Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board Update

More than a year ago, voters passed a constitutional amendment to create the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board (LCSB), to regulate all horse, poultry, cattle, swine, alpaca, llama, sheep, and goat producers in the state. Since the board’s creation, OEFFA has participated actively in the process to ensure well-developed standards that address the needs of all of Ohio’s livestock producers.

Here is an update on where things now stand:

Euthanasia Standards and Civil Penalties Finalized

Rules for euthanizing and slaughtering livestock and civil penalties for violators of the LCSB’s animal care standards cleared a key legislative committee in December and go into effect January 20. Following approval by the LCSB and an open public hearing, the standards were reviewed by the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review. The euthanasia standards regulate all on-farm and in-transport euthanasia and slaughter of livestock in the state, outside of inspected slaughter facilities. The civil penalties, apply in-transport euthanasia and slaughter of livestock in the state.

Disabled and Distressed Livestock Standards

The LCSB is in the final phases of developing standards for the treatment of injured or lame animals. Organizations, including the Ohio Farm Bureau, have raised concerns about limits on the transport of disabled and distressed livestock and with the definition of “distressed” in the document, which at one point included any animal which is injured, sick, exhausted, in poor body condition, in pain, or exhibiting avoidance behaviors.

OEFFA raised concerns about language which would have required all livestock owners, including small-scale and backyard producers, to prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), emergency action plans, attend trainings, and offer training programs to employees on a variety of topics. This language has since been removed.

Species Standards

Standards for veal calves and swine are nearly complete, with issues such as whether to restrict or phase out controversial confinement practices including gestation stalls for sows, and tethering and individual stalls for veal calves, involving extensive consideration and debate.

Standards for poultry (layers, broilers, and turkeys), beef and dairy cattle, and goats and sheep are also under development. OEFFA has voiced concerns about the layer standards, particularly with regards to definitions, housing standards, and space requirements for cage-free, free-range, and pastured poultry. OEFFA has worked successfully to remove language from the standards which would have required fencing and overhead protection for all free-range and pastured poultry, thanks in part to the efforts of several OEFFA members who have attended layer subcommittee meetings and submitted written comment.

Livestock Board to See Changes Under New Administration

Beginning this month, the LCSB has some new faces around the table. Governor-elect Kasich’s new Agriculture Director, James Zehringer, takes over as chairman of the board. Additionally, at least four positions will be open on the LCSB on January 25, all appointed by the Governor: a family farmer, a dean of an agriculture department at a college or university, a veterinarian, and a consumer. These positions are currently being held by Stacy Atherton, Bobby Moser, Leon Weaver, and Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, respectively.

What You Can Do

(1) Contact us. If you would like to see a draft of the standards or would like more information about the process, please contact us. We encourage all livestock producers to participate by reading the draft rules and providing feedback about how it would impact their operation. If you have concerns, questions, or comments about the standards, we’d like to know. Please email us at oeffa@oeffa.org or call (614) 421-2022 Ext. 203.

(2) Attend a Livestock Care Standards Board or species subcommittee meeting. To find out more about meeting times and locations, or to be put on a list to receive meeting notices, contact Mike Bailey at (614) 644-5812 or at mbailey@agri.ohio.gov.

(3) Write to the Livestock Care Standards Board. Email comments to livestockstandardsboard@agri.ohio.gov or mail written comments to the Livestock Care Standards Board, Ohio Department of Agriculture, Bromfield Administration Building, 8995 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068.
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OEFFA Chapter Contacts

Athens Chapter
Athens, Hocking, Perry, Morgan, Washington, Meigs, and Vinton counties
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Grain Growers Chapter
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Heart of Ohio Chapter
Knox, Licking, and Delaware counties
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Lake Effect Chapter
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Miami/Oxford Organic Network (MOON) Chapter
Butler, Preble, and Warren counties
Harv Roehling, President, (513) 756-9272, locustrun@navox.net

OK River Valley Chapter
Brown and Adams counties, OH / Mason and Robertson counties, KY
Julie Kline, President, (937) 392-1543, jkparsnip@yahoo.com

Real FOOD (Farmers of Organic Delicacies) Chapter
Ashland, Holmes, Lorain, Medina, Stark, Summit, and Wayne counties
Monica Bongue, President, (330) 465-1399, muddyforkfarms@gmail.com

Southwest Ohio Chapter
Hamilton and Clermont counties
Melinda O’Briant, President, (513) 561-7400, mjobriant@netzero.com

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An article in the paper caught my attention with the headline: “OSU climatologist takes stand on warming.” That climatologist is Lonnie Thompson, who has collected evidence of climate change in forsaken frozen places around the world. The take home message of the article was that after decades of presenting his research findings without editorializing, Thompson has recently published a paper in which he squarely voices an opinion on humanity’s options for how to respond to a warming planet.

