Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!

Harvest 2017 is in full swing in NE Ohio! The warm (really hot!) weather has helped dry down the corn and soybeans. Most silage corn has been chopped, and the soybean harvest has begun. We’ve also had excellent hay making weather that should have most people caught up.

Safety should be always on your mind this fall. Be sure to have fire extinguishers at the ready on all harvest equipment as there have already been several combine fires this year in Ohio. Watch those PTO shafts, and keep your fingers out of the augers!

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How Farmers Can Avoid 3 Top Igniters Of Combine Fires
By Jo Windmann

All that iron rolling across dry fields during harvest can easily spark a fire. Taking precautions can save more than bushels—it can save your life or the lives of your crew. Combine and tractor fires not only cause 40 to 50 serious injuries each year, they also cost more than $20 million in property losses and valuable time, says Dick Nicolai, South Dakota Cooperative Extension farm machinery and safety specialist.

Take these steps to prevent a combine fire at harvest:

**Electrical Igniters**
- Keep wiring and fuses in proper working condition.
- Correctly route and insulate all replacement wires.
- Use heat-resistant insulation.
- Check wiring and insulation for rodent damage and replace if needed.

**Fuel and Mechanical Igniters**
- Keep fuel line connections tight and in good condition.
- Don’t fuel up while smoking or the engine is running.
- Quickly clean oil and fuel spills.
- Check lubricant levels.
- Grease fittings.
- Watch for overheated bearings.
- Inspect your exhaust system for leaks, residue and loose pipes.

**Chaff and Trash Igniters**
- Use a pressure washer or air compressor to clean out chaff and trash before each use.
- Attach a ground chain to prevent static charges from igniting any chaff or harvest trash. You can attach a chain to the frame of your combine with a bolt and hang it up while driving down the road, then let the chain drag on the ground while in the field.
- Safety First
- Keep at least one fully charged, 10-lb. ABC fire extinguisher on hand.
- Check extinguishers monthly for signs of damage, cracks in the hose and gauges for charge.
• Have extinguishers checked annually by a certified professional.
• Call 911 first if a fire breaks out and then attempt to extinguish it. Remember P.A.S.S.: Pull the pin, aim the nozzle, squeeze the handle and sweep from side to side.

**Bill Would Create New Visa Category**

By: Mike Opperman  

A legislative bill creating a new visa category will be introduced shortly after Labor Day. The bill, called "The Agriculture Guestworker Act of 2017 (AG Act)" will create a new visa category called H-2C. This would replace the existing H-2A program and provide more streamlined access to guestworkers by dairies and other farmers who utilize immigrant labor.

The bill will be introduced by Rep Bob Goodlatte (R-Va), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

“We have waited 20 years for a realistic solution to our industry’s labor shortages,” says Laurie Fischer, CEO of the American Dairy Coalition, supporter of the bill. “We must make this bill work. We can no longer wait for reform.”

The bill must first pass through the House Judiciary Committee before being introduced to Congress. In the meantime, Fischer encourages producers to send letters of support for the AG Act to Chairman Goodlatte. For more information on how to support this effort, visit [www.americandairycoalitioninc.com](http://www.americandairycoalitioninc.com).

**Aluminum Can Recycling Center in Rock Creek Keeps on Crushing**

By Linc Jerome

Triandria Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons #780 is continuing the tradition of recycling aluminum cans at the Morgan Township garage. The late Harvey Johns founded this operation over 30 years ago. The Rock Creek Rotary Club owned the center until July 1, 2016 when Triandria Lodge took over the recycling center.

After an open house May 2017, Triandria is still looking for donations towards the purchase of a generator and for maintaining the aging facility. Estimated expenses are $10,500. The Ashtabula County Solid Waste Management District and Representative John Patterson have contributed but we are still short of our goal.

Proceeds from the crushed cans provide the scholarships Triandria Lodge distributes every year. One graduating senior from Grand Valley, Jefferson and Pymatuning Valley receive at
least a $500 scholarship grant as they enter an institution of higher learning. The long term goal is to increase the amount of the scholarship to $1000 for each school. Right now can crushing is done manually and is very tedious. Acquiring a generator would allow the recycling center to enhance the viability within the community by increasing the can intake and helping promising youth achieve their goals of higher education. That in turn, will again help the community.

