Hello, Northeast Ohio Counties!

Congratulations to David and Emily Marrison! The two tied the knot on September 2 during a beautiful ceremony in Coshocton County. We all wish you the best in your new adventures!

We will be interviewing candidates for the Ashtabula County ANR position this month, and we have some great candidates. Hopefully the position won’t be vacant for too long! In the meantime, you can still contact the Ashtabula County office with your questions or you can contact Lee in the Trumbull County office.

You can also still expect this newsletter to arrive each Tuesday! Stay safe!

David Marrison & Lee Beers
Extension Educators - Ag & Natural Resources
The Perfect Time to Renovate Your Pasture

Rory Lewandowski, OSU Extension Educator ANR, Wayne County
(Previously published in Farm and Dairy, August 23, 2018)

“My biggest pasture weed problem is foxtails, what should I do to control them?” This was the comment and question of a recent phone call I received. Foxtails, yellow, green and giant, are annual weeds. In a pasture situation, annual weeds such as foxtails, ragweed, pigweed, crabgrass and barnyard grass, are the result of pasture management.

These weeds require soil disturbance and bare soil to germinate and grow. Any practice that opens up or destroys the sod base allows these weeds to flourish. My caller admitted that those foxtails were growing in an area where hay had been fed in bale rings. Since foxtail is not a desirable forage species, we have to consider options to improve or renovate that pasture area. Late summer provides a window of opportunity to renovate weedy or thin pasture areas and there are a couple of good options to accomplish that task. The first step in any pasture improvement or renovation is a review of the soil pH and soil fertility levels.

Do you have a current (less than three years old) soil test for the pasture area you want to improve? If not, start with collecting a good soil sample. For pure grass stands, soil pH should be a minimum of 6.0 and preferably 6.3.

If legumes are in the mix, soil pH should be in the 6.5 to 6.8 range. Soil phosphorus levels are important to help a new seedling develop a root system. Minimum soil phosphorus levels requirements are 15 ppm Bray P1 (28 Mehlich 3) for pure grass stands and 25 ppm Bray P1 (40 Mehlich 3) for legume or legume mix stands.

Potassium is generally associated with winter hardiness and playing a role in disease resistance. For most Ohio soils, a test level of 100 to 120 ppm is a minimum recommendation. Make any needed adjustments to soil pH or soil fertility before adding any forage seed. An important consideration for my phone caller, and for most pasture renovation projects, is weed control.

Controlling Weeds
Control weeds, especially perennial weeds, before planting any forages. Control options include mowing, tillage and herbicides or a combination of these methods. Mowing annual weeds after they have entered seed formation but before seeds are viable can provide some control. Mowing, unless done multiple times, is not as effective for perennial weeds because they can draw upon root reserves to regrow.
Tillage provides good weed control, especially for annual weeds and generally sets back perennial weeds enough to reduce competition and allow new forage plants to establish. Tillage is also useful to level out and smooth out a pasture area that has ruts and rough spots due to winter feeding and/or intense hoof action.

The downside is that tillage can also provide opportunity for other annual weeds to germinate and perennial weeds may regrow. Additionally, tillage is not suitable for many pasture situations because of the risk of soil erosion after tillage.

Herbicides work well for no-till seeding or in combination with mowing and tillage. The two primary herbicide options in pasture renovation are burndown with paraquat (Gramoxone), a non-systemic contact herbicide, or use of a systemic glyphosate product, either alone or in combination with a 2,4-D product.

The paraquat option is attractive when there are desirable perennial forage plants in the stand because the chemical will not kill them, only burn the top growth off. Note that paraquat is a restricted use pesticide that requires a pesticide license to purchase and use.

The glyphosate or glyphosate/2,4-D option should be used when the intent is to kill everything down to the roots and start over. Always read and follow label directions regarding rates, timing, planting restrictions after application, application volumes and personal protective equipment.

Forage options include planting either an annual or a perennial species. The Ohio Agronomy Guide recommends completing the planting of perennial legumes by the end of August. There is a little more leeway for perennial grasses, but even so, the recommendation is to complete planting by early September.

If you need to pull a soil test and then apply lime or fertilizer there may not be time to get planting completed by these dates. In some cases, if 2,4-D was used in an herbicide tank mix, there may be a wait period before planting because 2,4-D can have some soil activity.