Reading about Thompson’s move emboldened me to voice some of my own thinking about climate change, as it plays out in the (unnecessary and often counterproductive) discussions about “local versus organic.”

I think there are lots of great reasons to purchase foods that have been produced locally—fresh flavors, supporting our neighbors, and accessing heirloom varieties are just a few. But buying local food, in and of itself, may not have much environmental benefit, especially when it comes to reducing climate-changing greenhouse gas emissions, despite reduced travel distance from farm to plate.

Modern (“green revolution”) agriculture is a major contributor to global climate change, responsible for 10-12% of anthropogenic (human caused) emissions of carbon dioxide, 60% of the nitrous oxide, and about 50% of the world’s methane emissions. These emissions result directly from a heavy reliance on petrochemical inputs and intensive cultivation of land and animals. Indirectly, deforestation, which results in part from degraded and eroded soils, also contributes to the problem.

Organic farming, as compared to conventional farming, reduces greenhouse gas emissions in several ways. Most importantly, organic farming is not dependent on the petrochemical inputs—fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides—in which tremendous quantities of fossil fuel energy are embedded. In addition, organic farming’s emphasis on soil quality results in sequestration of carbon in both the soil (due to higher organic matter content) and above ground in biomass (due to crop rotations emphasizing cover crops and green manures).

Surprisingly, transporting food accounts for comparatively little of the energy used in our food system. Production practices, specifically the use of chemical inputs, dwarfs the impacts of transportation distance.

That’s why I believe that for anyone concerned about climate change, it’s critically important to pay attention to how your food was produced. Of course, the growth of the local food movement is a tremendous development and both local and organic have a role to play in the solutions to climate change. But, we’re missing something critical if in embracing local foods we forget to ask some careful questions, not just about where our food has come from, but how it came to be.
Between 1982 and 2007, more than 23 million acres of America’s agricultural land was lost to development—an area the size of Indiana.

Of the 617 certified organic operations in Ohio, OEFFA certifies 385, or 62% of the state’s organic farms, processors, and handlers. Altogether, OEFFA certifies approximately 700 operations in the midwest.

Approximately 4.8 million acres of U.S. farmland—2.7 million acres of cropland and 2.1 million acres of rangeland and pasture—were in organic production in 2008.

While organic cropland acreage grows by an average of 15% each year, only about 0.7% of all U.S. cropland and 0.5% of all U.S. pasture was certified organic in 2008.

Every state has lost agricultural land to development over the past 25 years. Ohio lost 1.3 million acres of farmland between 1982 and 2007. Between 1950 and 2000, Ohio lost more than 6.9 million acres of farmland, representing nearly one-third of Ohio’s agricultural land and a size equivalent to 23 Ohio counties.

There were nearly 53,000 acres of certified organic pasture and cropland in Ohio in 2008.

Healthy livestock in the U.S. are fed 25 million pounds of antibiotics annually, more than eight times the amount used to treat disease in humans. This prolific use of antibiotics has caused bacteria to become antibiotic resistant, jeopardizing their use in treating human health conditions.

In 2010, there were 6,132 active farmers’ markets in the United States. Of those, more than 200 are located in Ohio.

Ohio’s farming population is aging. In 1997, the average age of an Ohio primary farm operator was 52.5 years. Ten years later, the average age was 55.7 years.

OEFFA currently has more than 2,600 active members, a 65.4% increase from just one year ago.

Sources:

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"I have been very pleased with Blue River products," Nathan Cook, BRH Dealer, Hillsboro, OH
Food Safety Legislation
What it means for you
By Gary Cox

In November, the U.S. Senate passed Senate Bill 510, the so-called Food Safety Modernization Act (the Act). On December 21, the House voted to pass the Senate version of the bill, House Resolution 3082, which was signed into law by President Obama later that month.