Please consider making a donation today. As a non-profit organization all donations are tax-deductible. Donations marked “Recycling Center” can be sent to Bill Robinson, 2313 W 9th St, Ashtabula, OH 44004.

**Harvest Weather Outlook**
By: Jim Noel
Source: [https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-31/harvest-weather-outlook](https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-31/harvest-weather-outlook)

After a first half of September which was 5-10 degrees below average, the second half of September will average 5-10 degrees above average making September in the end a near average month but marked by significant differences in the month. Temperatures the week of September 19-25 will run 10-15 degrees above average with no risk of frost.

Rainfall will remain limited in most areas for the rest of September as well. Some rainfall will occur Tuesday September 19 through Wednesday September 20. Rainfall will average less than a tenth of an inch in the southeast half of the state to 0.10 to 0.50 inches in the northwest half with isolated higher totals. After September 20, the next chance for rain does not come up until around Sept. 26 or 27.

**October Outlook**
Temperatures are likely to relax closer to normal in October after the warm late September. Rainfall is also expected to increase some especially in the second half of October. We expected October rainfall to be near or slightly below average which is close to 2 inches for the month on average.

**Tropical Outlook**
Tropical activity looks to stay east of Ohio in the coming weeks. In fact, with storms well east it is enhancing high pressure and drier
conditions over the region locally. Historically, storms tend to shift into the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico once we get to October and November. We will have to wait and see if some of that moisture would make its way back into our region.

**Frost/Freeze Outlook**
There is really no risk of frost and freeze conditions for the rest of September. At times we do see historically late September frosts in Ohio but none are expected this year. We have been talking in recent months that data suggest a normal to later than normal frost/freeze in Ohio and that looks still to be the case. Sometime in October we will likely see our first widespread frost and possible freeze and typically that arrives the first 2-3 weeks of October but chances are growing it will be in the middle to end of the month of October.

**La Nina Watch issued by NOAA Climate Prediction Center**
Confidence is still low to moderate but the NOAA Climate Prediction Center has issued a La Nina watch for cooler equatorial Pacific Ocean water this winter. See: [http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/](http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/)

This could lead to a winter and early next spring that is wetter than normal with temperatures starting winter warmer than normal and turning normal to colder than normal. It is too early to tell, but those are some of the early indications.

**Two week rainfall outlook**
The outlook for the next two weeks is normal to below normal rainfall for early harvest in the eastern corn, soybean and wheat areas with much above normal rainfall in western areas as the NOAA/NWS/OHRFC [graphic](https://www.cpc.noaa.gov/) shows.

### WHY JOHN DEERE JUST SPENT $305 MILLION ON A LETTUCE-FARMING ROBOT

By Tom Simonite

Tractor giant John Deere just spent $305 million to acquire a startup that makes robots capable of identifying unwanted plants, and shooting them with deadly, high-precision squirts of herbicide.

John Deere, established in 1837 to manufacture hand tools, announced it had acquired Blue River Technology, founded in 2011, late Wednesday.

Deere already sells technology that uses GPS to automate the movements of farm vehicles across a field to sub-inch accuracy. John Stone, an executive in the company’s intelligent-solutions group, says Blue River’s computer-vision technology will help Deere’s equipment view and understand the crops it is working with. “Taking care of each individual plant unlocks a lot of economic value for farmers,” Stone says.
The deal highlights the growing appetite for high tech in agriculture. Many companies are using drones to help farmers by collecting data on crops to plan spraying or other operations. Stone says that Blue River’s technology can make a larger impact on productivity because it makes decisions up close, on the ground. Pesticides and other chemicals are traditionally applied blindly across a whole field or crop. Blue River’s systems are agricultural sharp shooters that direct chemicals only where they are needed.

The startup’s robots are towed behind a regular tractor like conventional spraying equipment. But they have cameras on board that use machine-learning software to distinguish between crops and weeds, and automated sprayers to target unwanted plants.

The company says its first product, LettuceBot, already has a hand in roughly 10 percent of US lettuce production. It is used on fields with young lettuce plants, targeting weeds as well as plants that are too small, or growing on top of one another.

This season Blue River tested a second system for cotton farmers, ahead of a planned commercial launch in 2018. That system can target weeds with squirts of herbicide no larger than a postage stamp. Willy Pell, director of new technology at Blue River, says the system has shown it can reduce herbicide use by 90 percent.

Blue River, which has roughly 60 employees, will operate as an independent brand, from its base in Sunnyvale, California. Pell says that the company plans to develop versions of its technology for other crops such as soybeans and corn. Blue River also wants to deploy its computer-vision software in harvesting and seed planting equipment so it can adapt to variations in the size of soil clods or corn plants across a field.

Should We Add Diaporthe Stem Canker and Cercospora Leaf Blight to Our List of Disease Ratings for Ohio in 2018?

By Anne Dorrance
Source: https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-31/should-we-add-diaporthe-stem-canker-and-cercospora-leaf-blight

Improving soybean yields in 2018 begins first with the selection of the cultivars that have the best resistance package for Ohio’s notorious pathogens and pests. Any grower that’s slacked off on the Phytophthora package gets a quick reminder of the damage that this pathogen can continually cause in a vast majority of Ohio’s production regions. Same thing with soybean cyst nematode; while the symptoms may not be present, planting a susceptible variety and getting
half the yield that the neighbors got leaves some farmers scratching their heads. We finally have resistance to Sclerotinia that is effective for those regions that deal with it on an annual basis. Over the past decade, we’ve added frog eye leaf spot to that list as it can overwinter and if infections get started at flowering it can cause substantial damage. Why put another $30+/Acre for a fungicide to control frogeye or Sclerotinia when the cultivar resistance can hold that disease in check?

Now it may be time to begin to think about some additions to this list as in the past 3 years, I’ve been called to fields that have been severely affected by some pathogens that are typically rare in this part of the U.S. Diaporthe Stem Canker and Cercospora Leaf Blight (Figures 1 and 2). Let’s take each of these separately and explain a bit more.

**Diaporthe stem canker:**
The symptoms that are occurring in Ohio this year are large patches of early dying plants that still have their leaves attached. The canker is not as well defined but can occur from the third node at the bottom of the plant up to the top 1/3. There may be rows of small pin dots in the center of the canker or on pods that are the actual fungus. The bottom two nodes of the plant are still green – which can separate it from Phytophthora. If the stem is bleached white and has white mold – it is Sclerotinia. For Diaporthe, the internal tissue – both the pith and the stem are degraded.

Diaporthe is caused by several different fungi and can also lead to Phomopsis seed rot. The fungus survives very well on residue. And in fact the most affected fields that I have walked in 2017 – were in fields where the disease may have occurred to a smaller extent the previous year. Diaporthe also infects a number of weed hosts that can also contribute to the survival in fields including: black nightshade, morning glory, northern joint vetch, and spiny amaranth are a few and most do not show symptoms.

Infections for this disease occur in the early vegetative growth stages of the plant and these are favored by long periods of warm (72 to 86F) wet weather. Rain splash of spores from plant residue can facilitate these infections. Does this sound like our summer where some areas had 15” or more during June-July? This fungus takes its time, and the symptoms tend to coincide when the seeds begin to fill in the pods.

Management is highly successful with two tactics, planting resistant cultivars and reducing inoculum. The screening for resistance to this pathogen is fairly straightforward for Diaporthe, so
most companies should be doing this. Tillage and rotation both are effective in reducing inoculum. A study in Georgia reported in 1988 indicated that a soybean-wheat double crop was not as effective as a soybean-fallow rotation.

**Cercospora leaf blight-and Purple Seed Stain**
Another foliar and seed pathogen that is not well known in Ohio and is much more prevalent in the Southern US. The reddish discoloration and leathery appearance begins to appear on the top leaves as the plants begin to fill out the seeds. Purple lesions on the petioles or stems also develop. The infected petioles remain attached to the plants while the infected leaves fall off the plants. Warm temperatures and frequent rains also contribute to this disease which can be spread by rain and wind. This can also be residue born – so for farmers that have this in their fields in 2017 – TAKE NOTE- residue management and planting varieties with resistance will be essential in 2018.

Infections for Cercospora can begin at flowering and repeat throughout the season, but symptoms do not develop until pod fill. Seed can also become infected and develop the same purplish-red coloration and contribute secondary losses if they are food grade soybeans. The pathogen that causes Cercospora leaf blight and Purple seed stain produces a light-activated plant toxin, which contributes to the purple discoloration of the diseased tissue. Spores are produced on the residue or infected tissue and are dispersed by wind or rain onto nearby soybean plants. Only susceptible varieties will develop symptoms and these will be more pronounced when dry, warm conditions occur at pod fill.

