ‘Johnstone’) did not prove as persistent as Kentucky 31 with the endophyte.
- Grazing tolerant varieties of endophyte free tall fescue are available. For a full report on their persistence under heavy grazing, consult University of Kentucky Progress Report PR-735, Cool-Season Grass Grazing Tolerance Report (http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/PR/PR735/PR735.pdf).

The Kentucky 31 brand put our state on the tall fescue map worldwide. The endophyte present in those early seedlots contributed to its persistence but also its current limitations on pasture performance. But just when you think you understand the toxic endophyte of tall fescue, along comes a non-toxic endophyte. Really. But that is a subject for the next column. See you then.

Farm Bureau CAUV Meetings

Two CAUV informational meetings will be held by the Ashtabula and Trumbull County Farm Bureaus. Ashtabula County Farm Bureau will host on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at the Expo building at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds. The meeting will begin at 7 pm with registration starting at 6:30 PM. Guest speakers will be Leah Curtis, Policy Counsel with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and Ashtabula County Auditor, Roger Corlett.

Trumbull County Farm Bureau will hold a CAUV meeting on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, in the cafeteria at the Trumbull County Career and Technical Center (TCTC), beginning at 7 PM with registration starting at 6:30. Guest speakers will be Leah Curtis, Policy Counsel with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and Trumbull County Auditor, Adrian Biviano.

This is a “free” event for Farm Bureau members; Our Ohio Supporters will be $10; Non-members will be $25. The $25 fee signs you up as an Our Ohio Supporter. Supporters receive a subscription to Our Ohio magazine and special invitations to food, farm and gardening events,
opportunities to network, plus access to a variety of educational workshops at a reduced or free rate depending on the event.

Earn a chance to win!
You'll be entered into a drawing for a $100 gift card and a free 1-year membership when:
- You bring a non-member friend and they join Farm Bureau
- You are NOT a member and you join Farm Bureau
- You upgrade from an Our Ohio Supporter to a full Farm Bureau membership
- You renew your membership early.

**Seating is limited!!** Register by March 13th, with the Farm Bureau office at 440.426.2195 or email: nefarmbu@fairpoint.net.

**Workers’ Compensation Group Safety Meeting**
The Northeast Counties Farm Bureau will be hosting a Workers’ Compensation Safety Meeting on March 27 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Saint Mary’s Church located at 103 N Maple Street in Orwell, Ohio from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

This meeting is being held for the OFBF Workers’ Compensation Group Rating Program members and others who would be interested in the safety presentation. Tentative Topics are: Tractor & Equipment Safety; Fire Prevention and Stress Management. A very important aspect of reducing Workers’ Compensation premiums is to reduce the number of claims/accidents within the group. This can be accomplished by each member doing his or her own part to ensure a safe work environment.

There is no registration fee for Farm Bureau members with all others at $10 per person. Reservations are required by March 23 by calling 440-426-2195.

**Field Pea Meeting Slated for March 15, 2018 in Colebrook**
Colebrook Elevator will be sponsoring an informational meeting on growing field pea in Northeast Ohio on Thursday, March 15, 2018 beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Colebrook Community Center located at 682 US 322 East in Colebrook. Information will be shared on growing field pea in Northeast, Ohio. Reservations are requested by March 13 by calling Colebrook Elevator at 440-422-3353 or 440-855-1791.
OSU Extension to Host 5th Annual East Ohio Women in Agriculture Conference

Ohio State University (OSU) Extension will host the 5th Annual East Ohio Women in Agriculture Conference. The conference is planned for Friday, April 6 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. at the RG Drage Career Technical Center, 2800 Richville Drive SE in Massillon. All women and young women (high school age) who are interested, involved in, or want to become involved with food, agricultural, or natural resources production or small business are encouraged to attend.

The conference program features a networking fair, sixteen breakout sessions, and two extended breakout sessions presented by OSU Extension educators, producers and partner agencies. Sessions are focused around five themes: Business & Finance, Plants & Animals, Communication, Home & Family and Special Interest (branding and online marketing). The keynote speaker will be Rose Hartschuh – farm wife, mother, Agvocate, and recent winner of the American Farm Bureau Excellence in Agriculture Award.

Registered participants, community organizations or businesses interested in sponsorship information, and/or securing an information/vendor table, should contact the OSU Extension Coshocton County office at 740-622-2265.

Interested individuals can register for the conference on-line at go.osu.edu/eowia2018. Cost of the conference is $55 for adult participants and $30 for students. Conference fee includes conference participation, continental breakfast, lunch and conference handouts. A special discount is available for those women and students who also plant to attend the Northeast Ohio Small Farm Conference on Saturday, April 7. Deadline for registration is Friday, March 23. For more information contact the OSU Extension Holmes County Office at 330-674-3015.