So, how exactly does the Act affect the majority of OEFFA members? Beginning at Section 6101 of H.R. 3082, the Act generally amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and expands the authority of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to regulate “articles” of food. Specifically, the Act, in part, provides for the following:

1. It broadens the definition of “facility” that must register with the FDA under the Act and eases the conditions under which the FDA may “suspend” a facility’s registration status;
2. It requires facilities to develop what was formerly called a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Plan (HAACP);
3. The FDA can now assess and collect fees related to the inspections of facilities and the monitoring of recalls from each facility; and
4. The FDA is authorized to enhance food-borne illness surveillance systems.

In short, the Act broadens the already overreaching authority of the FDA. In this issue, I will address the Act’s impact on “facilities” and what some of the “facility” requirements are.

What is a facility? Prior to the Act, a “facility” was defined as “any factory, warehouse, or establishment that manufactures, processes, packs, or holds food.” Yet, the following were excluded from the definition of facility: “farms; restaurants; other retail food establishments; nonprofit food establishments in which food is prepared for or served directly to the consumer; or fishing vessels.”

However, the Act changes the definition of “facility” by “clarifying” Congress’ “intent” in what constitutes a “retail food establishment.” Under the Act at Section 6102, a retail food establishment now includes the following:

1. The sale of food directly to the consumer at a “roadside stand or farmers’ market where such stand or market is located other than where the food was manufactured or processed;”
2. The “sale and distribution of such food through a community supported agriculture program;” and
3. The “sale and distribution of such food at any other such direct sales platform as determined by” FDA.

Section 6102 states that the term consumer “does not include a business.” Therefore, farmers’ markets and roadside stands that sell food to “consumers” (but not businesses) at a place other than the farm would not have to “register” as a “facility” with the FDA under the Act. In addition, CSAs would be exempted from the definition of facility and would not have to register with FDA. Moreover, such sales at stands and markets to “businesses” would NOT render the facility a “retail food establishment” and thus they would not have to register with the FDA.

Under Section 6103, qualified facilities do not need to comply with the HACCP provisions. A “qualified facility” will eventually include a “small business” and a “very small business” once FDA issues regulations that define those terms. At present, however, a qualified facility is one where (1) the total sales of its products directly to consumers was more than its total sales to all other end users (e.g., restaurants and retail food establishments located in the same state or within 275 miles of the facility), and (2) its total sales, to both consumers and other end users combined, do not exceed $500,000.

Instead of having to comply with the HACCP requirements, a qualified facility would merely have to provide documentation to FDA that is has “identified potential hazards associated with the food being produced, is implementing preventive controls to address the hazards, and is monitoring the preventive controls to ensure that such controls are effective.” A qualified facility could comply with this “documentation” requirement by submitting to FDA evidence that the facility is in compliance with all applicable state, local, or county requirements. Moreover, qualified facilities that do not have to comply with the HACCP requirements are required to either (1) place a label on all of their products (if already required by law to do so), (2) hang a sign at the facility’s place of purchase, or (3) post an electronic notice if they engage in internet sales.

Thus, with the bill signed into law, OEFFA farmers can expect a more intrusive FDA role in their agricultural operations. Next time I will describe the impact of the Act on vegetable production and the interplay with the Organic Foods Production Act.

Gary Cox is General Counsel for the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to defending the right to buy and protecting the right to sell nutritious food directly from the farm. This article is intended for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended to be, nor should it be construed as, either a legal opinion or as legal advice. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and not of anyone else.
Food Safety Bill Signed by President
On December 21, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 215-144 to pass the Senate version of the Food Safety Modernization Act. The act is the first major food safety overhaul in seven decades, and will increase and combine regulatory powers of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The final bill signed into law by President Obama included six sustainable agriculture-backed amendments, including language to exempt farmers that direct market most of their products from traceability requirements, eliminate anti-wildlife habitat language, and reduce unnecessary paperwork and streamline requirements for small farmers and processors.

Ohio Farmers Market Top Ranked
After 60,000 online votes, the American Farmland Trust named America’s Favorite Farmers’ Markets for 2010. In operation since 1998, the Champaign County Farmers Market in Urbana, Ohio was the winner of Best Small Farmers’ Market category.

Organic Pilot Program and Farm to School Program Pass Congress
In December, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that includes a $10 million Organic Pilot Program. Under the program, competitive grants favoring socially disadvantaged schools will be offered to increase organic offerings in their meal programs. Senator Sherrod Brown and Representative Dennis Kucinich, both of Ohio, co-sponsored the amendment. President Obama signed the bill into law on December 13.