Disease management strategies include planting high-quality disease free seed, tillage to break down infested residue and crop rotation to prevent inoculum build-up, and planting resistant varieties. For fields that are affected in 2017 – a timely harvest to ensure the fewest number of seeds develop purple seed stain. Secondly, for fields in 2018 that go back into soybean, if susceptible varieties are planted, a fungicide application of a triazole at R3 may provide some protection. However, infections can occur during the vegetative phase and most of the data to date is from the southern states with determinant later maturity groups. This is a big hole in our data set for providing recommendations for fungicide timing for Cercospora blight in northern areas.

The bottom line, when you are at Farm Science Review this week talking with the seed companies, ask for the resistance packages on the varieties. Yes, yields are important – but the resistance and savings in additional mid-season inputs is key to profits in years with narrow margins. The risk for disease development continues to increase with mild winters that favor overwintering and the soil-saturating rains that seem to occur weekly. These conditions make those resistance scores more and more important each year.

For some additional reading while you are on auto-steer during harvest check out these resources:
http://soybeanresearchinfo.com/diseases/cercosporaleafblight.html
http://plantpathology.ca.uky.edu/files/ppfs-ag-s-20.pdf

Northeast Ohio Agriculture

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties
Exclusive: EPA eyes limits for agricultural chemical linked to crop damage

By Tom Polansek and Emily Flitter


(Reuters) - The U.S. environmental agency is considering banning sprayings of the agricultural herbicide dicamba after a set deadline next year, according to state officials advising the agency on its response to crop damage linked to the weed killer.

Setting a cut-off date, possibly sometime in the first half of 2018, would aim to protect plants vulnerable to dicamba, after growers across the U.S. farm belt reported the chemical drifted from where it was sprayed this summer, damaging millions of acres of soybeans and other crops.

A ban could hurt sales by Monsanto Co (MON.N) and DuPont which sell dicamba weed killers and soybean seeds with Monsanto's dicamba-tolerant Xtend trait. BASF (BASFn.DE) also sells a dicamba herbicide.

It is not yet known how damage attributed to the herbicides, used on Xtend soybeans and cotton, will affect yields of soybeans unable to withstand dicamba because the crops have not been harvested.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) discussed a deadline for next year's sprayings on a call with state officials last month that addressed steps the agency could take to prevent a repeat of the damage, four participants on the call told Reuters.

It was the latest of at least three conference calls the EPA has held with state regulators and experts since late July dedicated to dicamba-related crop damage and the first to focus on how to respond to the problem, participants said.

A cut-off date for usage in spring or early summer could protect vulnerable plants by only allowing farmers to spray fields before soybeans emerge from the ground, according to weed and pesticide specialists.

Monsanto spokeswoman Christi Dixon told Reuters on Aug. 23, the day of the last EPA call, that the agency had not indicated it planned to prohibit sprayings of dicamba herbicides on soybeans that had emerged. That action “would not be warranted,” she said.

The EPA had no immediate comment.

EPA officials on the last call made clear that it would be unacceptable to see the same extent of crop damage again next year, according to Andrew Thostenson, a pesticide specialist for North Dakota State University who participated in the call.
They said “there needed to be some significant changes for the use rules if we’re going to maintain it in 2018,” he said about dicamba usage.

State regulators and university specialists from Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa and North Dakota are pressuring the EPA to decide soon on rules guiding usage because farmers will make planting decisions for next spring over the next several months.

Tighter usage limits could discourage cash-strapped growers from buying Monsanto’s more expensive dicamba-resistant Xtend soybean seeds. Dicamba-tolerant soybeans cost about $64 a bag, compared with about $28 a bag for Monsanto’s Roundup Ready soybeans and about $50 a bag for soybeans resistant to Bayer’s Liberty herbicide.

Already, a task force in Arkansas has advised the state to bar dicamba sprayings after April 15 next year, which would prevent most farmers there from using dicamba on Xtend soybeans after they emerge.

Arkansas previously blocked sales of Monsanto’s dicamba herbicide, XtendiMax with VaporGrip, in the state.

“If the EPA imposed a April 15 cut-off date for dicamba spraying, that would be catastrophic for Xtend - it invalidates the entire point of planting it,” said Jonas Oxgaard, analyst for investment management firm Bernstein.

Monsanto has projected its Xtend crop system would return a $5 to $10 premium per acre over soybeans with glyphosate resistance alone, creating a $400-$800 million opportunity for the company once the seeds are planted on an expected 80 million acres in the United States, according to Oxgaard.

By 2019, Monsanto predicts U.S. farmers will plant Xtend soybeans on 55 million acres, or more than 60 percent of the total planted this year.

**RISKY DRIFT**
About 3.1 million acres of soybeans vulnerable to dicamba were hurt by sprayings this summer, accounting for 3.5 percent of U.S. plantings, according to the University of Missouri.

Chemical companies have blamed the crop damage on farmers misusing the herbicides. Specialists, though, say the weed killers are also risky because they have a tendency to vaporize and drift across fields, referred to as volatility. Summer can be a riskier time for sprayings, they said, because high temperatures can increase volatility.

Monsanto previously denied requests by university researchers to study its XtendiMax herbicide for volatility, as previously reported by Reuters. In the end, the EPA gave dicamba weed killers from Monsanto and BASF abridged two-year registrations, less than the five years experts say is more common.

To address the crop damage, the EPA has also asked state officials about enhanced training for dicamba users; tighter restrictions on when and how the herbicides can be sprayed; and the possibility of reclassifying the products so the general public could not buy them, according to participants on the call.

“Everything is an option,” said Jason Norsworthy, a University of Arkansas professor who was on the call.

Monsanto Chief Technology Officer Robb Fraley said in a statement that the company was communicating with the EPA, which is “evaluating potential actions to facilitate enhanced training and compliance for 2018.”

DuPont, too, is working with the EPA and state regulators on issues involving its dicamba herbicide, FeXapan, spokeswoman Laura Svec said. Rival BASF “could see some label enhancements” to its dicamba herbicide, Engenia, if the EPA requires changes, spokeswoman Odessa Hines told Reuters. The company “will be as flexible as possible” so farmers can use the product, she said.

**Using Livestock Manure to Replenish Nutrients in Hay Fields**
By Glen Arnold, OSU Extension

When hay is harvested nutrients are removed from the field. A ton of alfalfa removes approximately 13 pounds of phosphorus (as P2O5) and 50 pounds of potash (as K2O). According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Ohio harvested 2.6 tons per acre of alfalfa in 2016.

Many hay fields are not pure alfalfa. The acidic soils of the southern and eastern parts of the state make it difficult to maintain an alfalfa or clover stand so a mixed stand of grass and alfalfa/clover is common. Stands in older fields are often just mostly grass. A grass hay crop will
remove just as many nutrients per ton as an alfalfa crop. The big difference is that the annual yields from grass hay fields are usually about 1.3 tons per acre lower than alfalfa fields.

Livestock manure can be used as a fertilizer source to replace nutrients removed through hay harvest. Pen pack beef manure will contain approximately 7.9 pounds of nitrogen (mostly in the organic form), 4.4 pounds of phosphorus (P2O5) and 6.6 pounds of potash (K2O) per ton according to OSU Extension bulletin 604. Note that these are older book values and your actual farm manure nutrient levels can vary depending upon the animal’s ration, the amount and type of bedding material used and how manure is stored and handled. The recommendation is to sample and test manure at least on a yearly basis. This will provide a more reliable indication of the actual nutrient content of the manure on your farm. For more information about how and when to sample manure, Penn State Extension has a good publication available on-line at http://extension.psu.edu/plants/nutrient-management/educational/manure-storage-and-handling/manure-sampling-for-nutrient-management-planning.

Let’s assume a livestock producer wants to use pen pack beef manure to replenish the nutrients in a hay field where he harvested three tons per acre of hay. Since alfalfa and grass hay both remove similar amounts of nutrients per ton, we can assume the three tons of hay removed per acre contained 39 pounds of P2O5 and 150 pounds of K2O. If pen pack beef manure was used to replenish these nutrients, 8.8 tons per acre would be sufficient to replace the phosphorus. However, a rate of 22.7 tons per acre would be needed to replace the potash. The 22.7 ton per acre manure application rate would result in almost 100 pounds of P2O5 being applied per acre, far more than was removed in the three tons of hay.