**Check the Label**

What are options for September planting dates? You can take a chance and plant later. Depending upon the kind of fall we have, the planting could still be successful. Another option is the use of annual small grains. Small grains like winter triticale, winter wheat and winter cereal rye can all be planted in September and even into October and provide good cover to reduce soil erosion over the winter. When planted in late August to early September, small grains provide some late fall grazing.
All these species will overwinter and start growth in early spring to provide some spring grazing as well. Late summer and early fall provide an opportunity to control problem weeds in pastures and renovate the pasture stand.

**Sorghum oil approved for biodiesel production under the RFS**

Source: [https://biofuels-news.com/display_news/13858/sorghum_oil_approved_for_biodiesel_production_under_the_rfs/](https://biofuels-news.com/display_news/13858/sorghum_oil_approved_for_biodiesel_production_under_the_rfs/)

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved a variety of pathways for renewable fuel derived from sorghum as part of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) programme. This includes the use of sorghum to produce biodiesel. Acting EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler signed the final pathway on 24 July.

“Today’s approval sets the stage for more homegrown fuels under the Renewable Fuel Standard and adds diversity to our mix of biofuels in the US,” said Wheeler.

“This is a win for American sorghum farmers and biofuel producers alike.”

The newly approved pathways include biodiesel, heating oil, jet fuel, and liquefied petroleum gas produced from sorghum oil, a by-product of ethanol produced from using grain sorghum as a primary feedstock.

These pathways meet the greenhouse gas emissions reductions requirements to qualify to generate credits or Renewable Identification Numbers (RINs) for biomass-based diesel and advanced biofuels under the RFS program, according to the EPA.

For many, the EPA’s decision is seen as offering a significant boost to US farmers who are struggling as a result of various international trade disputes.

“Kansas farmers are hurting – low commodity prices and falling farm revenue have made it increasingly difficult for producers to make ends meet,” Senator Jerry Morgan of Kansas said.
“Approving the pathway is long past due, and I applaud Administrator Wheeler for acting quickly to finalise the pathway after assuming leadership of the agency. It is critical for EPA to recognise the challenges faced by farmers and ranchers and to make certain it pursues biofuel policies that will benefit rural America.”
Perhaps unsurprisingly, the new pathway has also been warmly welcomed by the US biofuels industry.

“This is long over-due and very welcome news for the renewable fuels industry,” said Emily Skor, CEO of major representative for the US ethanol industry, Growth Energy.

“Growth Energy, our member plants, and the National Sorghum Producers have been working side by side and pushing hard for this change for more than five years. We are thrilled to see our efforts become a reality for numerous ethanol producers using grain sorghum to produce ethanol, and for the opportunity to open up additional markets in a struggling agricultural economy.”

**Soy natural: Genetic resistance against aphids**
By Adityarup “Rup” Chakravorty

A tiny pest can cause huge losses to soybean farmers.

Several top soybean producing states in the U.S. are in the Upper Midwest. In these states, an insect—the soybean aphid—is a damaging pest. Each year, soybean aphids cause billions of dollars in crop losses.

In a recent study, researchers have taken a big step toward identifying new soybean genes associated with aphid resistance. “Discovering new resistance genes will help develop soybean varieties with more robust aphid resistance,” says lead author Aaron Lorenz. “There are very few commercially-available varieties of soybean with aphid resistance genes. Newly-identified genes can serve as backup sources of resistance if the ones currently used are no longer useful.” Lorenz is an agronomist and plant geneticist at the University of Minnesota.

Northeast Ohio Agriculture

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Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties
Currently, insecticides are used to control aphid populations to reduce damage. But aphid populations that are resistant to widely-used insecticides have been found. Environmental issues with insecticide use can also be a concern. These issues may limit insecticide use in the future.

Using soybean varieties that are naturally resistant to aphids is an alternative to using insecticides.

“But the soybean aphid is a genetically diverse species. It is capable of quickly overcoming plant resistance,” says Lorenz. “So we need to identify new sources of soybean aphid resistance.”

To find previously unknown aphid resistance genes, researchers used already-published research. Thousands of varieties of soybean have been tested for aphid resistance. Genetic information also exists for many of these soybean varieties.