In addition to the Organic Pilot Program, the bill includes a $40 million Farm to School Program. The program, which was authorized in the 2004 Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act but never funded, will offer competitive grants to schools or non-profit organizations to develop purchasing relationships with local farmers, plan seasonal menus, build school gardens, develop hands-on nutrition education, and provide solutions to infrastructure problems including storage, transportation, food preparation, and technical training.

Wind Turbines on Farmland May Benefit Crops
Wind turbines in farm fields may be doing more than churning out electricity. According to researchers at the U.S. Department of Energy’s Ames Laboratory and the University of Colorado, the giant turbine blades might also help crops stay cooler and dryer, help them fend off fungal infestations, and improve their ability to extract growth-enhancing carbon dioxide from the air and soil.

Organic Strawberries Benefits Found
A new study, entitled Fruit and Soil Quality of Organic and Conventional Strawberry Agroecosystems, shows organic strawberry farming results in higher quality fruit and healthier soils. Researchers found organically produced strawberries, while slightly smaller, have higher antioxidant activity, longer shelf life, and fared better in taste tests. Soils on the organic farms are also found to be healthier with higher organic matter concentration and greater microbial biodiversity.

Court Orders Removal of GE Sugar Beets
On November 30, Federal District Judge Jeffrey S. White issued a preliminary injunction ordering the immediate destruction of hundreds of acres of genetically engineered (GE) sugar beet seedlings planted in September. The judge ruled that the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service had violated the National Environmental Policy Act by allowing the plantings without analyzing the potential environmental, health, and socioeconomic impacts of growing GE sugar beets.

The court outlined the many ways in which GE sugar beets could harm the environment and consumers, noting that containment efforts were insufficient and past contamination incidents were “too numerous” to allow the illegal crop to remain in the ground. In his court order, Judge White noted, “farmers and consumers would likely suffer harm from cross-contamination.”

Biotech beets will remain illegal until the USDA completes a rigorous review of the potential impacts of the beets to farmers, the environment, and the public and makes a new decision whether to allow commercialization. Monsanto has already announced it will appeal the court’s ruling.

USDA Received 60,000 Comments on GIPSA Rule
The USDA received over 60,000 comments on a proposed Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule, which would define and clarify the protections for livestock and poultry farmers and ranchers in their dealings with packers and processors under the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921. The proposed rule now enters a lengthy review process, during which the USDA will review the comments received, perform a cost-benefit analysis, and eventually send the rule to the Office of Budget and Management for final clearance.

Organic Dairy Production Promotes Cow Health
The Organic Center has released a new report, A Dairy Farm’s Footprint: Evaluating the Impacts of Conventional and Organic Farming Systems. Comparing milk and meat production, revenue, feed intakes, inputs, and waste volume at conventional and organic dairy farms, the report shows that organic dairy farming systems promote cow health and longevity, while improving the nutritional quality of milk.

San Francisco Bans Happy Meals
In November, the City of San Francisco approved a ban on most of McDonald’s Happy Meals. The measure makes San Francisco the first major city in the country to forbid restaurants from offering a free toy with meals that contain more than set levels of calories, sugar, and fat. The ordinance also requires restaurants to provide fruits and vegetables with all meals for children that come with toys.

Oregano Supplement Decreases Cow Methane Emissions
A Penn State dairy scientist has developed an oregano-based supplement that not only decreases methane emissions in dairy cows by 40 percent, but also improves milk production. Alexander Hristov, an Associate Professor of Dairy Nutrition, found that oregano consistently reduced methane without demonstrating any negative effects, and increased daily milk production by nearly three pounds of milk per cow. Methane emissions are a major contributor to climate change.

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LOTS TO SEE AND DO AT OEFFA CONFERENCE EXHIBIT HALL

The exhibit hall will feature businesses, non-profits, and government agencies offering books, farm and garden products, and plenty of networking opportunities.

The exhibit hall will also feature a book-signing table. Keynote speaker Joan Dye Gussow’s books, including her latest, Growing, Older, will be available for sale. Joan will be on hand to sign books and answer questions. Ohio's own Gene Logsdon, known as The Contrary Farmer, will also be at the book signing table. His new book, Holy Shit: Managing Manure To Save Mankind, came out in August.
One of the benefits of OEFFA membership is access to the OEFFA Apprenticeship Program. This program allows host farmers and apprentice candidates to find each other.

