Hello! It is May! Hopefully our late April showers bring May flowers and warmer and drier weather. The rains of this past weekend and of this week have slowed field work down (which is not out of the ordinary). There are a lot of great articles being published on crop production and I have included a few of them for your review this week. On a solemn note, Our Master Gardeners lost one of their cornerstones with the passing of Susan Masirovits last Monday. She was a very dedicated MG Volunteer who gave over 2,200 hours of volunteerism in our program. We are saddened by her loss and will miss her expertise. Peace be with Susan. Have a good and safe week!

David Marrison, Ashtabula County Ag & NR Educator

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Adjusting No-till Burndown Programs for Later Planting
By Mark Loux
Source: http://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2015-10/adjusting-no-till-burndown-programs-later-planting

This is a revision of an article we seem to publish in C.O.R.N. about every three years, when wet weather prevents early planting and in some cases also prevents early burndown applications. There have been opportunities to apply burndown herbicides in much of the state over the past several weeks, and some areas have made considerable progress on planting. Other areas have made little progress. We are probably not in a true “late planting situation” yet, but some of the state is now wet and not that warm, and more rain coming midweek.

The longer-range forecast calls for drier than normal conditions and higher than normal temperatures apparently. The weeds obviously continue to get bigger under wet conditions, and what is a relatively tame burndown situation in early to mid-April can become pretty hairy by early to mid May. In our research plots, we appear to have as good a winter annual population as we have ever had, possibly due to a relatively mild winter (weed scientists admittedly probably have more appreciation for a “good” weed population than the rest of the world). There is a substantial difference in weediness between the fields treated with herbicides last fall versus the
lack of a fall treatment. Among other benefits, the fall treatment provides a clean start in the spring that persists for a while and ‘buys time’ in a delayed planting situation.

Marestail is one of the bigger concerns in a late burndown situation, especially when not initially treated last fall. Many of the other weeds, even if bigger, are still relatively well controlled by minor modifications to standard burndown programs (e.g. higher glyphosate rates, adding another herbicide). Marestail in fields not treated last fall has reached the size and age where a mixture of glyphosate and 2,4-D often won’t work. Substituting Sharpen for the 2,4-D can improve control usually, but even this combination is not infallible as marestail gets larger. Also – we have observed some weakness from the glyphosate/Sharpen combination on dandelion, purple deadnettle, and larger giant ragweed. The more effective approach is to combine all three herbicides – glyphosate, 2,4-D and Sharpen. The addition of metribuzin can also result in more consistently effective marestail control. And a reminder - deciding to include Sharpen at the last minute can result in a need to alter the residual herbicide program. Labels still allow mixtures of Sharpen with herbicides that contain flumioxazin (Valor), sulfentrazone (Authority), or fomesafen (Reflex) only if applied 2 or more weeks before planting. Some things to consider in a delayed burndown situation:

1. Increase glyphosate rates to at least 1.5 lb ae/A. This will not improve marestail control, but should help with most other weeds.

2. Where at all possible, keep 2,4-D ester in the mix, even if it means waiting another 7 days to plant soybeans. Plant the corn acres first and come back to soybeans to allow time for this. Have the burndown custom-applied if labor or time is short.

3. To improve control with glyphosate/2,4-D, add Sharpen or another saflufenacil herbicide, as long as the residual herbicides in the mix do include flumioxazin, sulfentrazone, or fomesafen if it’s within 14 days of soybean planting. It’s also possible to substitute Sharpen for 2,4-D when it’s not possible to wait 7 days to plant, but this may result in reduced control of dandelion, deadnettle and giant ragweed. Where the residual herbicide in the mix does contain flumioxazin, sulfentrazone, or fomesafen, and it’s not possible to change the residual or add Sharpen, adding metribuzin can improve burndown effectiveness somewhat.

4. Consider substituting Gramoxone or glufosinate for glyphosate? Gramoxone is less effective than glufosinate on marestail, but glufosinate can struggle some in a dense, large no-till burndown situation. Either one should be applied with metribuzin and 2,4-D ideally. Use the higher labeled rates and a spray volume of 15 to 20 gpa for best results. A consideration here is that in large no-till weed situations, high rates of glyphosate typically have more value than high rates of Gramoxone or glufosinate, with the exception of glyphosate-resistant weeds.

5. Among all of the residual herbicides, chlorimuron contributes the most activity on emerged annual weeds and dandelion. This is probably most evident when the chlorimuron is applied as a premix with metribuzin (Canopy/Cloak DF, etc). The chlorimuron may not be much of a help for marestail control, since many populations are ALS-resistant. Cloransulam (FirstRate) has activity primarily on emerged ragweeds and marestail, as long as they are not ALS-resistant. We have on occasion observed a reduction in systemic herbicide activity when mixed with residual herbicides that contain sulfentrazone or flumioxazin.

6. It is possible to substitute tillage for burndown herbicides. Make sure that the tillage is deep and thorough enough to completely uproot weeds. Weeds that regrow after being “beat up” by tillage are often impossible to control for the rest of the season. Tillage tools that do not uniformly till the upper few inches (e.g. TurboTill) should not be used for this purpose.
7. Late burndown in corn is typically a less dire situation compared with soybeans. Reasons for this include: 1) the activity of some residual corn herbicides (e.g. atrazine, mesotrione) on emerged weeds; 2), the ability to use dicamba around the time of planting; 3) the tolerance of emerged corn to 2,4-D and dicamba, and 4) the overall effectiveness of available POST corn herbicides. Overall, while not adequately controlling emerged weeds prior to soybean planting can make for a tough season, there is just more application flexibility and herbicide choice for corn. Having said this, be sure to make adjustments as necessary in rate or herbicide selection in no-till corn fields.