Lorenz and colleagues combined data on existing aphid resistance and genetics. “Our goal was to find which parts of the soybean genome contain genes related to aphid resistance,” says Lorenz.

To do so, the researchers scanned the soybean genome for small genetic landmarks, called SNPs (pronounced “snips”). Then they tested if any of these landmarks were present more often in soybean varieties that are resistant to aphids. If so, “we can infer that a gene associated with aphid resistance may be near that landmark,” says Lorenz.

Researchers have to be careful, though. “There are many reasons—beyond physical proximity—that could cause these associations,” says Lorenz. “We build statistical models to account for the other reasons.”

Lorenz and colleagues found several genetic landmarks that were more common in aphid-resistant soybean varieties. Some of these landmarks were in genetic regions near aphid resistance genes. But many others were in genetic regions not previously associated with aphid resistance.
That’s exciting, says Lorenz. “These results can help guide researchers toward discovering new aphid resistance genes. That could be key for developing new aphid-resistant varieties of soybean.”

Also encouraging is that the researchers found genetic landmarks associated with aphid resistance in several different soybean varieties. “That means a broad range of genetic backgrounds can be used for breeding purposes,” says Lorenz.

There is still work to do, though. Ultimately, multiple resistance genes can be bred into single soybean varieties. These varieties will then have highly robust resistance to aphids.

“I think resistance to aphids will become increasingly important to maintain soybean production,” says Lorenz. “Soybean farmers should know about them. Demanding soybean aphid resistance in the varieties they use will help their development and availability.”

Read more about this research in The Plant Genome. Funding for this research was provided by Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council, and Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center.

Farm Science Review Tickets Available
OSU Extension is pleased to announce that Advance tickets for the Farm Science Review are available at all Ohio State University Extension county offices for $7. This year’s Farm Science Review will be held at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center in London, Ohio on September 18-20, 2018. Tickets are $10 at the gate; however, presale tickets can be purchased at your local OSU Extension for $7 per ticket through Monday, September 17, 2018. Children 5 and under are admitted free. The review hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on September 18 & 19 and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on September 20.

Farm Science Review is known as Ohio’s premier agricultural event and typically attracts more than 130,000 farmers, growers, producers and agricultural enthusiasts from across the U.S. and Canada annually. Participants are able to peruse 4,000 product lines from roughly 620 commercial exhibitors and engage in over 180 educational workshops, presentations and demonstrations delivered by experts from OSU Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. More information about the Farm Science Review is at http://fsr.osu.edu
2018 Ashtabula County Beef Banquet Tickets
OSU Extension and the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s Association will be holding the 29th Ashtabula County Beef Banquet on Saturday, October 27 at the Lenox Community Center beginning at 7:00 p.m. Banquet activities will include a prime rib dinner; business meeting; election of two members to the Ashtabula County Cattlemen’s board of directors; entertainment; door prizes; and fine fellowship.

Tickets for the banquet can be purchased from the Directors of the Cattlemen’s Association. Directors are: Bart Kanicki, Pierpont Township; David Nye, Hartsgrove Township; Zach Ward, Austinburg Township; Dr. Bryan Elliott, Cherry Valley Township and Garret Love, Linesville, PA. 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 19, 2018. A program flyer can be found at: http://go.osu.edu/ne-events

Ohio Sheep Shearing School
The Ohio Statewide Sheep Shearing School will be held Friday and Saturday, September 14-15, 2018 from 9 AM to 4 PM at the Dave Cable Farm (10491 Canal Rd. Hebron, OH 43025). Students will be taught the proper techniques for productive sheep shearing through first-hand experience. Class space is limited and registration is due by Tuesday, September 4. The cost to attend is $50 per student for both days combined and includes a boxed lunch. Call Roger High at 614-246-8299 to register. Registration form is attached

David’s Final News Column
For Publication in the Jefferson Gazette on September 5, 2018

Hello, Ashtabula County! “Time and change will surely show, how firm thy friendship O-HI-O.” Ohio State Alumni will recognize this as the final line in the Ohio State’s Alma Mater song. Even though it has been almost 30 years since I graduated from college, I still get chills every time I hear this song. Writing this final column for you as the Agriculture & Natural Resources in Ashtabula County is also giving me the same feeling.