Many young people are eager to learn farming skills and to gain hands-on experience working on established organic farms. To help educate the next generation of sustainable farmers, OEFFA encourages you to participate in our farm Apprenticeship Program.

Listing your farm as a host farm is not difficult. Start by filling out a producer profile on the “Good Earth Guide.” Once you have a listing, click on the “Apprentice Program” logo on our home page. From there, you can fill out an online application that is comprised of about 20 questions. Your answers to these questions make up your profile that is available on the website (only host farmers and apprentices can see these profiles). Once an online application from a host farmer is processed and posted, host farmers can read the apprentice applications that have been submitted and contact appropriate candidates.

Apprentice candidates can also list their applications and view the host farm descriptions by filling out an application on the OEFFA website. Enterprising apprentice candidates can then begin contacting potential host farms for more information and to ultimately arrange a placement.

Hard copies of apprentice and host farm applications are available from the OEFFA office. OEFFA staff are happy to assist any host farmer or apprentice candidate who is interested in registering for this program.

For more information, go to www.oeffa.org and click on “Apprentice Program,” or contact Mike Anderson at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 204 or mike@oeffa.org.
Cultivating the Ohio Farm to School Program
By Julie Whitson

Connecting Ohio schools with fresh, local food and farmers is at the heart of the Ohio Farm to School program. This program has three goals: (1) To serve healthy food from Ohio farms to school children, (2) To create new market opportunities for Ohio farmers, and (3) To teach students about the path from farm to fork.

Ohio’s Farm to School program is a project of the Ohio Food Policy Council and is a joint effort between the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Department of Education. The program aims to support local farmers, keep food dollars in local economies, and create a generation of informed food consumers that understand the nutritional value of their food choices and how those choices impact their communities, the local economy, and the environment.

There are a variety of ways that schools and farmers can work together. Some different Farm to School projects include: adding local, fresh produce into a school meal program; starting a school garden to grow food for school meal programs; taking field trips to local farms; featuring local produce as part of a school fundraiser; and inviting a local farmer into the classroom.

In the 2009-2010 school year, Ohio schools served over 181 million lunches and spent about $52.5 million on fruit and vegetables. If schools purchased just 25 percent of their produce from Ohio farmers, $13.1 million would go back into our local economy. The impact would be even greater if schools started serving more fresh fruits and vegetables for school breakfast, snack, and summer feeding programs.

Farm to School initiatives have been sweeping across the United States. In Ohio, the program started with five pilot school districts. One pilot school district, Carrollton Exempted Village, purchased a salad bar and stocks it with Ohio-grown fruits and vegetables. Another pilot district, River View Local, began a project with their FFA students where they started a 2 acre vegetable farm.

Today, the Ohio Farm to School program has expanded state-wide by offering additional grants and now other schools are participating too. For example, the food service director of Sandusky City Schools purchases produce for his school from a local farm market. Just down the road at EHOVE Career Center, the food service director had the farm come to him. Local farmers rent land owned by the career center and run a produce farm that supplies them with fruits and vegetables.

In March, the Ohio Department of Agriculture will be sponsoring the first Ohio Farm to School conference in Cleveland, Ohio. The conference will provide opportunities for farmers, distributors, and food service directors to exchange information and network, and will feature sessions on topics including food safety and how to start Farm to School projects.

Farm to School aims to do more than simply offer nutritious food to kids during the school day. We hope that students take these lessons home where the whole family can benefit from knowing how to access local, affordable, and nutritious Ohio-grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs. In this way, students and their families can make healthier food choices and we can all better support local farmers by keeping more food dollars in our local economy.

For more information about the Ohio Farm to School program, go to http://agri.ohio.gov/farmtoschool. To join the Farm to School mailing list or for more information, contact Julie Whitson at (614) 387-1095 or JWhitson@agri.ohio.gov.

Julie Whitson is an Americorps VISTA with the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Farm to School Program.
The Anatomy of an Organic Label

By Lexie Stoia Pierce, Andy Hupp, and Mike Anderson

In previous newsletters, we’ve talked about organic product labeling, but what does it actually look like? This sample label represents a product labeled as “organic.” Please note there are different requirements for those products labeled “made with organic ingredients” (containing 70-95% organic ingredients) and 100% organic ingredients. Further information can be found in Subpart D of the NOP Standards (§205.300-311). These notations only refer to the organic aspects of a label. Processors should check with their state department of agriculture for label review and for other requirements.

