I can’t believe that it is the end of September already. The weather the past few weeks has been picture perfect. A lot of action is already happening in our local fields as some soybeans have been harvested already and a lot of 2nd & 3rd cutting hay was made last week. It has been awhile since we have been this far in harvest by the end of September. I guess this is our silver lining in an otherwise subpar growing season. I hope that many of our beef producers will attend the Northeast Ohio Beef Twilight Tour this Thursday evening. Ron Novak has an excellent operation; one which you can steal a lot of management ideas from. Have a good week!

David Marrison, AG Educator

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Northeast Ohio Fall Twilight Beef Tour to be held on October 1, 2015 in Trumbull County

OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association would like to invite beef producers to attend the 2015 Northeast Ohio Fall Twilight Beef Tour on Thursday, October 1, 2015 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Novak Town Line Farm in Burghill, Ohio (Trumbull County). Ron Novak purchased his first Angus heifer in 1961 and has grown his herd to now include over 40 purebred Angus cows & heifers. Bull calves are raised and commercially sold across the country. 73% of the herd is bred artificially and the herd maintains a 374 day calving interval.

During the tour, participants will learn more about the development of 80 acres of intensively grazed pastures which are accessed by a 16 foot lane which stretches over 3,300 feet. Learn how water hydrants have been placed every 200 feet to supply water to each paddock. Participants will see how easily the cows are moved through the electric fence from the lane to each paddock.

Participants will also learn how customized color coded Ritchey Livestock tags are used to track the genealogy of each cow and how the Novak’s winter house their animals, both inside and outside. Learn
how embryos transplants, synchronized breeding, and semen testing are being utilized. This
tour will provide a lot of great ideas for Northeast Ohio beef producers to take back to their
operations.

Dress for the weather as the tour will be held rain or shine! The farm is located on State Route
7, 2.4 miles south of State Route 88 (Vernon) and is on the southwest corner of Bradley Brownlee Road and Route 7.
If traveling from the south, the farm is 2.6 miles north of State Route 305 (Hartford).

All-beef hamburgers and hotdogs prepared by Cherry Valley Processing will be
served at the conclusion of the program. All northeast Ohio and northwest
Pennsylvania beef producers and industry people are invited. This twilight tour is
sponsored by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association, OSU Extension, and
Novak Town Line Farm. No reservations are needed. For more information or for
directions call the OSU Extension office (Ashtabula County) at 440-576-9008.

**Zaebst Family Awarded Soil & Water Conservation District’s Cooperator of the Year**
The Ashtabula Soil & Water Conservation District awarded its 2015 Cooperator of the Year at their annual banquet
on Monday, September 21, 2015 to the Zaebst Family of New Lyme Township. The Zaebst family- Chris and Cindy along with their
children Luke, wife Beth, grandchildren Leighton and Gannon,
Daughter Lindsey, husband Mark, grandchild Michael, Son Joshua,
Son Jamison operate an approximate 160 cow dairy with
replacement heifers known as Bossy’s Way in New Lyme Township.
Approximately 435 acres of mostly tillable ground is owned with
approximately 180 acres of rented ground. A corn/hay rotation is
used throughout the farming operation with some soybeans
planted. Congratulations to the Zaebst family for being recognized as great stewards of their land!

**Rennekamp to lead OSU Extension**
By Suzanne Steel  |  Posted on 9/22/2015

Roger Rennekamp, associate dean for outreach and engagement at Oregon State University, has been named the
next director of Ohio State University Extension. Bruce A. McPheron, Ohio State's vice
president for agricultural administration and dean of the College of Food, Agricultural, and
Environmental Sciences, made the announcement Tuesday, September 22, 2015 at the Farm
Science Review, the college's three-day educational and trade show that attracts 130,000
people annually.

Rennekamp will begin his duties Jan. 4, 2016. He replaces Keith Smith, who retired June 30
after 23 years in the position. Rennekamp will be the 12th leader of OSU Extension,
overseeing nearly 700 employees and a $71 million budget. Extension is the outreach arm of
the college. "Roger brings a great deal of experience at all levels of the Cooperative Extension
System and is known for building collaborative relationships and partnerships," McPheron said. "His strong
background in working across disciplines will serve Ohio State and Ohio quite well. Roger's enthusiasm and energy
will help create the Extension organization of the future."

"I am honored to renew my relationship with one of the nation's premier land-grant universities," Rennekamp said
about his return to Ohio State. "The need for Extension is as great as any time in its hundred-year history. Extension
of the next century must remain true to key principles of community engagement and responsiveness while embracing approaches and technologies that will increase its reach and impact."