2018 NE Ohio Living Your Small Farm Dream Conference

The 2018 NE Ohio Living Your Small Farm Dream conference will be held on Saturday, April 7 at the RG Drage Career Center, located at 2800 Richville Drive SW in Massillon Ohio. The conference provides education and topics of interest for small farm and rural landowners. Participants will walk away from the conference with knowledge and ideas of how to improve existing enterprises or marketing opportunities. For those who have some acreage but don’t yet know what to do with it, the conference is an opportunity to consider possibilities, gather information and make contacts.

The 2018 Living Your Small Farm Dream conference offers 26 different breakout sessions divided between five different track topics; Horticulture, Livestock, Marketing, Farm Management and Specialty Crop. Presenters include OSU Extension specialists, Extension Educators, Business owners, and small farm producers/entrepreneurs. Conference participants will have the opportunity to attend four different sessions over the course of the four breakout sessions. The Small Farm conference trade show offers another opportunity to learn and gather information. The trade show vendors/exhibitors feature goods and services used in small farm operations. The conference schedule includes time between each breakout session and over an extended noon hour to visit the trade show.
The specialty crop track features sessions on malting barley and hop production to tap into the growing microbrewery businesses. One session involves a panel discussion with several local microbreweries who will share their stories and use of locally sourced ingredients in their products. The horticulture track offers sessions on growing grapes, brambles, vegetables, flowers, beekeeping, use of soil amendments, and managing soil health. The livestock track includes sessions on raising and marketing pasture produced beef and poultry, as well as hay production and Ohio livestock care standards. The farm management track includes Ag law, business planning, tax issues, farmland renting, health care issues, and creating profitable small farm enterprises. The marketing track includes a two-hour super session focused on developing on-farm agitourism and agriculture entertainment businesses as well as sessions on how to scale up your small farm business to take advantage of marketing opportunities and a session on developing a distribution system for locally grown foods.

Conference registration/sign-in and the trade show opens at 8:00 am on April 7. Following some brief conference opening comments at 9:00 am, the first breakout session begins at 9:30 am. The conference concludes by 4:00 pm. Conference registration is $60/person or, if attending the Women in Agriculture Conference at the same location on April 6, plus the Small Farm Conference on April 7; $100 for a combined registration. Student discounts are $30 for attending the small farm conference alone or $50 if attending both the Women in Agriculture and the Small Farm conference. Pre-registration for both the Small Farm conference and the Women in Agriculture conference is due March 23. On-line registration is available at go.osu.edu/NESmallFarmReg. A Living the Small Farm Dream conference brochure that lists session topics and presentation times along with a mail-in registration form, and a document with descriptions of all the presentation topics is available at go.osu.edu/NEOHSmallFarms.

For more information about the Living Your Small Farm Dream conference contact Rory Lewandowski in the Wayne County Extension office at 330-264-8722, email: lewandowski.11@osu.edu; or Emily Adams in the Coshocton County Extension office at 740-622-2265, email: adams.661@osu.edu.

68th Annual Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet to be held on Saturday, March 24

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Dairy Service Unit are pleased to announce the 68th Annual Dairy banquet will be held on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at the Jefferson Community Center located at 111 East Jefferson, Street in Jefferson, Ohio beginning promptly at 7 p.m.

The banquet program will consist of the crowning of the 2018 Dairy Princess; the presentation of production and 4-H awards; and the election of two members to the Dairy Service Unit Board. Tickets are $15 per person and can be purchased from Dairy Service Unit Board members, Tom Coltman of Wayne, Joel Baldwin of Sheffield; Jason Brinker of Rock Creek; Lindsey Gray of New Lyme, Lisa Kalas of Jefferson; and from David Marrison at the Ashtabula County Extension office at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson. Pre-sale tickets are required by March 18, 2018. For more information about this program contact the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.
Ashtabula County Master Gardeners’ Spring Gardening Program at Local Libraries in March

Even though it is still winter, it is not too early to think about spring. The Ashtabula County Master Gardeners would like to invite you to join them at libraries across Ashtabula County during March. During their gardening talks, the Master Gardeners will be sharing information on Fertilizers, Climate Change & Your Ohio Garden, and New Plants of Interest. Plenty of time will also be given for you to ask your gardening questions.