**Wheat Diseases: Updated Facts and Pictures - Part 1**

Author(s): Pierce Paul & Jorge David Salgado

**Septoria tritici blotch:** This is usually one of the various diseases to show up during the wheat seasons. It develops best under cool, wet conditions, with symptoms commonly detected on lower leaves. Initial lesions appear as yellowish or chlorotic flecks that later enlarge into irregular, brown-to-reddish brown lesions. As the lesions age, the centers become bleached with gray or ash-white centers, with small, dark-brown to black specks. The presence of these specks, called pycnidia, is the most reliable characteristic to help tell this disease apart from other disease such as Stagonospora leaf blotch and tan spot that typically develop later in the season. Read more about Septoria and other leaf blotch diseases of wheat at:


**Powdery mildew:** This is another disease that usually shows up early in the season. Wheat plants are most susceptible during periods of rapid growth, especially between the stem elongation and heading growth stages. As a result, mildew is most prevalent on the lower leaves of susceptible varieties in late April or early May, especially when the wheat stand is dense (heavy tillering) due to high nitrogen application and seeding rates. Powdery mildew is one of the easiest foliar diseases to identify since it is the only disease that produces powdery, fluffy, white-to-gray fungal growth on leaves, and eventually on stems and even heads. Read more about wheat powdery mildew at:


**Leaf Rust:** Unlike powdery mildew and Septoria tritici blotch, leaf rust typically develops toward the latter half of the wheat season. This is mainly because the fungus that causes this disease does not usually survive in Ohio, and as such, spores have to be blown up from the south. However, under mild winter conditions similar to those we experienced this past winter, the fungus survives on volunteer plants and may infect the crop just as early as powdery mildew and Septoria. Leaf rust is the most common of three rust diseases that affects wheat, and can be identified by the presence of rusty-colored pustules erupting through the leaf surface. It can be distinguished from other leaf diseases by rubbing the leaves and looking for the rusty color on your finger. Read more about rust diseases of wheat at:

Septoria, powdery mildew, and leaf rust are all capable of substantially reducing wheat yield and test weight, especially if your cultivar is susceptible and the flag leaf is damaged between Feekes 8 and Feekes 10.5, before grain fill is complete. Scout fields and look for these diseases and use this information to help you make your fungicide application decision. This would be a good time to apply a fungicide to protect the flag leaf if your cultivar is susceptible. There are several fungicides to choose from, select one that is effective against all three diseases. Read more about wheat fungicides at:


Fertilizing Forages: Using Nutrients Wisely
By – Mark Landefeld, OSU Extension Educator, Monroe County
Source: http://u.osu.edu/beef/2016/04/27/fertilizing-forages-using-nutrients-wisely/
This article appeared first in the April, 2016 issue of The Ohio Cattleman’s magazine

Applying fertilizers to hay and pasture fields to stimulate plant growth is a common practice to substantially increase forage yields. This is a sound management practice if application is made in accordance with soil test results and or expected harvest yields. Applying more nutrients than recommended from a soil test can be expensive and detrimental to the environment.

A single application of 15-15-15, or 19-19-19 fertilizer on each field year after year does not make good use of your purchased nutrients. Why? Nutrient levels of the soil may be different in each field and grasses and legumes need nutrients in different quantities for their most beneficial growth. Legume plants do not need the same amount of nitrogen applied to the soil as grass plants because they can make use of nitrogen from the atmosphere. Also, different amounts of each nutrient (phosphorus and potassium) are removed in each ton of forage harvested.

Meadows for example – Each ton of tall grass or legume forage harvested removes approximately 13 pounds of phosphorus(P) and 50 pounds of potassium(K) from the soil. That means these nutrients need to be replaced, preferably in the ratio of about one part P to four parts K. A single yearly application of fertilizer, as mentioned above, would not build soil nutrients in the proper ratio to offset those removed in the hay.

If we expect to harvest four tons of hay a year from each acre, we would remove 52 pounds of actual P and 200 pounds of actual K from the soil on each acre. Applying a total of 275 pounds of 19-19-19 fertilizer per acre would meet our P needs (275 x .19 = 52 lbs.), but it would be about 148 pounds short of the K we need to replace (what we removed in four tons of forage). An additional application of 250 pounds of Potash (0-0-60) per acre should be applied to maintain our nutrient balance. P and K may be applied to the soil any time of the year if soil conditions are firm enough to hold equipment, but after first cutting has been removed may be the best.

Our 275 pound application of 19-19-19 fertilizer would also contain 52 pounds of nitrogen (N) per acre, adequate maybe for grass stands in one application, but too much N for a field that contains 35-40 percent, or more, legume plants. As farm managers we need to understand how the wrong fertilizer applications can be costly from the financial aspect and we must minimize unwanted effects to the environment.

That is why split or multiple applications of blended fertilizer with the appropriate analysis should be made. Multiple applications made during the growing season are an effective method to maximize growth and reduce N losses. Producers should use split applications if you have sandy soils with high potential for leaching, if you run the risk of volatilization of N, or if high rates of fertilizer are to be used. Surface volatilization occurs in some forms of N when it breaks down and forms ammonia gases. The rate of surface volatilization depends on moisture level, temperature and pH of the soil surface. If the area is wet when a fertilizer is spread and additional rain is not soon expected, evaporating water can pick up the ammonia released from the urea and be lost. Temperatures greater than 50°F and
pH’s greater than 6.5 can significantly increase the rate of urea conversion to ammonia gasses. Do not broadcast urea based fertilizers to fields where lime has been surface applied within the last 12 months, especially if two or more tons of lime per acre was applied, unless the fertilizer is incorporated. Nitrogen loss will occur.

To stop ammonia volatilization from urea, the urea must be tied up by the soil. To get urea in direct contact with soil it is beneficial to have enough rain to wash the urea from plant residue into the soil. If residue is very light, .25 to .50 inch of rain is enough to dissolve the urea and wash it into the soil. If heavy plant residue covers the soil .50 inch or greater rainfall is required. Other forms of N such as ammonium sulfate or ammonium nitrate could be used to reduce volatilization, but may be hard to find unless you make special purchasing arrangements.