Before taking on his current role in Oregon State’s College of Public Health and Human Sciences, Rennekamp led Oregon’s 4-H Youth Development program. He served as an Extension specialist in program and staff development and as a program specialist for 4-H at the University of Kentucky. He earned his B.S. from the University of Kentucky, his M.S. from Morehead State University and his Ph.D. from Ohio State. He and his wife, Denise, have two grown children.

**USDA Extends Dairy Margin Protection Program Deadline**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on September 22, 2015 that the deadline to enroll for the dairy Margin Protection Program for coverage in 2016 has been extended until Nov. 20, 2015. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating farmers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

“The fall harvest is a busy time of the year for agriculture, so this extension will ensure that dairy producers have more time to make their choices,” said Vilsack. “We encourage all operations to examine the protections offered by this program, because despite the very best forecasts, markets can change.” Vilsack encouraged producers to use the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Agency Service (FSA) online Web resource at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool) to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation. The secure website can be accessed via computer, smartphone or tablet.

He also reminds producers that were enrolled in 2015 that they need to make a coverage election for 2016 and pay the $100 administration fee. Although any unpaid premium balances for 2015 must be paid in full by the enrollment deadline to remain eligible for higher coverage levels in 2016, premiums for 2016 are not due until Sept. 1, 2016. Also, producers can work with milk marketing companies to remit premiums on their behalf.

To enroll in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy, contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit [http://offices.usda.gov](http://offices.usda.gov). Payments under the program may be reduced by a certain percentage due to a sequester order required by Congress and issued pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. Should a payment reduction be necessary, FSA will reduce the payment by the required amount.

**Shutdown Showdown: What Farmers Need to Know**

By Alison Rice - AgWeb.com

http://www.agweb.com/article/shutdown-showdown-what-farmers-need-to-know-NAA-alison-rice/?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRolvqzMZXonjHpfsX97usuUKag38431UFwdcjKPmjr1YcCRCb0aPyQAobGp5I5FEATrPYRadit61EWA%3D%3D

If you’re wondering if there’s anything you need to know about the current budget battles in Congress, the answer is yes. If the House and Senate can’t reach an agreement on the federal budget—or more likely, a continuing resolution to fund the government while they hammer out a budget—by Sept. 30, the federal government will shut down on Oct. 1, the first day of its new fiscal year.

Why does this matter to farmers on their combines, harvesting corn in fields hundreds of miles away from Capitol Hill? Because a government shutdown, depending on when it happens and how long it lasts, could affect everything from market-moving USDA reports to producers’ farm program payments for 2014, which are scheduled to be released in October.
Here's what you need to know about what is happening in Washington.

**Farm Bill Payments: Late to Arrive and a Little Light?**

If you’re expecting a 2014 farm bill payment, you may want to plan on it arriving late—and a little lighter than you projected. Due to the threat of a shutdown and ongoing negotiations over sequestration, Congress has plenty of things to discuss that could affect those checks. (Congress adopted sequestration a few years ago to reduce the federal budget; it will cut federal spending across the board by approximately 7% in fiscal 2016.)

It’s a frustrating situation for Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who highlighted the difference in cuts (7.3% in fiscal 2015 and 6.8% in fiscal 2016) applied to producer payments from one fiscal year to the next. “We think there needs to be equity. We think people need to be treated equally under similar circumstances,” he said on AgriTalk. “We’re still trying to work through all of this. The best thing that could happen would for Congress to get its work done.”

Regardless of the final number, it does appear that farmers should expect their checks to be trimmed. “The 2014 payments will be reduced unless Congress takes steps to lift the sequester,” said Jonathan Coppess, a former Farm Service Agency Administrator who now teaches in the University of Illinois’ Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, speaking on an Illinois Corn podcast. “I would not be surprised if these payments will be delayed,” between the time required to negotiate a change in the sequester cuts and the possibility of a shutdown, where there simply wouldn’t be the employees there to cut the checks. Stephanie Mercier, senior policy and advocacy adviser for the Farm Journal Foundation, agrees. “It would be hard for Vilsack to say sending farm bill payments was a critical function and keep those people at work.”

**Time to Skip a USDA Report?**

When the federal government shuts down, it keeps only “essential” employees on the job, furloughing the rest without pay until a budget is passed. In 2013, the last time the feds shut down, that added up to more than 850,000 civilian workers. That shutdown lasted more than two weeks. How did it affect farmers? Well, without time to gather and collect the data, USDA simply skipped the October 2013 World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report. It also didn’t produce the weekly crop progress numbers or livestock reports during the shutdown.

That could certainly happen again if there’s another shutdown, especially it lasts longer than a few days. “The Administration strongly believes that a lapse in appropriations should not occur,” a USDA spokesperson told AgWeb in September. “…..However, at this time, prudent management requires that the government plan for the possibility of a lapse and USDA is working with [the Office of Management and Budget] to take appropriate action. This includes reviewing relevant legal requirements and updating our plan for executing an orderly shutdown. Determinations about specific programs are being actively reviewed. It is our hope that this work will ultimately be unnecessary and that there will be no lapse in appropriations.”