As promised the past two weeks, I would like to close this column on a personal note and share some of my observations about life in general. I have to admit that I have been a slow learner when it comes to life lessons. And some, I am still in the process of learning. While I have enough to write a book about, I leave you with the following thoughts.

Don’t Judge A Book By its Cover- We have all heard this saying or maybe you have said “everything that glitters is not gold.” Shouldn’t our society be at a place where we judge others
by the content of their character versus what they own, what they wear, their cultural background or political beliefs? And money does not make one a good person.

Firm Handshake and a Hug - Is it just me, or have we lost the art of a firm handshake? There is so much kindness which is extended through a good firm handshake and greeting someone by looking them square in the eye. I also am a fan of hugs. I have not always been a hugger but over the past 20 years, I have learned the value of a good hug. But it has to be a meaningful hug not the “fake” ones you sometimes receive. A hug, just like a good handshake, can send such a powerful message of love, respect and compassion. And guys, my hint to you...give your wife a 20 second hug. You will be amazed on the results.

Unhurried Conversations - I have to admit that I am a go, go, go person and it appears as if our society is the same. It seems like we are so busy racing from one event to the next. Even our conversations seem rushed where we can't wait for the conversation to end so we can get onto the next event, task, or crisis.

One of my goals this year was to be more present in the moment and to cherish the unhurried conversations. My mind drifts back to two unhurried conversations from this past summer. One with Larry and Wanda Bagley of Jefferson and the other with George & Dot Hogle of Conneaut. We not only talked about the usual things like the weather but our conversations went deeper. We talked about agriculture, pond management, family, successes, struggles, living a purposed filled life, and those memories which we cherish the most. I would not trade these two conversations for the world.

My challenge to you. Are you taking the time for unhurried conversations in your life? When you talk to someone, are you fully engaged in what they are saying or, are you simply waiting for your time to talk? How about logging off from social media and instead turning to genuine interactions with one another? When is the last time you just dropped by to say hi to an old friend or family member? These conversations are what we long for when someone is gone. So why don’t we take advantage of the time we have now?

U-Hauls and Hearses - Can you take it with you? Have you ever seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul trailer so the deceased could take all their worldly possessions? Let’s face, we all like to have nice things but bottom line it is just STUFF. Materialism is suffocating us. After all, we just have to have the newest gadget, a pair of shoes to match every outfit, a 2nd home or other must-have items. We log extra time at work just to pay for it all. When is enough, enough?

Loneliness of Survivorship - The one thing that the past eight years has taught me is how death can alter a family. I never completely understood how my mom felt about losing my dad until it happened to me. We all rush to drop off flowers, cards, or a meat platter when someone dies but what about 3 weeks, 2 months, or even 2 years later? The silence of an empty house is
deafening. You move forward but are altered forever. There is no time table for grief, acceptance, and especially for starting anew.

**Eternal Perspective** - I quipped last year that just because a man is silent does not mean he has nothing to say. We all have trials and tribulations in our lives. Everyone reacts differently. Life does not go as you planned. In short, bad things happen to us all.

What has helped me the most is when I made the decision to keep my eyes focused upward and to live with an eternal perspective. This has given me a lot cleaner air to live life. To breathe and to focus on the blessings I have received. Faith does not mean trusting God to stop the storm but trusting him to strengthen us as we walk through the storm. For this I am eternally grateful.

**Final Thoughts** - I carry a coin in my pocket which states “Grace is when God gives you what you do not deserve” and “Mercy is when God spares you from what you deserve.” Grace and mercy are two amazing things. To you Ashtabula County, I am so grateful to have had the chance to serve you as the “County Agent” for Ashtabula County. I wish each of you the best and this is not goodbye but until we meet again. And my greatest wish for both you and I is that we will hear the following words someday, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Have a good and safe day!

**Lee’s Monthly News Column**

Hello Trumbull County! As many of you already know, this is David Marrison’s last week with OSU Extension in Ashtabula County. He will not be leaving OSU Extension, but he has accepted the Ag and Natural Resources Extension Educator position in Coshocton County. He will be getting married on September 3, and the new job will be much closer to his future wife, Emily. Married on September 3, and a new job on September 10 – a busy two weeks!