Pastures – Grasses and legumes in a pasture require the same nutrients as those in meadows. Do you need to put as much fertilizer on your pastures as you do your hay fields? Probably not, because as cows consume forages they also return approximately 66% of the phosphorus and 90% of the potassium to the field in their manure and urine. Are the nutrients evenly distributed back on the pasture? This depends a great deal on your management. When cows are confined to a specific area for a short period of time, rotationally grazed, studies have shown manure deposits to be evenly distributed over the entire area. If cows are continuously allowed to roam over large areas as they choose, manure deposits (your nutrients), are moved to the loafing areas where the herd spends most of the day. This may be around watering troughs or in a tree line/woods if livestock are given the opportunity.

Fertilizer applications in pasture fields should be done at times that are determined by your livestock’s forage needs. If you need additional forage early in the spring, fertilizing up to one-third of your pastures may be needed. Generally, grass and legume forages grow quickly in the spring (spring flush) without additional fertilizers. Early spring fertilization in pastures may compound problems associated with spring grass growth such as grass tetany. Late May to early June is usually a better time to spread fertilizer on pastures to boost production before hot and dry weather arrives in July and August.

Many farm managers also make fertilizer applications to a portion of their pastures again in early August then remove the livestock. This allows them to stockpile the forage growth for use later in the fall and winter to reduce stored feed needs.

So what does all this mean? Usually a specific blend of nutrients and proper timing of application are needed in most fields to maximize production. In most cases this requires a soil test and planning for the application to be done at a time when you will not lose a large portion of the N to volatilization. Multiple applications may be warranted to make the best use of the nutrients. Cost of nutrients must also be considered when trying to determine the best fertilizer to use.

Baleage: An Option in Better Haymaking
By Travis Meteer, Extension Educator, Commercial Agriculture, University of Illinois
Source: http://u.osu.edu/beef/2016/04/27/baleage-an-option-in-better-haymaking/

Throughout the Midwest, spring rains can make putting up dry hay very difficult. Last year, many producers struggled to get hay up without it getting rained on. This brings me to discuss baleage as an option for hay making. It is easy to see the reasons why you should consider baleage. Making hay at higher moisture allows you to bale closer to cutting and shorten the window of dry weather needed to get hay up. It also leads to less leaf loss, less nutrient leaching, and that makes for better quality hay. Wrapping bales also leads to less storage loss.

Waiting on dry weather can also impact forage quality and productions. As forage continues to grow and mature the quality will decline. When producing dry hay, often times traffic is still an issue on fields as much as 5 days after cutting. This can drastically decrease yields for the next cutting. Baleage allows for a quick on and off of the field.
Timing is crucial in making baleage. I recommend cutting the forage in the afternoon if possible as the sugars will be the highest in the plant during the afternoon. Baling should occur with a target of 50% moisture in the bale. The targeted range should be no more than 40% to 60% moisture. When bale moisture gets on either side of that range, fermentation patterns will be poor.

Proper wrapping is very important. If the wrap is too thin, torn, or not quality plastic, your baleage will be sub-par. Baleage is only as good as the integrity of the plastic you use. Using net wrap will provide a smooth surface to wrap with less opportunity for air pockets or the plastic to be poked through. Storage of the baleage needs to be in an area that can be monitored for rodents and raccoons. Anything that tears plastic or compromises the anaerobic environment will result in ruined baleage. Storing bales close to where they will be fed is wise. Moving bales after wrapping can be difficult. Spearing the bales or poking holes in the plastic will negatively impact the baleage. You may need to look into bale grabbers or methods of grabbing and moving bales without compromising the plastic.

A few tips:
- Monitor bale size. Large bales can weigh too much and be difficult to handle.
- For balers with knives, think about removing half of the knives to improve bale integrity and limit bales that “blow apart” once opening
- Use inoculants. Especially following a frost or in drier weather.
- Avoid dirt and manure contamination. Listeria and Clostridium can be an issue and cause serious risk.
- Wrap dirt and manure contamination. Listeria and Clostridium can be an issue and cause serious risk.
- Wrap will cost about $3-$5 per bale. Don’t short the layers of wrap needed to get a good seal.
- When doing a feed inventory or selling hay, remember half of the bale is water. Dry hay is only 15% moisture

EDITOR’s NOTE: For more detail on making baleage, see the publication entitled Large Round Bale Silage by James W. Garthe, instructor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and Marvin H. Hall, assistant professor, Department of Agronomy at Penn State University.

OSU Extension in Lake County Seeking Agricultural & Natural Resources Extension Educator
OSU Extension is searching for a qualified professional to fill the Lake County Agricultural and Natural Resource Educator position. This position is replacing Randy Zondag who retired at the end of April after serving in this capacity for over 33 years. The Educator will provide overall leadership to developing and conducting a proactive applied research and education program in agriculture and natural resources to meet current and future needs in farm management, livestock and crop production, food security, home horticulture/Master Gardeners, commercial horticulture, farm land-use issues, innovative agricultural business opportunities, environmental quality and sustainability, renewable energy, and bio-based products.

This position is located in Painesville, Ohio; Western Reserve EERA and the first round of interviews for selected candidates will be held in Columbus Ohio on Wednesday, June 1, 2016. The required qualifications are an earned Master’s degree at the time of hire is required with at least one degree in Agriculture, Natural Resources, or other related field; strong written and oral communication skills; experience working with diverse clientele and organizations; demonstrated success in working as part of a team and initiating collaborative partnerships; leadership ability and strong teaching and subject matter expertise in at least one area of agriculture; willing to work flexible hours with minimal supervision. The desired qualifications include a degree in Production Horticulture with two years of experience; technical writing experience and computer skills; and experience working with statewide growers groups.