The word “Organic” may appear in the name of the product, but is optional. (§205.303(a)(1))

While the processor of this product did not choose to, s/he may list the % of organic ingredients on the label, following certain size and style specifications. (§205.303(a)(2))

Information Panel

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup 148g (148g)
Amount Per Serving
Calories 54
Calories from Fat 4
Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup 148g (148g)
Amount Per Serving
Calories 54
Calories from Fat 4
Total Fat 0g 1%
Saturated Fat 0g 0%
Trans Fat
Cholesterol 0mg 0%
Sodium 1mg 0%
Total Carbohydrate 21g 7%
Dietary Fiber 4g 14%
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All organic ingredients must be identified as such, either with the word “organic” in front of each one, or with an asterisk which refers to “Organic” written underneath. (§205.303(b)(1))

“Certified Organic By [Agency]” must appear below the information identifying the handler or distributor of the product. (§205.303(b)(2))

The USDA Seal and Certification Agency Seal may be used on products labeled “Organic” or “100% Organic,” but they are not required. The USDA logo must meet certain color specifications, and the Certification Agency Logo must not be more prominent than it. (§205.303(a)(4-5))
In order to lawfully be represented as "organic," food must be produced and is just one of many management practices involved in organic production. Although organic foods are produced without the use of chemicals, this idea that organic food is different because it was produced without chemicals is not simply a matter of subtraction, but about what is added to the formula. In summary, when purchasing or consuming an organic food product, you can rest assured that it is not only free of chemical substances, but that it came to your plate through the use of farming methods that protect the environment and support a healthy and sustainable food system. Organic food production is not simply a matter of subtraction, but about what is added to the formula. In order to lawfully be represented as "organic," food must be produced and handled according to a complex set of national standards. These production regulations, known as the National Organic Program (NOP) standards, require that producers of organic food implement cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that recycle resources, support ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Organic farming involves the active maintenance and improvement of soil quality; protection of water quality and natural resources; management of crop nutrients through ecologically-based practices; control of pests, weeds, and diseases without the use of synthetic substances; maintenance of living conditions for livestock which accommodate their natural behaviors, and the list goes on.

**Organic Mythbuster:**

**MYTH:**
The only difference between organic and nonorganic foods is that organic foods are produced without the use of chemicals.

**TRUTH:**
The idea that organic food is different because it was produced without chemicals is a bit like claiming that a healthy lifestyle consists only of not eating junk food. Although organic foods are produced without the use of chemicals, this is just one of many management practices involved in organic production.

In order to lawfully be represented as “organic,” food must be produced and handled according to a complex set of national standards. These production regulations, known as the National Organic Program (NOP) standards, require that producers of organic food implement cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that recycle resources, support ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Organic farming involves the active maintenance and improvement of soil quality; protection of water quality and natural resources; management of crop nutrients through ecologically-based practices; control of pests, weeds, and diseases without the use of synthetic substances; maintenance of living conditions for livestock which accommodate their natural behaviors, and the list goes on.

In summary, when purchasing or consuming an organic food product, you can rest assured that it is not only free of chemical substances, but that it came to your plate through the use of farming methods that protect the environment and support a healthy and sustainable food system. Organic food production is not simply a matter of subtraction, but about what is added to the formula.
Register now to save your spot at OEFFA’s 32nd annual conference! The conference will feature keynote speakers Klaas and Mary-Howell Martens and Joan Gussow, more than 70 informative, hands-on educational workshops, a fun and educational kids’ conference, great homemade meals featuring local and organic ingredients, a child care area, a trade show, and Saturday evening entertainment. For more information, or to register, go to www.oeffa.org or call (614) 421-2022.

**Keynote Speakers**

**KLAAS AND MARY-HOWELL MARTENS**

**Keynote Session: Living Upstream: Decision-Making on an Organic Farm**

The Martens have farmed organically since 1993 and own and operate New York’s only dedicated organic feed mill and organic seed operation. The Martens farm about 1400 acres of organic corn, soybeans, small grains, and other crops and raise organic heifers, pigs, and chickens. Their organic grain business, Lakeview Organic Grain, was started in 1996 and has expanded to supply more than 300 organic farmers in central New York. They helped found New York Certified Organic, a farmer education group, and the Northeast Organic Network, an innovative consortium of farmers, researchers, extension educators, and grassroots nonprofits working together to improve organic farmers’ access to research and technical support.