Such a situation could disrupt USDA operations around the globe. Mercier notes that a shutdown could close Foreign Agricultural Service offices overseas, too, which means U.S. farmers could be lacking market information for both the U.S. and abroad. The absence of information could make the current market even harder to predict. If the October report gets missed, “it would put a little more volatility into the market,” says Chip Flory, editorial director of Pro Farmer. “It extends the waiting game on USDA’s numbers.”

Of course, given the controversy that those USDA numbers can inspire, perhaps farmers wouldn’t mind missing a report. Not so fast, says Mercier. “I think there is always a loud minority who don’t trust the release, but the vast majority rely on them for a snapshot of the market, and there would be a loud outcry if they got rid of them.”
Now What?
With the unexpected resignation of House Speaker John Boehner on Friday, though, the potential for an October shutdown may be fading. “My impression is that it’s less likely that the government will shut down on Oct. 1, because Speaker Boehner doesn’t have to worry about spending political capital to get a deal done” to temporarily fund the government.

Known as a continuing resolution, the measure basically gives Congress more time—until Dec. 11, to be exact—to pass a federal budget for 2016. But the shutdown threat has hardly vanished. Depending on who the Republicans elect as the new Speaker of the House, Congress may have an even harder time coming to a budget agreement. The new leadership “is going to have six to eight weeks to make a deal for a real appropriations bill or settle for a new continuing resolution,” Mercier observes. “They’ll have relatively little time to figure it out and probably even less power than even Boehner had.”

Tar Spot: a New Corn Disease in the Midwest
by Pierce Paul

A few weeks ago, Tar Spot, a new disease of corn caused by the fungus Phyllachora maydis was reported for the first time in the US, first in Indiana and then in Illinois. It was later found as far east as Allen County, IN, bordering Paulding County in northwest Ohio. So, although Tar Spot has not yet been confirmed in Ohio, it is quite possible that it may be present in the northwestern corner of the state.

What does it look like? Even though corn is drying down, if Tar Spot is present, you can still detect it on dry, senescent leaves almost as easily as you can on healthy leaves. So, please check your fields to see if this disease is present. According to Dr. Wise, my counterpart at Purdue University, “Symptoms of tar spot begin as oval to irregular bleached to brown lesions on leaves in which black spore-producing structures are formed... giving the symptomatic areas of the leaf a rough or bumpy feel to the touch... resembling pustules on leaves with rust. Lesions ... may coalesce to cause large areas of blighted leaf tissue. Symptoms may also be present on leaf sheaths and husks.”

What causes Tar Spot and how damaging is it? Tar spot is caused by the fungus Phyllachora maydis, but the greatest impact of this disease in terms of yield loss occurs when P. maydis-infected plants are infected by a second fungus called Monographella maydis. So far, thankfully, only the first fungus has been reported in the US (IN and IL). In regions such as Mexico where Tar Spot has been known to cause substantial yield losses, the two fungi act as a team, with Phyllachora maydis first infecting the plants, followed by infection with Monographella maydis. Damage tends to be most severe under cool, humid conditions at high elevations.

Where did it come from and will it survive and become established? At this point it is unclear how Tar Spot got here. It is not known to be seed-borne or infect other plant species, so corn seeds and weeds are unlikely to be the sources of inoculum. However, the fungus can survive and be moved around on fresh and dry plant materials such as leaves and husks. In addition, since spores of the fungus can be carried by water and wind, there is some speculation as to whether it came in on a tropical storm. Since Tar Spot is generally considered a tropical disease (common in Mexico, parts of South America and the Caribbean), it is unlikely that the fungus will survive the harsh Midwest winter and become established here. However, we’ll have to wait and see and do the research to learn more about this disease.

What should I do if I find Tar Spot? If you see anything that fits the description of, or resembles (Picture), Tar Spot, please inform your state specialist, field specialist, or county extension educator, and most importantly, please send samples to my lab (1680 Madison Ave, Wooster, OH) for testing and verification.

Read more about Tar Spot of Corn at:

Liming Considerations
By Ed Lentz & Steve Culman

Fall is an excellent time to test soil pH and determine whether any lime needs to be applied for future crops. Proper soil pH is important for nutrient availability, herbicide activity, and crop development. For most soils, additional lime is not needed every year. Consider these points before liming your fields:

Do I need lime? Each year we hear stories of people adding lime to their fields without a soil test. The grower has a source of free waste-product lime that they pick up and apply to their fields. In many cases their soil pH was fine, but they did not want to pass up a "good deal". Without knowing the soil pH, a grower may inadvertently raise their soil pH to the high 7's. At this elevated pH, certain nutrients may become limited and the productivity of their crop may be reduced and require special management practices. Western Ohio has the greatest risk of elevating soil pH from careless applications of lime. A soil analysis is the best step to determine if a field needs lime.