The deadline to apply for this position is May 15, 2016. The complete application can be found at: Jobsatosu.com— http://www.jobsatosu.com:80/postings/69539. For more information about this position contact Jackie Kirby Wilkins, Northeast Ohio Regional Director at 330-350-0512 or wilkins.201@osu.edu.
Dine in to Make a Difference at Bob Evans Restaurants on May 16-17, 2016
Looking for a great way to support agriculture and get a great meal? If so, mark May 16-17 on your calendar as the Ohio Farm Bureau and Bob Evans are partnering to support a trio of organizations that enhance education and experience of youth in agriculture. Ohio Farm Bureau and Friends Days at Bob Evans restaurants throughout Ohio are set for May 16 and 17. The goal of the fundraiser is to increase awareness of the importance of agriculture education programs supported by Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio 4-H and Ohio FFA.

Farm Bureau members in conjunction with 4-H and FFA member families have the potential to work together to make a huge impact on the future of agriculture education programs in Ohio. Plan to “dine to make a difference” at any of the 194 Bob Evans Restaurants in Ohio on May 16 or 17, 2016. When diners present a flyer at check-out, Bob Evans will donate 15 percent of the sale to the Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation, Ohio 4-H Foundation and Ohio FFA Foundation. Dine in, carryout and catering orders will count toward the fundraiser. Catering orders must be placed by May 9.

April 29 Edition of the Ohio Grape Newsletter
The Ohio Grape Team has published the April 29 edition of the Ohio Grape Newsletter. Articles in this issue include: Sensitive Crop Registry-It’s FREE to Register; Disease Section; Early Season Disease Management; Leaf Roll Virus Grapevine Diseases caused by Viruses and Phytoplasmas; OARDC Vineyard Update; OSU Piketon South Centers Vineyard Update; Editor Note on Ozone Sprayer; Northern Michigan Vineyard Experiment with Ozone Sprayers; Vineyard Experiment with Ozone Sprayers; Insect Pest Time Table for Controls; Phylloxera Study; The Cocoon; Honey Bees need Lobbyists too; Weather is Whether and You are NOT going to Change It?; News to Use; Grant Applications-Value Added Grants; Editor Note on Worker Protection Standards; EPA Revisions to Worker Protection Standards; and Agricultural Worker Protection Standards Comparisons of Current versus New. The newsletter can be accessed at: http://ohiograpeweb.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/sites/grapeweb/files/imce/pdf_newsletters/OGEN20160429%2810%29.pdf

Winery Helps Farmer Find Himself
By Marcia Pledger
Source: http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/business/2016/04/24/1-winery-helps-farmer-find-himself.html

About six years ago, Tony Kosicek was all smiles when he got an offer to sell his grape farm in Harpersfield Township to someone who wanted to turn the land into a winery. Farming is hard work, especially when you're working another part time job. Dreams of doing something totally different were short lived, though, when the third-generation grape farmer met with his accountant. With some deals, income you receive from the sale is subject to taxes with even higher rates than capital gains. He turned down the deal and kept growing concord grapes and selling cars on the side for a friend's business.

For years, Kosicek sold about 150 tons of grapes to Welch's food and beverage company each year. He thought he was satisfied with having a paid-off house, working hard and living comfortably. But the thought of starting his own winery kept nagging at him. And even though he was in the heart of Geneva, with about a dozen wineries within 15 minutes of his farm, he decided to go for it after the sale fell apart. He scaled back on his contract with Welch's and started planting several different red and white varieties of grapes. Two years ago, he opened Kosicek Vineyards.
"We're fast becoming a destination place for tourists in this area. Most people come in and do a tasting, and maybe buy a bottle of wine to go," said Kosicek, 50. "They spend about an hour at each different winery. So on a typical weekend day, they might stop at four or five wineries — not drink a lot of wine — but hopefully buy quite a bit of wine to go home with."

Kosicek is not one to open up easily about challenges. He prefers to talk about the present and future. But this is a man who built a winery from scratch on a farm that both his father and grandfather worked on first. Growing up, his biggest dream was moving away from the farm and the area after getting a college degree in computer programming. But when his father got sick, he came back home. At one point, he was running a bowling center his family owned in the area and working at the farm. That was too much. After he sold the bowling center, he started enjoying living in the area more than ever.

These days, he generally works about 80 hours a week. And he’s happy about his decision to start a winery in the hills of the Grand River Valley, Ohio's largest wine region. Nationwide, there are wineries in every state. The state of California accounts for about 90 percent of total U.S. wine production, and the state of Washington ranks second with 718 wineries, according to the Wine Institute. Ohio, with 143 wineries, ranks No. 7 among the nation's top 10 wine producing states and No. 8 for wineries.

What to Communicate to Your Banker Now
by Sara Schafer, Ag Web by Farm Journal
Source: http://www.agweb.com/article/what-to-communicate-to-your-banker-now-naa-sara-schafer/

A farmer going dark on his or her banker is the first warning sign of trouble to come. That’s according to Curt Covington, senior vice president of agricultural finance at Farmer Mac and a 30-year veteran of ag banking. Today’s tight margins are cause for many ag lenders to be spooked about their farmer clients. For that reason, Covington preaches “constant communication.”

Keep strong lines of dialogue with all key farm stakeholders—especially your banker, Covington advises. As with any other problem, a farm conflict is best dealt with sooner rather than later after it has festered or worsened, he says. Plus, trusted advisers can provide valuable intelligence.

“Your vendors are servicing hundreds of your competitors and could provide you advice and new ideas,” he says. As you visit with your banker about your 2016 plans, don’t be surprised if they want more information and documentation than ever before, notes Chris Barron, a consultant at Ag View Solutions, an Iowa farmer and a Top Producer columnist.

“Lenders are looking at the risk level of their farmer customers,” Barron says. “Producers are typically optimistic about prices and yields. What the lenders will do is pull price projections and yield expectations down to stress-test your cash flow.” Because many farmers are borrowing a larger line of credit, Barron says, it’s important to develop a working capital improvement plan. “To improve working capital, there are only two things you can do: Spend less money or increase productivity and profitability,” he notes.