The first program was held this past Saturday at the Andover Public Library located at 142 West Main Street in Andover from 10:00 to 12:00 noon. On Thursday, March 15, the program will be offered at Henderson Memorial Library located at 54 East Jefferson Street in Jefferson from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

On Saturday, March 17, the program will be offered at the Rock Creek Public Library located at 2988 High Street in Rock Creek, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It will also be held at the Geneva Public Library located at 860 Sherman Street in Geneva from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and at the Ashtabula Public Library located at 4335 Park Avenue in Ashtabula from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

On Saturday, March 24, the program will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at both the Grand Valley Library located at 1 North School Street in Orwell, Ohio and at the Conneaut Public Library located at 304 Buffalo Street in Conneaut. The program will also be offered at the Harbor-Topky Memorial Library located at 1633 Walnut Blvd in Ashtabula from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. And finally, the program will be offered on Wednesday, March 28 at the Kingsville Public Library located at 6006 Academy Avenue in Kingsville from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

These programs are free however space is limited. Please call your local library to reserve your spot! A program flyer can be accessed at: http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/master-gardener-volunteers/upcoming-educational-programs. This flyer includes the phone numbers for the libraries. More information can also be received by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at: 440-576-9008 for more details.

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. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

**Getting Started in Community Gardening Workshop Slated for March 24, 2018**

The Master Gardeners will be hosting a “Getting Started in Community Gardening” workshop on Saturday, March 24, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Ashtabula County Extension office. Join the Ashtabula County Master Gardeners to learn how to get started in community gardening. This two hour introductory class is designed to give you the information you will need to design, plan and organize a sustainable community garden.

During this workshop, the Master Gardeners will discuss what community gardening is, how to develop a leadership team, how to define a vision for the garden and how to find a suitable garden location. They will also discuss how to develop the procedural practices for the shared garden space. Pre-registration is required by March 19, 2018. Registration fee is $10.00/per person. Registration includes refreshments and program handouts. If you have any questions please call 440-576-9008.

**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: flyer can be found at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events.
Caring for Garden Tools
By: Ashtabula County Master Gardeners

You hoe the rows, pull the weeds, stake up the tomatoes, hill the potatoes, mend the fence, pick off the beetles, coil up the garden hose. But what do you do with your tools? Garden tools need care and maintenance just like anything else. You can't expect them to continue to do their jobs if they've been neglected. So give your tools some routine care, and they'll serve you well for years.

Here’s what you need to know in a nutshell: clean, dry, oil, sharpen, hang up. These procedures will prevent rust, preserve wood from dry rot and splintering, and maintain cutting edges.

Clean: At the end of the day, brush off as much soil as possible from the tools. Soil holds moisture, which causes rust on metal parts and dry rot on wooden handles. You may occasionally want to rinse off tools with the garden hose, but dry them thoroughly afterwards.

In the case of pruning shears or other cutting tools, clean them with a damp paper towel and some dish detergent to remove sticky sap, then disinfect with a 10% bleach solution. Ideally, cutting tools should be disinfected between each plant or even between each cut to prevent the spread of disease. Bleach is corrosive, though, so rinse with water after disinfecting.

Dry: We all know that moisture causes rust. Rust dulls blades, holds disease in its pits, freezes up moving parts, and eventually destroys metal parts. Dry rot, paradoxically, happens when damp wood harbors a type of fungus that digests the cellulose and lignin that give strength and rigidity to wood. Clean and dry your tools and bring them inside each day when you’re done with them. Avoid storing them in damp locations.

Oil: Oil forms a barrier that excludes water, preventing rust and preserving wood. After cleaning and drying, apply the oil of your choice to both metal and wooden parts. There are advocates for boiled linseed oil, mineral oil, WD 40, even motor oil. Linseed oil works for all parts and is easy to apply with a rag kept handy in the tool storage area.

Wipe down handles and blades, and lay out the oily rag to dry thoroughly to prevent spontaneous combustion. WD40, with its spray straw, helps lubricate moving parts and hard to reach nooks and crannies. Motor oil works for metal parts but isn’t at all pleasant on wooden handles.

Sharpen: Sharp blades slice through matted roots or heavy soil much more easily than dull ones, so this is partially about reducing your work load. Think about trying to cut a steak with a butter knife and you get the idea. Sharp tools may actually help prevent injuries because they require less force to operate and are less likely to slip or twist.

In the case of cutting tools such as pruners or loppers, dull blades will crush and bruise stem tissue, interfering with cell function and leaving damaged ends open to the entry of disease. If you don’t have a file for blade sharpening, buy a “bastard cut” mill file for a few dollars at the hardware store and ask how to use it.
Hang up: Hang up everything you can, both the small and the tall, because good air circulation keeps everything dry. Avoid leaning long handled tools with one end on the ground, and don’t toss small tools into a drawer where they may stay damp or clank together, damaging the blades you just sharpened. Having a designated place to hang your tools will encourage you to store them properly.