What is the pH of my subsoil? Generally a laboratory recommends lime when the soil pH drops two to three units below the desired value. The desired value depends upon the crop and the pH of the subsoil. In parts of Ohio where the subsoil pH is less than 6.0 for mineral soils (eastern Ohio), additional lime is recommended after the soil pH drops to 6.2 for corn and soybean, and 6.5 for alfalfa. In other parts of the state (generally western Ohio), the subsoil pH for mineral soils is greater than 6.0 and lime is not needed until the soil pH drops below 6.0 for corn and soybeans, and 6.2 for alfalfa. Private laboratories may not take in account the subsoil pH and use recommendations based on a subsoil pH less than 6.0 for all parts of the state, possibly recommending lime applications several years earlier than needed for some areas.

What is the Effective Neutralizing Power of my lime source? An important item from a lime analysis report is the Effective Neutralizing Power (ENP) value, which is required for material sold as lime for agricultural purposes in Ohio. This value allows a producer to compare the quality among lime sources because ENP considers the purity, neutralizing power (including fineness) and moisture content. In other words, the ENP tells you how much of that ton of lime actually neutralizes soil acidity. The unit for ENP is pounds/ton (be careful not to use %ENP, which may also be on a lime analysis report). The ENP allows a producer to compare different lime sources because they can now determine price per pound or ton of actual neutralizing material.

Should I use “hi cal” or dolomitic lime? In most situations it does not matter, so a producer can select the least expensive of the two lime sources. Transportation is often the largest cost of a lime material, so generally the closest lime source (quarry) is often the most economical.

Several parts of the state are historically low in soil magnesium (eastern and southern Ohio). Adequate soil magnesium is important to reduce the risk of such problems as grass tetany for grazing animals. Soil test magnesium levels need to be greater than 50 ppm (100 lb) for optimal corn, soybean, wheat, and alfalfa production. Often areas low in magnesium also need lime, which has made the application of dolomitic lime an economic solution for both concerns.

The ratio between calcium and magnesium is important. Soils should contain more calcium than magnesium. Extensive research has shown that crops yield the same over a wide range of calcium to magnesium ratios and will not affect crop production as long as the calcium to magnesium ratio is larger than 1. High calcium lime should be
used in situations where the soil test calcium to magnesium ratio is less than 1, or in other words, the soil magnesium levels are greater than the soil calcium levels. We have not observed any Ohio soil tests where the magnesium levels are above the calcium levels. Also keep in mind that almost all dolomitic lime sources will contain more calcium than magnesium. Unfortunately, some producers have been led to believe that magnesium levels in dolomitic lime may be undesirable. The Ohio State University is currently investigating the importance of calcium to magnesium ratios in crop production since the last Ohio research was completed in the early 1980s. For now, the focus should be selecting lime on its Effective Neutralizing Power (ENP) rather than its calcium level.

**How about gypsum as a lime source?** Gypsum is not a lime source. It does not have the right chemical composition to neutralize soil acidity, such as carbonate (gypsum is calcium sulfate). Gypsum is used as an amendment for soil physical properties and/or as a fertilizer providing calcium and sulfur.

In summary, make sure you take a soil test to determine if lime is needed, determine if magnesium is needed, know the historic pH of your subsoil, and then use the ENP to select the most cost effective lime material. A soil test every three to four years will determine the lime requirements for your fields. Additional information on ENP and lime sources and liming rates may be found at the following location: [http://agcrops.osu.edu/specialists/fertility/fertility-fact-sheets-and-bulletins/AGF505.pdf](http://agcrops.osu.edu/specialists/fertility/fertility-fact-sheets-and-bulletins/AGF505.pdf)

**Revising Fertilizer Recommendations for Corn, Soybean, and Wheat**

By Steve Culman

Ohio State is in the process of updating the Tri-State Recommendations, looking specifically at N, P and K in corn, soybean and wheat. This is a major undertaking that will require a collective effort from numerous extension personnel, crop consultants and farmer cooperators. We will cast a broad net to collect data from a large number of farms across the state to determine economically-optimum fertilization rates.

Experiments will involve applying fertilizer or no fertilizer to replicated strip plots. If a farmer has grid-sampled and has variable rate capabilities, we can write fertilizer prescriptions to get even more information. Farmers can choose which nutrient they’d like to work with and will have a large degree of flexibility in the plot layout and applied rates. We are ideally looking for farms that capture a diversity of soil types, and are especially interested in fields that test low in P and K. Farmers will be paid for their time and effort, and crop consultants or co-op agronomists can get paid by helping facilitate on-trials on their clients' fields.