David has been the Ag and Natural Resources Extension Educator in Ashtabula for 21 years following in the footsteps (and tradition) of Lanny Anderson. Ashtabula County has only known two Ag Educators in the last 50 years – Lanny Anderson and David Marrison. In 2009, David also took on the responsibility of developing agricultural programs in Trumbull County until I was hired in 2015. David’s dedication to the NE Ohio agricultural community is second to none. It seems, as though he knows every farm, farmer, FFA kid, and 4H member in our region.

We all wish David the best of luck in his next adventure, and he as assured us that he will be back on a regular basis to help his replacement get up to speed. Good luck David!
If you are tired of the humidity, I wish I had better news for you. It looks that humidity levels will be higher than normal as we head into harvest season in September and October. The humidity will be accompanied by higher than normal temperatures, and we could see the highest temperatures of the year in the next couple of weeks. This is according to Jim Noel of the Weather Service in Wilmington, OH. Hot weather will really speed up the browning of plants, but humidity may make the soil a little sticky in lower lying areas.

Crop conditions generally look good around the area considering the challenging spring and early summer conditions. Corn yields will be all over the place and will really depend on planting date and where the rain fell this summer. There is some fantastic looking corn out there, but there are more than a few fields that were planted late and then missed the rains in August that may suffer at harvest.

Soybeans are also looking pretty good and there have not been many reports of disease that I have heard of. This is the time of year that white mold, sudden death, and Diaporthe stem canker will start to appear so I will continue scouting fields and you should too. Insects appear to be a bigger issue in soybeans this year. Japanese beetles, aphids, and now Mexican bean beetle are causing significant injury throughout Ohio. Fortunately, Mexican bean beetle has been only found in southern and central Ohio. Aphids are in our area and I have received several reports from local farmers, but both instances the fields were not infested severely enough to cross the economic threshold. Knowing those thresholds are key to making decision based on economics given tight crop budgets this year.

For more information about farming, gardening, the Master Gardener program, or any other program, call the OSU Trumbull County Extension Office at 330-638-6783 or visit trumbull.osu.edu. Don’t forget to check out and “Like” OSU Extension Trumbull County’s Facebook page for current programs and up to date information.
Upcoming Events

Ashtabula County Master Gardener Recognition Banquet
October 15, 2018

Ashtabula County Beef Banquet
October 27, 2018

Ashtabula County Dairy Banquet
March 26, 2019

Pesticide Applicator Training Dates
Lake County “Early Bird”– November 8, 2018
Trumbull County – January 16, 2019
Geauga County – February 1, 2019
Ashtabula County – February 28, 2019
Geauga County “Last Chance” – March 28, 2019
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2018 Statewide Sheep Shearing School – September 14-15, 2018
Sponsored By: Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and OSU Extension

The Statewide Sheep Shearing School will be held Friday and Saturday, September 14-15, 2018 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Dave Cable Farm, 10491 Canal Rd., Hebron, OH 43025. **Class Minimum: 15 participants** and the cost is **$50 per student**, which must be returned with registration form by **Tuesday September 4, 2018**. As part of the registration fee, a box lunch and drinks will be provided each day of the school.

If you decide to register after that date or have further questions, please call Roger A. High at 614-246-8299.

Make checks payable to: **Ohio Sheep Improvement Association**. Return bottom portion of this form with payment by Monday April 2, 2018 to Ohio Sheep Improvement Association – Sheep Shearing School, c/o Roger A. High, 280 N. High St. P.O. Box 182383, Columbus, OH 43218. Applications will also be available at [ohiosheep.org](http://www.ohiosheep.org). Payment is nonrefundable after September 4, 2018.

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**2018 Sheep Shearing School Registration Form – September 14-15, 2018**

Please print:
Name ____________________________________________
Street Address ____________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ________ Zip _____________
Cellphone ___________________________ Email ______________________

Please provide a cell phone and an email if possible in case we would need to contact you prior to the school, in case of class cancellation or reminders about the school.

**Shearing Experience (check one):**
Beginner ___________________________ Intermediate ______________________ Advanced ______________________

Right-Handed ___________________________ Left Handed ______________________

*Payment of $50 per student is due with registration form. Make check payable to Ohio Sheep Improvement Association.*

**Disclaimer (must be signed):** By signing this form I am hereby releasing the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and any of its members of any liability for injury or accident as a result of participating in the Sheep Shearing School.

Signature: ___________________________ Date ______________________

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CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information: [http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity](http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity).