Finally some decent weather! It was great to see everyone going full steam ahead the past four days with soybean harvest. To see 70 degree temperatures in later October was wonderful! But as is the norm in Northeast Ohio, there is rain coming tonight and snow is in the forecast for this weekend. Ouch!

Over the past week, I was able to work with our Farm Service Agency to conduct dairy farm bill meetings in Ashtabula, Geauga and Medina Counties. In addition, Dianne Shoemaker resourced 2 meetings in Trumbull County. For dairy producers who were not able to make it to one of these meetings, there is a great decision tool available to help dairy producers decide at what level they enter into the Dairy Margin Protection Program. If you would like any of the information shared at these meetings, please drop me a line at marrison.2@osu.edu

A reminder that tickets for the 25th Ashtabula County Beef Banquet on November 8, 2014 must be purchased by this Friday, October 31. You won’t get a better piece of Prime Rib anywhere!

David Marrison, AG Educator

In this Issue:
- Regional Grape & Wine Meetings to be held across Ohio
- Dairy Situation and Outlook
- 2014 Farm Bill’s APH Yield Exclusion to be Implemented for 2015 Spring Crops
- Ashtabula County Plat Books Available
- 25th Annual Beef Banquet to be held on Saturday, November 8 in Lenox, Ohio.
- Northeast Ohio “Snow Bird” Private Pesticide Applicator Re-Certification Session & Commercial Fertilizer Application Certification to be held on Tuesday, November 25 in Burton, Ohio.
- Improving Your Woodland Workshop to be held on Saturday, November 15 in Kirtland, Ohio
- Ashtabula County Master Gardener Volunteers Sought

Regional Grape & Wine Meetings to be held across Ohio
The Ohio Wine Producers Association (OWPA) and the Ohio Grape Industry Committee (OGIC) will be hosting regional meetings across Ohio in November and December. These meetings will be held on:

Tuesday, Nov. 4: Kosicek Vineyards, 636 SR 534 S Harpersfield
Monday, Nov. 10: Sarah's Vineyard, 1204 W. Steels Corners Rd., Cuyahoga Falls
Monday, Nov. 24: Chateau Tebeau, 525 St. Rte. 635, Helena
Monday, Dec. 8: Meranda-Nixon Winery, 6517 Laycock Rd., Ripley
Tuesday, Dec. 9- Rockside Vineyard, 2363 Lancaster-Newark Rd., Lancaster

This meeting will start at 10:30 a.m. with registration to begin at 10:00 a.m. Topics which are on the agenda include: Upcoming Farmers' Market wine sales legislation and opportunities this will present; Trail activities: brochures, social media efforts/trail special events coming in each region; Update on program plans for License to Steal; Update on national issues from WineAmerica fall meeting including ingredient labeling, volunteer use by for profit wineries, issues with BMI and ASCAP; Update on planned, upcoming legislative receptions and legislative activity: state and Federal - spring
WineAmerica meetings in DC; Crisis Management handbook to address unexpected issues; Legislative action guide; Wine Conference Preview Day for new and soon to be established wineries; Motorcoach policy handout; Responsible Alcohol consumption; Update on Polar Vortex, TAP program and information about the opportunities for insuring your crops under USDA's NAP presented by USDA staff; Meeting with ODLC representatives AND lunch for an update on rules, legislation and other issues impacting the industry. Following these discussions, an OGIC Strategic Planning Session will be conducted by Christy Eckstein, OGIC Executive Director.

The cost for this program is including a welcome coffee and lunch will be $20 per person -- register on line at OhioWines.org. If growers are only coming for the OGIC afternoon planning session, there is no charge for attendance.

Dairy Situation and Outlook, October 20, 2014
By Bob Cropp, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension racropp@wisc.edu

Higher U.S. milk production, slowing of dairy exports and higher dairy imports are pushing down milk prices. USDA’s estimated milk production for the month of September shows production 4.0% higher than a year ago. Milk cow numbers only increased 2,000 head from August and were 0.6% higher than a year ago. But, milk per cow was much higher at 3.4% above September a year ago. Milk per cow was above a year ago for each of the 23 reporting states. Of the 23 reporting states 8 had had fewer milk cows than a year ago—California, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Only one state, Illinois had less total milk than a year ago. Compared to a year ago, milk production for the top five dairy states was: California +2.9%, Wisconsin +3.2 %, Idaho 3.4%, New York 4.5% and Pennsylvania 3.5%. States with the highest relative increase in milk production were: Colorado 10.8%, Texas 9.6%, Kansas 9.2%, Utah 7.8% and Arizona 6.5%.

The latest dairy export report was for August. The report showed that compared to a year ago August exports were 59% lower for butter, 10% lower for nonfat dry milk, 20% lower for dry whey, 36% lower for whey protein concentrate and 11% lower for lactose. But, cheese was still 11% higher. Due to increase in world milk production and China’s much lower dairy imports than earlier in the year world dairy product prices have declined substantially and are considerably lower than U.S. prices lowering U.S. exports.

With world dairy product prices lower than U.S. prices and the strengthening of the U.S. dollar compared to the Euro and Oceania currencies imports of butter and cheese have increased compared to a year ago. For the January through August period butter imports were up about 175% and cheese up 3%. Tight butter stocks were also a factor for butter users to seek butter supplies outside the U.S. As of August 31st butter stocks were still 37.4% lower than a year ago. Cheese stocks were not nearly as tight being just 4.2% lower. As U.S. dairy product prices decline and stock levels increase imports no doubt will decline.

Dairy product prices have declined considerably from where they were back in September with butter prices leading the way. Butter prices normally don’t decline until holiday orders are filled sometime in November. But, this year butter on the CME set a record high at $3.06 per pound on September 19th but as of October 20th prices have fallen to $2.015 per pound. Cheddar barrels were $2.49 per pound back on September 25th and as of October 20th prices had fallen to $2.1075. The 40-pound cheddar blocks were $2.45 per pound on September 19th, fell to $2.14 on October 2nd, but rebounded to $2.325 on October 20th. Dry whey which was $0.65 per pound in September is now $0.60, and nonfat dry milk which was $1.51 per pound early in September is now $1.40.

The Class III price which was $24.60 for September will be near $23.95 for October down to around $19.50 by December. For the year, the Class III price will average near $22.45, about $4.45 higher than the $17.99 average last year. The Class IV price was $25.58 for September, but lower butter prices will put the October price near $22.20 and
down to around $17.10 by December. The Class IV price will average near $22.20, about $3.15 higher than the $19.05 average last year. The U.S. All Milk price will average near $23.95 for the year, about $3.90 higher than the $20.05 average last year. The year will finish with cow numbers averaging about 0.4% higher than a year ago and milk per cow 2.1% higher resulting in total milk production near 206.3 billion pounds, 2.5% higher than last year. The higher milk prices experienced and much lower feed costs than a year ago has resulted in very favorable margins (returns over feed costs) for dairy producers. While milk prices will be lower next year, with lower feed cost margins, while not as high, could still be favorable for increase milk production. Milk cow numbers are likely to increase for much of next year with milk per cow running above year ago levels. USDA is forecasting the number of cows next year to average 0.8% higher with milk per cow averaging 2.2% higher pushing total milk production to 212.5 billion pounds, 3.0% higher. But, this could be on the high side. Dairy producers are more cautious about adding cows knowing milk prices are likely to be lower. Also dairy replacements are rather tight and at a much higher price. Also the price for slaughtered dairy cows will remain relatively high encouraging culling all of which may slow the increase in cow numbers and the increase in milk production.

There is unanimous agreement amongst price forecasters that milk prices will be lower in 2015. But, the opinions vary considerable as usual. Two big uncertainties are what will be the level of dairy exports and how much U.S. milk production will actually increase. As of now it looks like the Class III price could be about $18.25 by January and then falling into the $17s most of the year with the possibility of even being below $17 mid-summer before some strength in the fall. With anticipated much lower butter prices and lower nonfat dry milk prices the Class IV price will likely be in the low $17s or high $16s during the year. The average U.S. Milk price for the year could average $3 to as much $5 lower than this year. Some are forecasting milk prices even lower than this, which is possible. We know that prices are very sensitive to rather small changes in milk production, domestic sales and exports. These factors can change as we move through next year and significantly impact milk prices. Weather conditions not only in the U.S. but major exporters like New Zealand can affect crop conditions and feed cost impacting U.S. and world milk production, and to the extent China comes back importing dairy products, are examples of changes that can have a big impact milk prices next year. Thus, there is considerable risk with milk prices in 2015.

2014 Farm Bill's APH Yield Exclusion to be Implemented for 2015 Spring Crops

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on October 21, 2014 the implementation of a new Farm Bill initiative that will provide relief to farmers affected by severe weather, including drought. The Actual Production History (APH) Yield Exclusion, available nationwide for farmers of select crops starting next spring, allows eligible producers who have been hit with severe weather to receive a higher approved yield on their insurance policies through the federal crop insurance program.

Spring crops eligible for APH Yield Exclusion include corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, grain sorghum, rice, barley, canola, sunflowers, peanuts, and popcorn. Nearly three-fourths of all acres and liability in the federal crop insurance program will be covered under APH Yield Exclusion. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency and Farm Service Agency staff worked hard to implement several 2014 Farm Bill programs ahead of schedule, such as the Agricultural Risk Coverage, the Price Loss Coverage, Supplemental Coverage Option and Stacked Income Protection Plan. USDA is now able to leverage data from the Agricultural Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage to extract the information needed to implement APH Yield Exclusion earlier than expected.

"Key programs launched or extended as part of the 2014 Farm Bill are essential to USDA's commitment to help rural communities grow. These efforts give farmers, ranchers and their families better security as they work to ensure Americans have safe and affordable food," said Vilsack. "By getting other 2014 Farm Bill programs implemented efficiently, we are now able to offer yield exclusion for Spring 2015 crops, providing relief to farmers impacted by severe weather."
The APH Yield Exclusion allows farmers to exclude yields in exceptionally bad years (such as a year in which a natural disaster or other extreme weather occurs) from their production history when calculating yields used to establish their crop insurance coverage. The level of insurance coverage available to a farmer is based on the farmer's average recent yields. In the past, a year of particularly low yields that occurred due to severe weather beyond the farmer's control would reduce the level of insurance coverage available to the farmer in future years. By excluding unusually bad years, farmers will not have to worry that a natural disaster will reduce their insurance coverage for years to come.

Under the new Farm Bill program, yields can be excluded from farm actual production history when the county average yield for that crop year is at least 50 percent below the 10 previous consecutive crop years' average yield.

RMA will provide additional program details in December 2014. Federal crop insurance, which is sold through private crop insurance agents, offers a variety of options that may impact coverage and premium costs. Producers are encouraged to work with their crop insurance agent to determine the coverage that best meets their risk management needs. Farmers can find a crop insurance agent in their area at: www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html.

Ashtabula County Plat Books Available
The latest edition of the Ashtabula County Plat Directory is now available from Ashtabula County OSU Extension. Published by Great Mid-Western in 2013, the Plat Map Directory makes a great gift for the hunter, hiker, farmer or nosey family member! Supplies are limited so call 440-576-9008 or stop in today to pick up your copy for $35.00 plus tax. All proceeds benefit the Ashtabula County 4-H, where we are helping youth to develop citizenship, leadership, and life skills.

25th Annual Beef Banquet to be held on Saturday, November 8 in Lenox, Ohio.
OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association will be holding their 25th annual banquet on Saturday, November 8 at the Lenox Community Center beginning at 7:00 p.m. During the banquet, our Cattlemen’s Association will provide a recap on the past year and elect two members to the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s board of directors. We have invited back the Klein Family Singers of Madison, Ohio for this year’s banquet entertainment. They were in the middle of a great performance at last year’s banquet when power was lost due to a nasty thunderstorm. The Klein Family is a family band who plays Bluegrass, Old-time, Gospel, Folk, Celtic, Cajun, and Country music. Tickets for the banquet can be purchased from the Directors of the Cattlemen’s Association. Directors are: Bob Brown, Dorset Township; Tim Gildersleeve, Jefferson Township, Dr. Bryan Elliott, Andover Township, Bart Kanicki, Pierpont Township and Rick Poff, Geauga County. Tickets are $25 per person. Call the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 for more information. Pre-reservations should be made by October 31, 2014.

Northeast Ohio “Snow Bird” Private Pesticide Applicator Re-Certification Session & Commercial Fertilizer Application Certification to be held on Tuesday, November 25 in Burton, Ohio.

Do you head south for the winter? Does your Private Pesticide Applicator’s License expire on March 31, 2015? If so, OSU Extension in Northeast Ohio has planned his session with you in mind! This workshop will be held on Tuesday, November 25, 2014 at Geauga County Extension Office, 14269 Claridon-Troy Road, Burton, Ohio 44021

This workshop will offer 3 credits for re-certification for CORE and All Categories (1-7). Private Pesticide Applicators from any county in Northeast, Ohio are welcomed to attend this session. This session will be held from 9:00 to 12:00 noon. A special afternoon session will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. for private applicators who would like to complete their Commercial Fertilizer Application Certification. Due to Ohio’s new legislation, any producer who applies commercial fertilizer to 50 or more acres must be certified by no later than September 30, 2017. Attend this
session to complete your certification. This session is open only to current licensed private pesticide applicators who wish to become certified.

The registration fee is $35 per person for the morning private pesticide applicator re-certification. There is no fee for the afternoon fertilizer certification session. A hearty farmers lunch will be provided for those who are staying for the afternoon session for $15 per person. Pre-registration is required by November 17, 2014. An additional late registration fee of $25 per person will be added for any registration received after November 17, 2014. Make checks payable to OSU Extension and mail to OSU Extension-Geauga County, PO Box 387, Burton, Ohio 44021. More information can be obtained by calling the Geauga County Extension office 440-834-4656. Additional private pesticide re-certification and commercial fertilizer certification sessions will be held in 2015 on January 16 (Williamsfield), January 30 (Burton), February 9 (Cortland) and February 26 (Perry).

Improving Your Woodland Workshop to be held on Saturday, November 15 in Kirtland, Ohio

We all own our woodlands for a variety of reasons. Understanding how your goals and objectives relate to your woods is part of what will be explored for the day. What can a landowner do to ensure a healthy and productive woodland into the future? OSU Extension is pleased to be hosting an “Improving Your Woodland” Workshop on Saturday, November 15 at the Holden Arboretum in Kirtland, Ohio. Attend this workshop to learn what items should be on a landowner’s radar when it comes to their woodland. How can our goals and objectives best be accomplished? We will spend the morning inside exploring these issues and the afternoon outside putting those ideas to work! The registration fee for this program is $35 per person. Lunch and materials are included in the class fee. This class will also cover some information on sugar bush management - how traditional forestry tools can be utilized to keep the forest healthy and thriving. This class is worth 4 credit hours for the Ohio Forest Tax Law Program. The Holden Arboretum is located at 9500 Sperry Road in Kirtland, Ohio. Registration is requested by November 10. More information can be found at: http://woodlandstewards.osu.edu/classes/events/improving-your-woodland or by calling 614-688-3421.

Ashtabula County Master Gardener Volunteers Sought

If you have a strong interest in gardening and enjoy helping others, you are invited to apply to become an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener volunteer for Ashtabula County. The main purpose of the Master Gardener Program is to help meet the horticultural needs of Ashtabula County.

To become an OSU Extension Master Garden volunteer, you must attend 11 training sessions held from January to April 2015 and volunteer 50 hours of horticultural service to the community through Extension educational programming. Such service could include teaching 4-H youth gardening, planting and maintaining Extension demonstration gardens, answering gardening questions from the public, judging flower and vegetable projects at local fairs, and assisting community garden participants. As a benefit of becoming a Master Gardener, you will increase your knowledge and understanding of such varied horticultural topics as best cultural practices for growing flowers and vegetables, house plant care, plant disease, and insect pest identification and control and much, much more.

Course topics include: history of OSU Extension, plant physiology, soils, composting, fertilizers, herbs, houseplants, plant propagation, plant pathology, diagnostics, entomology, integrated pest management, vegetables, lawns, woody ornamentals, fruits, landscape maintenance, and making effective presentations.

Three informational meetings will be held for those interested in being selected for the 2015 training program. These meetings will be Tuesday, October 7, 2014 from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.; Tuesday, October 21, 2014 from 12:00 to 12:45 p.m. and Wednesday, November 5 6:30-7:15 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the OSU Extension office at 39 Wall Street in Jefferson. Specifics with regards to the application process, training schedule, course fee, and
fingerprinting requirements will be shared at this meeting. It is recommended that applicants attend this orientation meeting.

The dates for this year’s training program are: January 22 & 29; February 12, 19, & 26 and March 5, 12, 19 & 26 and April 16. This program is taught in conjunction with the Lake County Master Gardener program. Five of the sessions will be taught at the Ashtabula County Extension Office in Jefferson and five will be taught in Lake County. All courses will be taught from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. There is a $200 course fee that covers course materials, refreshments, and speaker travel costs. Registration is limited and all applications are due by November 24, 2014. Please call the Ashtabula County Extension Office at 440-576-9008 for more information or for a complete application packet.

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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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