Data to be collected:

- Soil samples before planting
- Leaf tissue samples for nutrient analysis at early reproductive stage
- Grain yields and nutrient analysis of grain at harvest
- Short questionnaire about soil management

All lab analyses will be paid for and we will work with you to ensure that you understand your results and implications it has on your farm. Interested cooperators can contact Steve Culman at culman.2@osu.edu or go to [http://go.osu.edu/fert-trials](http://go.osu.edu/fert-trials) for more information. This work is being generously funded through farmer check-off dollars (Ohio Soybean Council and Ohio Corn and Small Grains Marketing Programs).

**FSA Reminds Producers of Approaching NAP Deadlines for 2016 Crops**

The USDA Ohio Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers who are interested in the 2016 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), of the need to apply for coverage by the following crop deadline dates.

- **October 1, 2015** is the deadline for 2016 NAP coverage on winter wheat, rye, barley and speltz.
November 20, 2015 is the deadline for 2016 NAP coverage on apples, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, forage for hay and pasture, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, honey, maple sap and hops. NOTE: Hops is a perennial crop and the application deadline moved from spring to fall for coverage.

March 15, 2016 is the deadline for 2016 NAP coverage on forage sorghum, oats, potatoes, Soybeans, Sunflowers and all spring planted specialty crops grown for food.

The 2014 Farm Bill provides greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops. Previously, the program offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price. The expanded protection is especially helpful to beginning and socially disadvantaged producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage.

Eligible producers can apply for 2016 NAP coverage at their local FSA Office using form CCC-471, Application for Coverage. The service fee for basic NAP coverage is the lesser of $250 per crop or $750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of $1,875 for a producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Producers interested in buy-up coverage must pay a premium, in addition to the service fee. The maximum premium will be $6,564.

Producer meeting the definition of a socially disadvantaged farmer, beginning farmer or limited resource farmer will have service fees waived. Producers meeting this definition that choose to purchase buy-up coverage will also have service fees waived and the premium will be capped at $3,282. To help producers learn more about the NAP program and how it can help them, USDA, offers an online Web tool at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap. The webtool allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage and gives producers an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation. For more information on NAP coverage or obtain coverage, please contact your FSA County office.

Purdue Adds to Agronomy's Online Courses for Professionals
WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Purdue University's Department of Agronomy is expanding professional development courses through its new Agronomy e-Learning Academy following the success of its first such online course, Agronomy Essentials.

Over the next year, the academy will add two other courses - Precision Agriculture and Nutrient Management. Because course content is available online any time of the day, the courses are designed for the convenience of busy professionals who want to improve their knowledge but do not have the time to attend classes at specific times.

Course graduates receive certificates of completion as well as continuing education units for certified crop advisers. Riley Kenney, an agronomy sales specialist with Ceres Solutions in Brook, Indiana, got so much out of the 12-week Agronomy Essentials that he helped to recruit a colleague to take the course, which will be offered for the third time beginning Sept. 30. The flagship course, which received the 2015 Award for Excellence in Distance Learning from Purdue, helps professionals from all areas of agriculture in their job effectiveness.

"Agronomy Essentials helped me in my career by giving me a good general knowledge of agronomy as a base that I want to build upon," Kenney said. "It gave me more confidence to move ahead in my career and education and boosted my learning exponentially. The course is readily accessible, easy to navigate and conveniently organized."
The course contains 100 high-definition video lessons by professional educators, including lead instructor Bruce Erickson, Purdue's agronomy education distance and outreach director. Video lessons are supplemented with reading, graphics, glossaries, downloadable slides and tests to measure participants' understanding and retention. More information, registration and a preview video of Agronomy Essentials is available at http://tinyurl.com/purdueagry. The preview contains snippets of video lessons from several of the 26 course learning modules.

Precision Agriculture will be released Jan. 13, 2016, and will be offered three times during the year, running simultaneously with Agronomy Essentials. Precision Agriculture will appeal to producers and other agricultural professionals who want to gain a better understanding of the latest technology and best practices in this rapidly growing area of agriculture. The third course will be Nutrient Management, to be released in November 2016. This advanced course will delve into the critical study of soil fertility and plant nutrition for a variety of crops. Housed on Purdue's Blackboard Learn site, the courses are accessible from computers and mobile devices with Internet access. For more information, contact janblack@purdue.edu.

7 Handy Ag Apps
By Ben Potter - AgWeb.com
Source: http://www.agweb.com/article/7-more-handy-ag-apps-NAA-ben-potter/

Here are some of the newer agriculture apps that hope to earn a roster spot on your smartphone or tablet computer.

1. NCGA Action – this app places advocacy powers in the palm of your hand. The National Corn Growers Association created it as a means to notify farmers about what’s happening in Washington, D.C. that could affect their operations, and gives them a means to get involved and make their own voices heard.

“Digital tools like this are being used more and more by farmers and others, and are critical when we need to make our voices heard on important matters quickly,” says NCGA president Chip Bowling. “As a farmer, I know how important saving time is – especially during planting and harvest – and being able to take action anywhere and anytime, within minutes, can help us protect our freedom to operate and defend and expand important markets for our corn.” The app is free to download on both Apple and Android devices.

2. Seed Finder – this app is included in Farmer Business Network membership ($500) and allows users real-world yield results on more than 550 seeds and 56 brands. FBN has aggregated and standardized millions of acres of production data from its member farmers. Users can search yield performances and impacts based on various criteria, including by seeding rate, cumulative precipitation, rotation, planting speed, soil type and planting temperatures. This allows farmers to match top-performing seeds to each of their fields.

The app is available on Apple devices at https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fbn/id937252799?mt=8

3. KSUSoyYieldCalc – this Android application can help estimate yields of soybeans prior to harvest. Users need to input four pieces of data – plant population, pods per plant, seeds per pod and seed size. The result is a quick, relatively easy yield estimate. To find the app on the Google Play store, go to: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ksu.tania90.soya1

4. MachineryGuide – this app lets farmers turn their Android devices into a simple GPS precision guidance application. (Note – requires purchase of software and a small GNSS antenna.) The app’s creators say it is ideal for smaller or medium-size farms that don’t care to invest money in more expensive guidance systems, and say the app could save farmers up to 10% in reduced input costs. For more information, visit http://www.machineryguideapp.com/en.
5. **NeoMyco Reports** – this app from Neogen lets users access the company’s latest mycotoxin reports in the U.S. and Canada. They can also submit their own mycotoxin reports, catch up on Neogen’s blog (sample headlines – “Study of U.S. farm data shows loss of crop diversity” and “Food fraud cases growing; becoming more serious”), and quickly link to the company’s mycotoxin tests and information. Click here to find the app on iTunes or the Google Play store.

6. **Farm at Hand** - this is a cloud-based app intended to help farmers manage their operation “from seed to sale.” Users can track and schedule field activities. They can also trace every bushel from bin to buyer. And they can keep up with their equipment fleet by entering machinery details and creating maintenance logs. A calendar function allows cross-team collaboration. Users can share this data with vendors as needed, at their discretion. Farm at Hand is available for both Android and Apple devices.

7. **My Farm Radio** – last fall, Farm Journal Media launched My Farm Radio, giving users access to best-in-class news, weather and markets, and features both live streaming and on-demand content. “There is a 24-7 stream, which functions just like a 24-7 news talk station, it’s a constant stream of farm news, information, and analysis,” says Mark DePrez, vice president and general manager of My Farm Radio. Content includes Farm Journal programs, like AgDay, U.S. Farm Report, Machinery Pete TV, AgriTalk and Market Rally radio. The list also includes outside contributors, such as USDA, Top Third Ag Marketing, Agri-Pulse and Real Agriculture out of Canada.

In a major September 2015 update, DePrez says the app added a farmer-curated country radio station called “The Farm.” The playlist is a blend of current hits, along with country classics from 1990 to 2005. Download My Farm Radio on Andriod or Apple devices at [http://www.agweb.com/my-farm-radio/](http://www.agweb.com/my-farm-radio/). Looking for more useful agriculture apps? AgWeb has compiled nearly 80 app reviews at [www.AgWebAppFinder](http://www.AgWebAppFinder).

**Proper Cow Culling is Important to Your Business**
By Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University

Cull cows represent approximately 20% of the gross income of any commercial cow operation. Cull beef cows represent 10% of the beef that is consumed in the United States. Therefore, ranchers need to make certain that cull culling is done properly and profitably. Selling cull cows when they will return the most income to the rancher requires knowledge about cull cow health and body condition. Proper culling will reduce the chance that a cow carcass is condemned at the packing plant and becomes a money drain for the entire beef industry.

Is she good for another year? At cull culling time, producers often face some tough decisions. Optimum culling of the herd seems to require a sharp crystal ball that could see into the future. Will she keep enough body condition through the winter to rebreed next year? How old is the cow? Is her mouth sound so that she can harvest forage and be nutritionally strong enough to reproduce and raise a big calf? At what age do cows usually start to become less productive?