Start with expense improvement. Barron suggests looking at these options:

- Enact a purchase freeze. Let everyone in the operation know that no major purchases can occur for the rest of the year. Agree that any expense over $500 must be approved by the management team.
- Take a hard look at compensation. You may have to trim salaries a bit in years like this or consider not replacing team members who have left the operation. If you hire part-time help, see if you could get by with your current team instead of outsourcing jobs.
Look at restricting debt. If working capital is low, review your loan options. Be sure to talk with your lender about this decision so they understand why you want to restructure debt (and that you’re not just covering up losses).

Liquidate unused machinery. Yes, selling machinery is tough right now, as equipment costs have gone down. But on the other hand, there’s cash sitting in assets that are not generating any revenue. Even unloading less-expensive equipment can add up to decent savings.

Above all, Barron says, you should look at your budget every month. “Pull the detail out every month and have everyone in the operation look at every single line item,” he says. “Paying attention to details isn’t an option any more—it’s an absolute necessity.”

Handling Your Maple Syrup Crop after the Season
By: Les Ober Geauga Co. OSU Extension
Source: https://ohiomaple.wordpress.com/2016/04/29/handling-your-maple-syrup-crop-after-the-season/

Every once and awhile it is good to go back and visit and old post with a good message here is one from 2013 with a few additions. Maple syrup is often referred to as “liquid gold”. The increased demand for maple syrup and the escalating value of this year’s crop, has added new meaning to this old adage. Once the season is over you need to use a little TLC when it comes to storing maple syrup so it will maintain its quality and value. If you have not sold all of this year’s maple syrup and have some left in the sugarhouse or in a tool shed you need to watch the inside temperatures of those buildings. With all of the recent hot weather syrup stored in outside non-insulated structures can elevate in temperatures quickly and spoilage can occur. You may have thought that you covered the entire basis by packing the syrup hot in a sealed container. Maybe not!

Let’s look at how syrup is packed and stored. Most syrup is stored in stainless steel barrels that were packed in February and March. The syrup went in to barrels hot and was sealed. A thirty gallon drum is a hard vessel to pack there is always room for air. They very seldom are packed without a small amount of air space. The drums then cool to the temperature of the time of the year. Eventually over time the syrup inside the drums takes on the same temperature as the outside temperature. Steel transfers heat and cold well. The syrup on the inside of the barrel will remain cold for a long period of time due to its viscosity and mass. The steel in the outside drum will heat up quickly when outside ambient temperature gets above 80 and stays warm. The result is the buildup of condensation between the warm steel and the cool syrup on the inside. When this moisture gets into the air space molds can form.

This is the same thing that happens to jugs when they are not heated to 185 degrees F. If the product is not above 66 brix the syrup can even ferment. The same is true for drums they should be packed hot and the seal should not be broken until you can the product. The worst culprit when it comes to spoiled syrup is a drum that was partially filled and then topped off with some hot syrup. This scenario and the spoilage that often comes with it can be avoided by repacking that drum at between 150 and 180 degrees Fahrenheit. It is always best to completely fill a drum with hot syrup right off the filter press, seal it and store it.

The best solution for long term storage is to build a cool room. You notice I did said cool, not cold. A walk in cooler would be the best case scenario but most producers cannot afford such a luxury. Take a small space big enough to hold several drums of syrup. This could be a closet or small room in a building. Insulate the room and stick a window air conditioning unit through the wall. When temperature gets above 80 deg. F for any length of time, fire up the air conditioner and brings the room to just below 70 deg. F. At that temperature the syrup will stays relatively cool in the barrels. It always seems to be colder than the outside temperature. You only have to get the syrup through the hot months, once the daytime temperatures cool off you are out of the woods. Another trick is to rotate the drum occasionally this moves the syrup around inside the drum. This should dissipate any moisture that forms on the metal wall of the drum thus reducing the chance of spoilage if the drum was packed correctly to begin with.
CRP Payouts Entice Farmers to Leave Land Fallow
By Betsy Jibben

Some farmers around the Corn Belt are not planting all of their land this year. Instead, they are converting cropland into conservation acres, popularly known as CRP, under USDA’s Conservation Reserve Program, which pays farmers to remove "environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production," according to the agency.

Iowa farmer Mark Happel is keeping busy during planting. “If these conditions consist, I think we’re going to start some planting here,” says Happel, who farms in Sumner, Iowa. But he won’t be running the planter on all of his acres. He is trying to transition some ground into the CRP this year. “It will be 15% of my corn acres going into CRP this year,” says Happel. He says the switch is all economic, due to cash rents, lower commodity prices and CRP payouts. “Low commodity prices are probably the main reason we got into this,” he explains. "There are payouts between $275 and $330 an acre for these CRP programs, whereas the cash rent is probably $200 to $250 on that type of ground anyway,” says Happel.

He’s not alone in his thinking. Analysts say there is a movement to enroll farmland into CRP ground in the northern and western Corn Belt. “I think there are some regional areas going into CRP. We’re hearing more of the pockets of the Dakotas and Minnesota. It’s really a function of what the county is willing to pay for it. I’ve heard of some exceptionally high prices,” says Farm Journal Economist Bob Utterback of Utterback Marketing Services.

CRP Payouts Entice Farmers to Leave Land Fallow.

Those prices—and the decision—all depends on that state and county payouts, which can vary. “There are a lot of acres going into CRP. It’s just in a different watershed than mine," says Brent Judisch, who farms in Cedar Falls, Iowa. "The watershed east of us has more money budgeted for it. A lot of farmers take advantage of it. If you can get as much government on the land to not produce it, then why have to go through the work and the hassle to spray and harvest it to make the same kind of money? For the farmers who own the land, it’s a great opportunity."