Maintenance won’t protect your tools from deliberate abuse, such as using a shovel as a pry bar, but it will ensure that your tools are ready whenever you are. This article is a brief overview of tool care. For more detailed information, search online or visit your garden center or library.

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.

Pruning Fruits
By Christine Gelley, Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator- Noble County

Did you know that the best time to prune fruit trees in Ohio is March? March is the perfect time because it is the end of the dormant period. At this time the trees are not actively growing, the risk for cold injury on wounds is low, and there is less risk of pathogen entry.

Young fruit trees and mature fruit trees have different needs when it comes to pruning. Neglected trees are worth an article of their own. Which we will cover next week. Young fruit trees (1-5 years) need to be trained so that the framework of growth is desirable for both growth and harvest. When planting new trees, trim any branches below 24 inches. Ideally,
you will want three to four evenly spaced branches around the trunk to use as scaffolds. Select your training style: open center, central leader, or modified central leader.

The most common style is central leader. Open center is often used for peaches, plums, and apricots. It allows good light filtration to reach all of the tree's branches. Modified central leader is often used for apples, pears, and pecans. Side shoots should be trained to grow at a 60 to 70 degree angle.

When choosing which limbs to prune and which to train, consider symmetry for even fruit production and light filtration to lower branches. During the harvest season, mark any branches that produce shriveled and dried fruit to be pruned during the dormant season. Any damaged or diseased branches should also be removed.

Pruning mature trees may reduce number of fruit produced, but fruit size will be increased, ripening will be more uniform, sugar accumulation will be greater, and there will be fewer disease and pest problems as a result of better light filtration and air circulation.

If trees are vigorous growers, prune more aggressively. Avoid pruning too close to the main branch to keep wound size minimal. If the tree is very large or neglected, spread extensive pruning out over multiple years. Match your pruning tools to the size of branches. Use shears for small twigs, lopping shears for medium branches, and a hand saw for large limbs.

There are many aspects to pruning fruit trees correctly. For more details and illustrations, you can access the Midwest Home Fruit Production Guide for examples at: http://go.osu.edu/MWFPG.
Hello Ashtabula County! March sure came in like a Lion! I am sure we will continue to experience the typical rollercoaster of extremes for this month. As I look forward to March, I am already exhausted as we have a whole host of Extension workshops, banquets, and conferences slated for this month. March is still “go-time” for education because once the calendar flips to April, our farmers will turn their attention towards planting season. Today, I would like to remind producers about the upcoming 68th Annual Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet, a Fertilizer Certification workshop and encourage farmers to nominate their local schools for a grant program.

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A reminder the 68th Annual Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet will be held on Saturday, March 24 at the Jefferson Community Center located at 111 East Jefferson, Street in Jefferson, Ohio beginning promptly at 7 p.m. The banquet program will consist of the crowning of the 2018 Dairy Princess; the presentation of production awards; and the election of two members to the Dairy Service Unit Board.

Tickets are $15 per person and can be purchased from Dairy Service Unit Board members, Jason Brinker of Rock Creek; Tom Coltman of Wayne; Joel Baldwin of Sheffield; Lindsey Gray of New Lyme; Lisa Kalas of Jefferson; and from David Marrison at the Ashtabula County Extension office at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson. Pre-sale tickets are required by March 18, 2018. For more information about this program contact the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008.

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Due to Ohio’s new legislation, any farmer who applies commercial fertilizer to 50 or more acres must attend obtain a fertilizer certificate either by taking a test from the Ohio Department of Agriculture or by attending a 3 hour certification session. During the past three years, we have offered over 15 certification programs locally with over 200 farmers completing their training.

We are pleased to announce that we have another certification session scheduled for this Monday, March 12, 2018 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Ashtabula County Extension Office in Jefferson, Ohio. The training will include discussions on the fertilizer regulations, record keeping requirements, soil testing, water quality in Lake Erie and fertility recommendations for agronomic crops.

There are exceptions for needing the certification. For instance, any start-up fertilizers that is applied through a planter is exempt as the certification applies to fertilizer which is broadcasted or is applied during the growing season. And if you have the co-op or other custom applicator make your fertilizer applications, you do not need the certification.

The registration fee for this program is $35 per person and pre-registration is requested due to space limitations. Contact the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 to reserve your spot. A registration flyer can also be obtained at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events.
This week I learned about a unique opportunity from the Grow Rural Education program from Monsanto which allows eligible farmers to nominate their local public school district for grants to help enhance STEM education. Once nominated, school districts can submit applications to compete for $10,000 or $25,000 grants to help fund projects that enhance their STEM curriculum. These grants are helping to improve test scores, but better yet, they're getting kids to think bigger about their tomorrow. Nominations are being accepted until April 2, 2018. Farmers can nominate their school online at https://www.americasfarmers.com/grow-rural-education/ I hope that you will take the time to nominate our school districts to apply for this opportunity.

I would like to close with an African Proverb which states “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” 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

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

**Backyard Chickens**
Trumbull County Extension Office 6-8pm
Wednesday, March 14, 2018

**Shiitake Mushroom Program (SOLD OUT)**
Ashtabula County Extension Office 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 15, 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

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trumbull.osu.edu
Join OSU Extension on March 14, 2018 for an evening to learn about how to get started with chickens in your backyard. OSU Extension Educators Tim McDermott DVM, and Lee Beers will discuss breed selection, safe egg handling, chicken health, zoning requirements, housing, nutrition and other topics that will help you successfully raise chickens. Cost for this program is $15/person and includes many handouts and light refreshments. To register for this event, please complete the registration form on the back and mail with payment to OSU Extension, Trumbull County, 520 West Main St., Cortland, OH 44410. Please make checks payable to OSU Extension. **Pre-registration is requested by March 7, 2018.** Questions? Call OSU Extension at 330-638-6783
Backyard Chicken Basics
March 14, 2018

Name ____________________________________________

Address _________________________________________

City __________________ State_____ Zip______________

Phone ___________________ Email ____________________

Number of People Attending: _________ X $15/person _________

Please mail this completed form with payment to the below address before March 7, 2018. Make checks payable to OSU Extension.

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

For questions, contact Lee Beers at 330-638-6783 or by email at beers.66@osu.edu
### Trumbull Crop Lunch

**Harmful Algal Blooms – Current Updates**

**Justin Chaffin, PhD**  
Research Coordinator, Senior Researcher  
The Ohio State University’s Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 20, 2018</td>
<td>11:30 – Registration and Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU Extension Office</td>
<td>12:00 – Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520 West Main Street</td>
<td>1:30 – Adjourn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cortland, OH 44410</td>
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Cost is $5/person - includes lunch, and CCA credits

Join us on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 for lunch at the Trumbull County Agriculture and Family Education Center to learn about harmful algal blooms (HAB) and the propositions to prevent the blooms from occurring. Justin Chaffin, PhD, Research Coordinator, Senior Researcher with The Ohio State University’s Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory Ohio Sea Grant will present information on the blooms in the lake in regards to biomass and toxicity. Justin will also discuss what was proposed to stop the blooms. Eric Zamary, Trumbull SWCD Water Quality Specialist, will provide a brief update regarding the chemical water quality monitoring program at the District. Eric will focus on the tests conducted for nutrients and the results obtained thus far. A catered lunch is sponsored by the Trumbull County Holstein Club. Cost to attend is $5.00.

On-site payment is available, but please call the Trumbull SWCD office to let us know you will be attending so we have enough food. Call the office at 330-637-2056, opt. 3 or email Amy Reeher at reehera@embarqmail.com to register or if you have questions. Trumbull Crop Lunch is a partnership between The Ohio State University Extension, Trumbull SWCD, and Trumbull County USDA NRCS.

Name: ________________________________  
Address: _____________________________  
Email: _______________________________  
Phone: _______________________________

Number attending _____ x $5/person = _____________  
Enclosed
Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training

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.

Wednesday, February 14, 2018 6 – 9 p.m.  
Pre-register by February 7  
Trumbull County Ag Center 520 West Main St  
Cortland, OH 44410

Monday, March 12, 2018 6– 9 p.m.  
Pre-register by March 5  
OSU Extension Ashtabula County 39 Wall Street  
Jefferson, OH 44047

$35/Person
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
Farmers once again have an opportunity to grow peas for the 2018 season.

- No additional Equipment needed
- Peas add nitrogen into the soil and breaks disease cycle

$11.25 per bushel guaranteed!

PEA SEMINAR
March 15, 2018
Starts at 10:00 AM
Lunch at Noon
RSVP BEFORE 3/13/18

Colebrook Community Center
Rt 322 & Rt 46
682 US-322 E,
Orwell, Ohio 44076

Special guests:
David Marrison
Lee Beers

CALL TODAY TO RSVP:
440-422-3353
440-855-1791