There is great variability in the longevity of beef cows. Data from large ranches in Florida would indicate that cows are consistent in the rebreeding performance through about 8 years of age. A small decline was noted as cows aged from 8 to 10 years of age. However the most consistent decline in reproductive performance was noted after cows were 10 years of age. A steeper decline in reproductive performance was found as they became 12 years of age. In other words, start to watch for reasons to cull a cow at about age 8. By the time she is 10, look at her very closely and consider culling; as she reaches her 12th year, plan to cull her before she gets health problems or in very poor body condition.

**Other reasons to cull cows:**
Examine the eye health of the cows. One of the leading causes of condemned beef carcasses is still “cancer-eye” cows. Although the producers are doing a much better job in recent years of culling cows before “cancer-eye” takes
its toll, every cow manager should watch the cows closely for potentially dangerous eye tumors. Watch for small pinkish growths on the upper, lower, or corner eye lids. Also notice growths on the eyeball in the region where the dark of the eye meets with the “white” of the eyeball. Small growths in any of these areas are very likely to become cancerous lesions if left unchecked. Likewise be aware of cows with heavy wart infestations around the eye socket. Many of these become cancerous over time. Culling these cows while the growth is still small, will allow the cow carcass to be utilized normally. If however, cancer engulfs the eyeball and gets into the lymph nodes around the head, the entire carcass will likely be condemned as not fit for human consumption.

Check the feet and legs. Beef cows must travel over pastures and fields to consume forages and reach water tanks and ponds. Cows with bad stifle joints, severe foot rot infections, or arthritic joints may be subject to substantial carcass trimming when they reach the packing plant. They will be poor producers if allowed to stay on the ranch while severely lame. They may lose body condition, weigh less, and be discounted at the livestock market by the packer buyers. Culling them soon after their injury will help reduce the loss of sale price that may be suffered later. If the cow has been treated for infection, be certain to market the cow after the required withdrawal time of the medicine used to treat her infection.

Bad udders should be culled. One criteria that should be examined to cull cows is udder quality. Beef cattle producers are not as likely to think about udder health and shape as are dairy producers, but this attribute affects cow productivity and should be considered. OSU studied the effect that bad udders had on cow productivity. They found that cows with one or two dry quarters had calves with severely reduced weaning weights (50 – 60 pounds) compared to cows with no dry quarters. Plus, cows with bad udders tend to pass that trait along to daughters that may be kept as replacement heifers. Two key types of “bad” udders to cull include: the large funnel-shaped teats and weak udder suspension. The large funnel-shaped teats may be indicative of a previous case of mastitis and cause the quarter to be incapable of producing milk. In addition, large teats may be difficult for the newborn calf to get it’s mouth around and receive nourishment and colostrum very early in life. As some cows age, the ligament that separates the two sides of the udder becomes weakened and allows the entire udder to hang very near to the ground. Again it becomes difficult for the newborn calf to find a teat when the udder hangs too close to the ground. Select against these faults and over time your cow herd will improve its udder health.

Cull cows when in moderate body condition. Send older cows to market before they become too thin. Generally, severely emaciated cattle have lightly muscled carcasses with extremely small ribeyes and poor red-meat yield. This greatly lessens the salvage value of such animals. Just as importantly, emaciated cattle are most often those which “go down” in transit, as they lack sufficient energy to remain standing for long periods of time. Severe bruising, excessive carcass trim, increased condemnations, and even death are the net results of emaciation. Very thin cows have a low dressing percentage (weight of the carcass divided by the live weight). Because of these factors, cow buyers will pay less per pound for very thin, shelly, cull cows. In addition, thin cows will weigh less. As you combine these two factors (weight and price per pound), thin cull cows return many fewer dollars at sale time than if the cow was sold when in moderate body condition. If they are already too thin, a short (45 to 60 days) time in a drylot with a high quality feed will put condition back on the cows very efficiently. There is no need to put excess flesh or fat on cows. They become less efficient at converting feed to bodyweight after about 60 days and the market will not pay for excessive fatness on cows.

Cull any really wild cattle. They are hard on you, and your equipment, and they raise wild calves. Wild calves are poor performers in the feedlot and are more prone to producing dark cutting carcasses as they reach the packing plant. “Dark cutters” are discounted severely when priced on the rail.

Cull open cows. Why feed a cow all winter that will not have a calf next spring? Call your veterinarian, schedule a time for pregnancy checking and find which cows have not bred back. Cull them while they are in good body condition after summer pasture and before you spend $200 or more on the winter feed bill.
Ride with the Trumbull County Commissioners on October 10
On Saturday, October 10, 2015, the Trumbull County Commissioners and Trumbull County MetroParks are proud to announce the first Ride with the Commissioners on the Western Reserve Greenway. Starting at 9:00 am there will be refreshments at the Sunside Trailhead, on State Route 305 (547 Center Street East, Warren, Ohio), and then at approximately 10:00 am riders and the Commissioners will depart south to ride the Paul E Heltzel portion of Western Reserve Greenway (Phase 3) approximately a 7 mile bike ride. For any additional information please visit our website at www.trumbullmetroparks.org or call Zachary Svette, Trumbull MetroParks Operations Director at 330-675-3072.