A representative with Iowa's state Farm Service Administration office says it’s too early to determine how many acres will be awarded a contract in the state of this fiscal year, but from October 2015 until March 2016, roughly 293,000 acres were enrolled in Iowa. The farm bill has a national cap of 24 million acres per fiscal year, and there are currently 23.8 million acres enrolled. Some of those will expire at the end of September. Farmers will have to wait to see how many contracts may be approved from the general sign-up period.

Happel says it wasn’t a hard decision putting some of his marginal land into the program. “With this creek right here, a two-inch rain or more that goes north at least five miles will bring the water level up above the banks," he says. It also offers him a reliable source of income in a roller-coaster year for commodities. “Most years we get a good crop, but there are a lot of years that we don’t," Happel says. "This guarantee of income every year off this type of ground? Well, that’s a good income for us." While the farming is his profession, he’s comfortable knowing land is in CRP, especially with a new farm bill on the horizon, a different leader moving into White House in January 2017 and uncertainty of crop prices.

USDA Offers New Loans for Portable Farm Storage and Handling Equipment

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide a new financing option to help farmers purchase portable storage and handling equipment. Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Val Dolcini and Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Administrator Elanor Starmer announced changes to the Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program today
during a local and regional food roundtable in Columbus, Ohio. The loans, which now include a smaller microloan option with lower down payments, are designed to help producers, including new, small and mid-sized producers, grow their businesses and markets.

“As more communities reconnect with agriculture, consumer demand is increasing for food produced locally or regionally,” said Dolcini. “Portable handling and storage equipment is vital to helping farmers get their products to market more quickly and better maintain product quality, bringing them greater returns. That’s why we’ve added this type of equipment as a new category for our Farm Storage Facility Loan program.”

The program also offers a new “microloan” option, which allows applicants seeking less than $50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of five percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history. Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. The microloan option is expected to be of particular benefit to smaller farms and ranches, and specialty crop producers who may not have access to commercial storage or on-farm storage after harvest. These producers can invest in equipment like conveyors, scales or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them to markets. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply.

“Growing high-value crops for local and regional markets is a common entry point for new farmers,” said Starmer. “Since they often rent land and have to transport perishable commodities, a loan that can cover mobile coolers or even refrigerated trucks fills an important gap. These producers in turn supply the growing number of food hubs, farmers markets or stores and restaurants interested in sourcing local food.”

Earlier this year, FSA significantly expanded the list of commodities eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loan. Eligible commodities now include aquaculture; floriculture; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables; corn, grain sorghum, rice, oilseeds, oats, wheat, triticale, spelt, buckwheat, lentils, chickpeas, dry peas sugar, peanuts, barley, rye, hay, honey, hops, maple sap, unprocessed meat and poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt and renewable biomass. FSFL microloans can also be used to finance wash and pack equipment used post-harvest, before a commodity is placed in cold storage.

AMS helps thousands of agricultural food producers and businesses enhance their marketing efforts through a combination of research, technical services and grants. The agency works to improve marketing opportunities for U.S. growers and producers, including those involved in specialty crop production and in the local and regional food systems. Visit http://www.ams.usda.gov/ to learn more about AMS services.

This announcement will further advance the efforts of USDA’s Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative, which coordinates the Department’s work to develop local and regional food systems. USDA is committed to helping farmers, ranchers, and businesses access the growing market for local and regional foods, which was valued at $12 billion in 2014 according to industry estimates. Under this Administration, USDA has invested more than $1 billion in more than 40,000 local and regional food businesses and infrastructure projects. More information on how USDA investments are connecting producers with consumers and expanding rural economic opportunities is available in Chapter IV of USDA Results on Medium. To learn more about Farm Storage Facility Loans, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact a local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit http://offices.usda.gov/.

USDA Establishes New Partnerships to Link Underserved Farmers to FSA Programs
The U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) announced on April 26, 2016 cooperative agreements with 55 partners to educate farmers and other producers that have been underserved by USDA programs historically about Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs that provide financial, disaster or technical support. Nearly $2.5 million will go to nonprofits, associations, universities, and foundations that will provide training and information on agricultural best practices,
local networking opportunities, and more. “We’re always working to find new ways for our programs to reach more producers and create more jobs in agriculture,” said FSA Administrator Val Dolcini. “The organizations selected as part of this effort share USDA’s priority of helping more Americans build successful farms and ranches.”

FSA, which solicited applications last fall, received nearly 100 proposals that requested over $9 million in funding. Cooperative agreements, encompassing more than 28 states, will be between $20,000 and $75,000 each and several involve multi-state or national efforts. A list of awardees can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach. FSA also announced today that it is accepting proposals for consideration in the second evaluation period. Applications are due no later than July 11, 2016. Projects not selected during the first evaluation period will be reconsidered during the second period. Additional information on the funding solicitation and the related FSA programs can be found at http://www.grants.gov/ using reference number USDA-FSA-CA-2016-001. For nonprofits and public institutions of higher education that are considering participation, a recording of the online informational session held with stakeholders is posted on the web at www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach.

USDA is also helping producers find an entry into farming through urban agriculture opportunities and the increasing consumer demand for locally-produced items. Under this Administration, USDA has invested more than $1 billion in over 40,000 local and regional food businesses and infrastructure projects. USDA is committed to helping farmers, ranchers, and businesses access the growing market for local and regional foods, which was valued at $12 billion in 2014 according to industry estimates. More information on how USDA investments are connecting producers with consumers and expanding rural economic opportunities is available in Chapter IV of USDA Results on Medium.