A farmer would need to be cautious about using this practice repeatedly and growing the soil phosphorus level. It takes about 20 pounds of phosphorus applied to a field to raise the soil test level one pound per acre or two parts per million. So if the soil test level is low, the additional phosphorus from the manure would not raise the soil phosphorus level much in a single year.

The key to using livestock manure to replace the nutrients removed through hay harvest is to get even distribution of the manure across the entire field. Having mowed hay fields as a teenager, where bedded pack manure was applied, I would strongly urge an even distribution pattern across the field. Avoid large clumps that will plug the mower or interfere with regrowth.

If you are unsure how many tons per acre your solid manure spreader applies there is a simple way to make a determination. Make a heavy plastic piece that is 56 inches by 56 inches. Fasten it to the ground with weights on the corners and apply manure across the plastic. Fold up the plastic and weigh the manure captured. Many people use a bathroom scales for this. One pound of manure captured on the plastic is equivalent to one ton of manure applied per acre. Thus, if you captured 10 pounds of manure the application rate was 10 tons per acre.

It is common for county extension offices to have farmers ask; “Can manure be applied between cuttings”? The answer is “yes”. Farmers commonly use liquid swine and liquid dairy manure between cuttings to replace soil nutrients and “boost” regrowth of the forage crop in northwest Ohio. There is the potential to damage the crowns of the forage plants but most farmers seem to
like the results of the manure application. Solid manure could also be applied between cuttings instead of waiting until fall to apply the manure. The manure application should take place as soon as the hay is baled.

Liquid beef manure is also being used to replace nutrients in hay fields. Liquid beef manure we have sampled has contained 40 pounds nitrogen (about half in the organic form and half in the ammonium form), 35 pounds of phosphorus (P2O5) and 30 pounds of potash (K20) per 1000 gallons of product. Applied with a drag hose, this can be an excellent fertilizer for a forage.

A final cautionary note regarding manure application to forage fields: If manure is coming from a herd with animals infected by Johne’s disease, that disease can be transmitted by manure to healthy cattle. According to a publication from the US Dairy Forage Research Center at Madison Wisconsin and authored by Michael Russelle and Bill Jokela, the Johne’s bacterium can survive on hay. Therefore, those authors recommendation is that in herds with Johne’s, manure should not be applied as a topdressing on fields that will be harvested as dry hay.

October 15th Pre-registration Deadline for the 2017 Lake Erie Maple Expo Approaching
Les Ober, OSU Extension Geauga County

It is hard to believe that it has been six years since the concept of developing a maple syrup educational tradeshow, located in the central maple syrup producing region of the country, became a reality. Traditionally the majority of the educational seminars, on maple production, have been centered in New England and New York. The idea of bringing a maple syrup expo to the shores of Lake Erie was definitely a long shot. However, the LEME planning committee, made up of producers from Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York put together a program that was designed to meet the needs of maple producers in this region. They also realized that they could tap into a whole new audience that were not making the trip to the eastern programs and would really appreciate a chance to attend a maple syrup tradeshow in their home region. The LEME popularity has grown proportionally over the last 5 years. Over 500 producers came to the LEME last year. This year’s edition will continue to raise the bar when it comes to maple syrup education.

What can producers expect when they walk through the doors on November 10 & 11, 2017? On Friday the LEME will present a series of 4 hour workshops where producers have the opportunity of focusing on one specific topic. One of the highlights this year’ workshop series will be a Woods Walk and Talk with Glenn Goodrich. This workshop will offer a rare opportunity to learn the basics of sugarbush layout and design from one of the most respected experts in the maple industry. Another area many producers struggle with is tree health and management. To address this topic the LEME has once again invited Cornell University Extension Forester Dr. Peter Smallidge who will present a workshop on Sugarbush Management. For producers interested in a more in-depth look at maple syrup processing there will be three workshops to choose from. This year’s Boiling Workshop will be presented by Kevin Lawyer from the Leader
Evaporator Co. RO information is always in demand and the LEME has once again invited NY Maple Specialist Stephen Childs to discuss RO's For the Small Producer. One of the most talked about areas in maple production is the adoption of the new grading system and how it relates to maple syrup quality. Les Ober from OSU Extension along with Ohio Maple Producer and Maple Products Judge James Miller will go in-depth on the topic; Maple Grading and Quality Assurance How Can It Help You? Other workshops include a Beginners Workshop with Laura Dengler and Mark Lewis, A Museum Talk with Janet Woods and a Confections Workshop with Jake Moser. The registration for the Workshops is separate from the Expo registration. The cost to attend a 4 hour workshops is $30.00 which includes lunch.

After the workshops the program shifts back to Northwestern High School where the tradeshow will open at 5:00pm. The program will include maple equipment and more maple equipment along with a panel discussion at 6:30 pm. With all of the expansion in the maple Industry and the recent down turn in bulk prices, have you ever wondered “Where is The Maple Industry Headed?” The panel of expert's discussion topic, by the same name, should shed some light on the subject. Panel members include Glen Goodrich of Goodrich Maple, Carl Lapierre from Lapierre Maple Equipment and Joe Orefice, newly named Director of Cornell’s Uihlein Forest Research Center. If you are interested in knowing what the future may hold for the North American Maple Industry in the next 5 years and beyond, you will not want to miss this discussion.

On Saturday the Trade Show will open at 8:00 am followed by concurrent seminars where producers will be able to choose from over 40 different topics. Here is a sampling of the topics at this year’s LEME. Center Acer’s Martin Pelletire who will discuss the Center's research on Off Flavors. Cornell University is represented by four speakers in this year program. NY Maple Specialist, Steve Childs will demonstrate how to use Vacuum Cooling to improve making maple candy and cream and an overview of maple research at the Cornell Maple Program. Dr. Peter Samllidge will present several programs related to sugarbush improvement and tree health. Joe Orefice will present two topics on timber production. Mark Cannella from Cornell’s Cooperative Extension will discuss putting together a business plan for your maple operation. Les Ober from OSU Extension will offer two programs for the new producer. Industry presentations include; The Principals of Vacuum and Pump Selection with Carl Lapierre, a boiling seminar by Leader Evaporator sugarbush monitoring systems from Marcland and a Spin-Fusion demo from CDL. There will also be a wide variety of programs on confections and value added products presented by local and regional producers. A complete updated list of this year’s topics will be available by Mid-September.

Come join your fellow maple producers at the 2017 LEME, November 10 & 11, 2017 at Northwestern High School in Albion Pa. Friday morning the workshops will start at 10:00am at different venues across the area. Friday evening the doors to tradeshow open at 5:00pm and the show will run until 8:00 pm. The evening program will begin at 6:30pm in the Auditorium. Saturday’s program will start with the tradeshow at 8:00am the educational seminars will begin at 9:00. The cost of both Friday evening and all day Saturday programs is 40.00 dollars. Lunch is included. Please plan on preregistering by Oct 15th. A late registration fee will be
For complete registration information go online to the Northwestern Penn. Maple Producer Association website www.pamaple.org

David’s Weekly News Column

Hello, Ashtabula County! Last week, the Ohio State’s Farm Science Review was held in London, Ohio which nearly 114,000 attended. In fact, I got to see quite a few of our farmers at the review. It was nice to visit with so many locals! While it was nice and sunny here in Northeast Ohio, the Review was hit by a torrential downpour on Tuesday which caused a lot of flooding and mud throughout the exhibits. But the mud, heat and rain did not slow attendees from attending a ton of educational sessions and visit the record-setting 642 exhibitors. I am always amazed on how technology is advancing in agriculture.

At the review, I had the opportunity to serve as one of the moderators for the “Ask the Expert” panel. Each day, 15 experts were each questioned over a 20 minute period on some of the hottest farm management issues that we are currently facing. These sessions were eye opening especially given the financial slow-down we are facing in agriculture. Today, I would like to share some of the notes I jotted down during these sessions.

2018 Budgets- Barry Ward, Assistant Professor in OSU Extension’s Extension Department of Agricultural & Natural Resources, was a panelist and was able to share his budget forecasts for 2018. Sadly, these numbers do not look too encouraging. While most of the input costs for corn, soybeans, and wheat are projected to remain the same for 2018, net profit is looking slim at best because of stagnant crop prices. One good note is that nitrogen prices appear to be more favorable for next year.

Barry, reports that on average, after paying all the variable and fixed costs per acre, there will be only $31 per acre for corn; $106 per acre for soybeans, and $8 per acre for wheat to cover land rent/expense and for family living withdrawal. This means 2018 will be another tight year! So it is imperative that producers examine their budgets to see where they can trim costs. Any producer who would like the OSU Extension’s 2018 budget estimates for corn, soybeans, and wheat should call the Ashtabula County Extension office at 440-576-9008 or drop me an email at marrison.2@osu.edu and I will send them to you.

2017 Rental Rates- Given the low profit margins the past few years and similar projections for 2018, both Barry Ward and Dr. Michael Langenmeier from Purdue University indicated that
rental rates should continue to drop over the next few years. I know this is a hard pill for many landowners to swallow given the run-up of our CAUV property tax rates. Something will have to give, as it will be hard for many producers to continue to operate with such low margins.

Food Waste- Dr. Brian Roe gave a really nice session on the food Americans waste. I was shocked to learn that food waste accounts for almost 22 percent of what is in every landfill. In fact, Brian shared during his session that we waste about 40 percent of the food we produce or more than 34 million tons of food. He shared while food waste does occur at restaurants and supermarkets, the largest area for food waste is right in our homes. Each year, Americans throw out about one-quarter of the food they buy, costing an average family anywhere from $1,365 to $2,275 a year. Dr. Roe and his team are working on an APP which will allow users to determine how much food they are wasting. So, how much food are you wasting? A great question for all of us to ask!

Tax Reform- I presented both on Tuesday and Thursday on the tax reform discussions which have permeated in Washington D.C. since the election of President Trump. There is still chatter that tax reform might happen this year but I am skeptical. For business owners, there is talk about increasing the Section 179 acceleration of depreciation from its current level of $510,000. There is also chatter of the elimination or curtailment of Section 1031 tax deferred exchanges. These like-kind exchanges have been beneficial to many farmers through the years. Currently, farmers are allowed to exchange their equipment for new farm equipment and usually owe no tax on the exchange. Also, farmers can sell less productive farmland and roll that gain over into new farm land and defer the tax.

It also appears that Congress wants to repeal the estate tax. I would be careful what you wish for as an elimination of the estate that could mean the end to the “step up in basis.” Or it could lead to a creation of a capital gains tax at death similar to the Canadian tax system. For many operations this could mean paying more, not less, when the farm passes from one generation to the next. So be careful of jumping on the “get rid of the federal estate tax band wagon” as it could cost more money in the long run. This could jeopardize your ability to pass the farm on to the next generation.

Final Thoughts- There was not a lot of good news from the “Experts” with regards to profitability in 2018 for agriculture producers. I cannot stress the need for producers to develop sound budgets for next year and to improve their record keeping systems. A dollar an acre saved here and a dollar saved there will make a huge difference in 2018.

To close today’s column, I would like to share from the book of Matthew, "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father
who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” 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](http://ashtabula.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/upcoming-educational-programs-deadlines)

**2017 Ashtabula County Beef Banquet**  
Saturday, November 11, 2017

**Private Pesticide Applicator & Fertilizer Re-certification Sessions**  
November 16, 2017 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Lake County  
January 12, 2018 from 8:00 to 12:00 noon in Ashtabula County  
February 2, 2018 from 8:00 to 12:00 noon in Geauga County  
February 9, 2018 from 10:00 to 3:00 p.m. in Portage County  
March 9, 2018 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Trumbull County

**2018 Northeast Ohio Winter Agronomy School**  
Wednesday February 21, 2018

**2018 Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet**  
Saturday, March 24, 2018

**21st Annual Joe Bodnar Memorial Northern Classic Steer & Heifer Show**  
Saturday, April 21, 2018
Donate Crops To Support Charity

A tax strategy that helps local charities.

Donating crops, instead of money, can have significant advantages:

• The value of donated crops is not included on Schedule F, but the expenses are deductible on the form.
• There are no federal or state income taxes paid on the value of donated crops.
• There is no self employment tax paid on the value of donated crops.
• Yield records are not affected by the donation.
• Savings exist whether you itemize or take the standard deduction.

Keep The Money In Our Community

The primary mission of the Northern Trumbull County Community Foundation is to help in keeping our community strong not only for its current residents, but also for future generations. All donations are invested back into the community with this purpose in mind.

The Northern Trumbull County Community Foundation is an affiliate of the

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