Ashtabula County 4-H Fall Festival to be held on October 6, 2015
The Ashtabula County 4-H Fall Festival will be held Tuesday, October 6th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. during National 4-H week at the Expo Building at the County Fairgrounds. This family fun event is held to celebrate 4-H and encourage families who are interested in 4-H to come and learn about what 4-H has to offer. It also serves as a way to end the year for members who are currently enrolled in the program.

Fun fall food, like hot dogs, popcorn, caramel apples and cider will be served for donation to children of all ages. Exciting and interactive games and 4-H program information will also be available during the evening. Attendees are invited to bring their best decorated pumpkin and/or scarecrow for a chance to win great prizes.

If you would like information on the 4-H program in Ashtabula County, please contact Jenna Hoyt at 440-576-9008 or via email at hoyt.88@osu.edu or by visiting our website at www.ashtabula.osu.edu and visiting the 4-H Youth Development page.

Vegetable of the Week – Pie Pumpkin (Cucurbita pepo).
Author: Amy Stone; stone.91@osu.edu

Not always a Halloween decoration, pumpkins have been grown as a food crop for livestock and people for centuries. A New World plant, pumpkins were introduced into Europe only after the discovery of the Americas. Over the next several hundred years they provided a means of storing fodder for cattle and pigs. Recipes were developed for pies, breads and even beverages for human enjoyment. It was only within the last century that plant breeders concentrated on selecting ornamental characteristics of the pumpkin rather than taste and eating quality. However, most pumpkins produced in the United States are still used for processing.

Pumpkins are usually sown directly from seed each year. While too late to plant, grow, harvest and enjoy this year, begin your plans for next season if you would like to grow your own.

Pie pumpkins are usually smaller than field or carving pumpkins and require less space. However, they still need room to spread; it is recommended that pie pumpkins be planted 3’ apart in rows with 6’ between rows. Each plant should produce 3 - 4 fruits. Fruit is ripe when they achieve a clear orange color and the skin is firm (cured). Pumpkins can be stored in a cool dry area for several months. Pie pumpkins are selected for their thick, relatively dry fruit and higher sugar content. Carving pumpkins can be used for pies, but the quality of the resulting puree will be poorer than that of a pie pumpkin.
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

Readers can subscribe electronically to this newsletter by sending an e-mail message to: marrison.2@osu.edu. If you would like to opt-out of receiving this newsletter, please e-mail marrison.2@osu.edu with the words: UNSUBSCRIBE

The Ohio State University
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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2015 Northeast Ohio Fall Beef Twilight Tour

Thursday, October 1, 2015
6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
Novak Town Line Farm
4825 State Route 7
Burghill, Ohio, 44404
330-772-3186

Join us for the 2015 Northeast Ohio Fall Beef Twilight Tour as we visit Novak Town Line Farm in Burghill Ohio (Trumbull County). Ron Novak purchased his first Angus heifer in 1961 and has grown his herd to now include over 40 purebred Angus cows & heifers. Bull calves are raised and commercially sold across the country. 73% of the herd is bred artificially and the herd maintains a 374 day calving interval.

During the tour, participants will learn more about the development of 80 acres of intensively grazed pastures which are accessed by a 16 foot lane which stretches over 3,300 feet. Learn how water hydrants have been placed every 200 feet to supply water to each paddock. Participants will see how easily the cows are moved through the electric fence from the lane to each paddock.

Participants will also learn how customized color coded Ritchey Livestock tags are used to track the genealogy of each cow and how the Novak’s winter house their animals, both inside and outside. Learn how embryos transplants, synchronized breeding, and semen testing are being utilized. This tour will provide a lot of great ideas for Northeast Ohio beef producers to take back to their operations.

Directions on Back
The farm is located on State Route 7, 2.4 miles south of State Route 88 (Vernon) and is on the southwest corner of Bradley Brownlee Road and Route 7. If traveling from the south, the farm is 2.6 miles north of State Route 305 (Hartford).

Dress for the weather as the tour will be held rain or shine! All-beef hamburgers and hotdogs prepared by Cherry Valley Processing will be served at the conclusion of the program. All northeast Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania beef producers and industry people are invited. This twilight tour is sponsored by the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association, OSU Extension, and Novak Town Line Farm. No reservations are needed. For more information or for directions call the OSU Extension office (Ashtabula County) at 440-576-9008.