Since 2009, USDA has worked to strengthen and support American agriculture, an industry that supports one in 11 American jobs, provides American consumers with more than 80 percent of the food we consume, ensures that Americans spend less of their paychecks at the grocery store than most people in other countries, and supports markets for homegrown renewable energy and materials. USDA has also provided $5.6 billion of disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; expanded risk management tools with products like to Whole Farm Revenue Protection; and helped farm businesses grow with $36 billion in farm credit. USDA has engaged its resources to support a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building new markets and market opportunities; extending new conservation opportunities; offering appropriate risk management tools; and increasing our outreach, education, and technical support including 102,000 direct and guaranteed farm operating and ownership loans. USDA has also provided more than 18,000 microloans totaling over $406 million since the program began in January 2013. Nearly 89 percent of microloans, or more than $363 million, were used by new, beginning and underserved farmers to grow their farming operations. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/results.

Consider Attracting Bats to Your Garden
By the Ashtabula County Master Gardeners

Ashtabula County Master Gardeners have written articles about attracting birds, butterflies and hummingbirds to our gardens, but not many columns are devoted to attracting bats. Why is that? Bats are amazing little creatures that help the environment in many different ways. Are you plagued by mosquitoes, cut worms, June Beetles, or leafhoppers in your garden? Have stinkbugs invaded your home?

Before you stock up on pesticides to get rid of them, think about attracting bats. Bats eat many of the insects we would prefer not to entertain. Whether yours is a large or small garden, you can keep bats coming back as long as you offer them what all living creatures need: water, food and shelter. But wait a second, you say. Aren’t bats carriers of rabies? Over twenty years of research clearly indicates that less than one percent of the bat population contracts rabies, and those that do die quickly and seldom become aggressive as do dogs or cats.
And that old myth about their being blind and getting tangled up in people's hair? So untrue. Using high-frequency sounds like dolphins do, bats can "see" everything but color. In total darkness, they can detect obstacles as fine as a human hair. Why, then, do we fear bats and try to drive them away from our domiciles and outside living areas? Most likely, it is due to that most common aspect of human behavior: we fear what we don't understand. As poet Theodore Roethke penned, "Something is amiss or out of place / When mice with wings can wear a human face."

Although they may not have the beauty and appeal of birds and butterflies, the bats we encounter in Ashtabula County are gentle and shy and avoid contact with humans as much as possible. When they mistakenly blunder into someone's living room, no one wants them out more than the bats themselves. Outside where they belong, each can catch up to 600 mosquitoes in an hour. During the two hours or so of dusk and dawn, a colony of 500 mouse-eared bats can easily consume half a million little disease-carrying bloodsuckers! With growing concerns about the Zika and West Nile viruses and all the other pathogens that mosquitoes can carry, we need MORE bats!

There is one other reason for providing bat habitat. Although little brown bats are our most abundant species locally, recent range wide declines are troubling, and the ODNR Division of Wildlife has labeled this bat a "Species of Concern." Especially alarming is the White-Nose Syndrome, first detected in bats in Schoharie, New York, in 2006. It has spread throughout the northeast and was found in neighboring counties to our west in 2011-2012. This fungal disease has been known to wipe out entire colonies during hibernation.

It is estimated to have killed over six million bats in North America since its arrival in 2006. Even more serious declines have been recorded worldwide, probably due to loss of habitat and predation by humans who fear them. The implications are dire. As bat expert Merlin D. Tuttle says, "We need bats whether we like them or not; their loss poses serious, potentially irreversible consequences to the environment that we all must share."

How can you attract bats and keep them coming back to your garden? Every night, bats must have water to drink, lapping it up "on-the-wing." A pond or creek nearby will certainly entice more visitors, but installing a birdbath or fountain will help, too. We can dramatically increase food sources for bats by planting fragrant flowers, herbs and night blooming plants that attract night-feeding insects, a bat's main food source. Some plants to consider are evening primrose, four o'clocks, nicotiana, French marigolds, heliotrope, asters, bubbleia, rosemary, lavender and honeysuckle.

Bats also like areas with mature trees because there are many more insects in the tree canopy than close to the ground. If you have trees, shrubs or hedges, these will do more than anything to attract bats to your garden. Of course, bats need proper habitat; unfortunately, habitat destruction is a big problem today. Many people remove dead and dying trees from their yards, but these trees provide excellent habitat for bats.

Specially-built bat houses can be purchased locally at the Bird Feeder in Jefferson or online. Place your bat house fifteen to twenty-five feet off the ground, preferably attached to the south side of your house or a free-standing pole. Bat houses don't do as well attracting occupants under shade trees because of the bats' need for heat.

Expect it to take six months to two years for bats to find their new house. Bat houses close to a stream, pond or some other water source are more popular. Once your bat house is occupied, you can expect the bats to return year after year to roost, bringing with them all the benefits their huge ability to consume pesky insects provides.
Sources: Liz Miller, Adams County Master Gardener, Pennsylvania, "Attracting Bats to Your Garden," and Merlin D. Tuttle, America’s Neighborhood Bats

The Best Movies about Farmers: Part II
By Katie Woods

It’s been a few years since we’ve talked about farming movies. We took a leaf out of our readers’ books and watched some of the movies they suggested after we shared our previous list (Note: Shared this in last week’s E-News). Our lists aren’t exhaustive, but they offer a glimpse at how Hollywood has portrayed agriculture through the decades.

Our Vines Have Tender Grapes (1945)
Based on the 1940 George Víctor Martín novel with the same title, “Our Vines Have Tender Grapes” features Norwegian-American farmer Martinius Jacobson and his wife Bruna who are raising their seven-year-old daughter, Selma, as they do life in a small Wisconsin farming community. Martinius, played by Edward G. Robinson, is dedicated to his family and his land. Margaret O’Brien plays Selma, who goes off on adventures with her five-year-old cousin Arnold, played by Jackie “Butch” Jenkins. With glimpses into the lives of various townspeople, “Our Vines Have Tender Grapes” shows how connected the community is and highlights the ideals of rural America. When one farmer loses his newly-built barn to a fire, Selma offers her new calf to him, and the rest of the community follows her lead by being generous in their donations. The title is taken from Song of Solomon 15:2 (KJV): “Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”

The Green Promise (1949)
This black and white film depicts the lives of a widowed father, Papa Matthews, and his children, Deborah, Abigail, Phineas and Susan, played by Natalie Wood. The family is starting fresh with a new farm after leaving their old failing one. Susan desperately wants to join the local 4-H club and raise lambs, but Papa puts his foot down. She finds a way to get the lambs anyway, though, with the help of the county agricultural agent, David Barkley, who has his eye on oldest daughter Deborah. Several times throughout the movie, Papa’s refusal to heed others’ advice leads to close calls that threaten the farm and the family. He disregards advice to stop cutting timber on the hill overlooking the farm, and he decides to plant a crop he knows instead of listening to David. Eventually, he has a change of heart. “The Green Promise” is another movie with a title drawn from the Bible, this time alluding to God’s “green promise” to Moses about the Promised Land.

The Egg & I (1956)
“The Egg and I” is another film based on a book. With the same title as the movie, Betty MacDonald wrote the book as a memoir of her life on a chicken farm with her husband in Washington state. MacDonald recounts events from the 1920s and 1930s. This lighthearted film takes place after World War II. Bob returns from serving in the military, marries Betty and surprises her with news that he purchased an old farm and plans to raise chickens and sell eggs for a living. Both Bob and Betty are from the city, so farm life is a new experience for them. The couple faces various hardships and occurrences that come along in rural farming life, such as learning to take care of livestock, befriending their neighbors and handling farm life. The movie was broadcast on the radio by the Hallmark Playhouse in 1950. Claudette Colbert, who plays Betty MacDonald in the movie, participated in the presentation.

Farming doesn’t promise an easy life. Starring Sissy Spacek and Mel Gibson, “The River” chronicles the lives of Tennessee farmers Tom and Mae Garvey, along with their children, Lewis and Beth, as they battle not only the elements but the local bank as it threatens to repossess their farm along the river and the owner of the local milling company that wants to purchase the land that borders the river, too. After rain destroys his crops, Tom takes a job as a scab at a steel mill to keep the foreclosure on the farm at bay while Mae remains on the farm, completing daily
chores. The movie won an Academy Award for sound effects editing and a Golden Reel Award for best sound editing: sound effects. Even if you don’t have a farming background, you can appreciate the heartaches and trials the Garvey family faces.

**Country (1984)**
In the same vein as “The River,” “Country” chronicles the lives of Iowa farming couple Gilbert and Jewell Ivy, played by Sam Shepard and Jessica Lange, respectively. The family struggles to make a profit during the 1980s, when America’s economy and government farm policies heavily impacted family farms. The farm has been in Jewell’s family for generations, but it faces possible foreclosure, a tornado, low crop prices and other trials. The hard times get to Gilbert, but Jewell is determined to hold on. The drama hits close to home for farmers who have faced environmental disasters, volatile markets and impending foreclosure. It was nominated for several awards and won the National Board Review for Top Ten Films in 1984.

**Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern (1995)**
Tracing her family’s southwestern Iowa farm back to its beginnings in 1860s, Jeanne Jordan, along with production help from her husband Steven Ascher, tells the history of the farm, from run-ins with a gang in the 1880s to the financial crisis of the 1980s and finally, in the 1990s, the family’s efforts to save the farm from foreclosure. When Jeanne’s parents Russel and Mary Jane tell her they have to sell the farm, Jeanne and Steven return to Iowa. The family watches as their cattle, equipment and furniture are all sold at auction. To them, it’s like the life they know is disappearing. After the auction, the family pays off their debt, Jeanne's brother Jim takes over the land and Russel and Mary Jane move to town. “Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern” was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary and won a Sundance Grand Jury Prize & Audience Award for Best Documentary, plus other awards.

**Remembering Susan Masirovits**
Susan C. Masirovits, age 68, S. Elm St., Jefferson, died unexpectedly April 25, 2016 at her residence. Susan was the daughter of the late Walter H. & Esther W. (Kolehmainen) Masirovits and has been a Rock Creek and Jefferson resident all of her life. Susan was a graduate of Jefferson High School, she received her Bachelor’s Degree in education and Master’s Degree in American History from Kent State University. She also received Master’s Degrees in Foreign Language from Columbia University and Library Science from Florida State University.

Susan was a gourmet chef with certification from the Paganini’s Culinary School and was a master gardener from Ohio State University. She was a member of the Kent State Alumni Assoc., Jefferson Garden Club, Ashtabula Co. Historical Society, volunteered for the Ashtabula Co. Election Board, was one of the organizers of the Jefferson Farm Market, wrote recipes for the Gazette and volunteered at the county fair, always entering flowers and baked goods. Susan served as a member of the OSU Extension Extension Advisory Committee where she served as the group’s Secretary. She also enjoyed reading, gardening and traveling. Susan was the head librarian at Henderson Memorial Library for 20 years and was the assistant manager of the Eastlake Public Library 10 years, before retiring in 2005.

In 2004, Susan successfully completed the Ashtabula County Master Gardener training program and was an extremely valuable member of this group. Since completing her training, she donated over 2,200 hours of volunteerism to the group and was in 2007 was selected as the Ashtabula County Master Gardener of the Year. Susan was instrumental in coordinating the group’s community horticulture classes, worked with various fair projects, chaired the horticulture hotline committee, helped publish and distribute the Master Gardener cookbook, was the group’s resident expert on Butterflies and Giant Hogweed.
Susan’s fellow Master Gardeners have reflected on the Susan’s qualities. Some of these include: she was willing to do the unsung and was a steady, reliable Master Gardener. She had a take charge attitude, was responsible, dependable, available & willing to ALWAYS help. Everyone enjoyed working on team projects with her due to her enthusiasm, reliability and cooperative spirit. In addition to being very funny and friendly, she was extremely courteous and polite when communicating professionally with the public.

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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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