**JOAN DYE GUSSOW**

**Keynote Session: Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?**

Joan was one of the first people to envision, teach, and write about a local, organic whole food system, earning her the title “matriarch of the modern day food movement.” As one of the foremost critics of industrial agriculture, Joan has been a mentor to leaders in the local foods movement, including Barbara Kingsolver and Michael Pollan. Joan is a highly acclaimed nutrition educator, author, gardener, Mary Swartz Rose Professor Emerita, and former chair of the Columbia University Teachers College Nutrition Department. She is the author of *This Organic Life*; *The Feeding Web*; and *Chicken Little, Tomato Sauce and Agriculture: Who Will Produce Tomorrow’s Food? Her newest book is Growing, Older.*

**Featured Pre-Conference Event**

**the ABC’s of CSAs**

Friday, February 18, 2011 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Granville Inn, 314 E. Broadway, Granville

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs are growing in number and consumer interest increases each year, but they are often intimidating even for experienced growers. If you are considering a CSA program for your farm but aren’t sure where to begin, this workshop will provide guidance on the logistics of CSA coordination and management including: challenges and benefits of CSAs; planning and record-keeping strategies; member recruiting and education; working members; opportunities for partnering with other farms, and more. If you’re looking to start a CSA, or have a few years under your belt, this intensive program is for you. Veteran CSA providers will discover information to help fine-tune their operations. Workshop presenter Beth Knorr spent nine years co-managing one of Northeast Ohio’s most successful CSA operations at Crown Point Ecology Center with her husband Tim, and currently manages farmers’ markets and provides educational workshops for the Countryside Conservancy. Beth will be joined by CSA growers, who will share their experiences.
OEFFA CONFERENCE WORKSHOP SCHEDULE
Subject to change. Full descriptions available at www.oeffa.org/conference2011.php

Saturday February 19, 2011

9:30-11:30 a.m.
» Growing Brambles Successfully (Gary Gao)
» Season Extension Tools and Techniques for Growers (Matt Klevenhans & Natalie Bumpner)
» All in a Cup of Tea: The Art of Herbal Teas, Salves, and Liniments (Leah Rond)
» Networking Food System Businesses to Build Local Economies (Megan Shornfelt & Steve Basserman)
» 15 Measures of Dairy Farm Competitiveness (Dianne Shoemaker)*
» Pasture for Profit I: Getting Started (Bob Hendershot & Jeff McCutcheon)*
» Self-Sufficiency: A Three Year Plan to Greater Independence on $12,000 a Year (Aime Hanor)

9:30-10:25 a.m.
» Understanding Soil Biology and Its Role in Organic Crop Systems (Larry Phelps)
» Backyard Maple Syruping for Everyone (Christine Tailer)
» Weed Management in Organic Grain Crops (Klaas & Mary-Howell Martens)
» The New Organic Pasture Rule (Paul Duitter)
» Hiring and Keeping Happy and Productive Farm Workers (Monica Bangare)
» Demystifying Carbon Offsets and Renewable Energy Credits (Nick Leone)

10:35-11:30 a.m.
» Increasing Crop Available Nutrients with Proper Timing of Incorporation of Green Vegetation (Tim Kimpel)
» Solar and Wind Made Simple (Tom Rapan & Valerie Garrett)
» High Quality Organic Small Grain Production (Deborah Shinn & Larry Phelps)
» Pastured-Raised Turkeys: From Pouls to Processing (Guy & Sandy Ashmore)
» Making Community Supported Agriculture Work for You (Tim Shaver & Matt Ewer)
» Organic Recordkeeping 101 (Paul Duitter)
» Creating a Fair Farm Bill (Alex Beauchamp)

1:45-3:45 p.m.
» What's New in Organic Weed Management (Doug Doohan, Jason Parker, Stan Ernst, Andy Glasser, & Sarah Zwicker)
» Pasture for Profit II: Plants and Soil (Jeff McCutcheon & Bob Hendershot)*

1:45-2:40 p.m.
» Solving the Vacant Lot Issue: Using Compost to Remediate Soil, Grow Food, and Remove Blight (Brad Charles Meier)
» Mushroom Production for the Home Grower (Janel Baran)
» Producing Organic Potted Herbs and Other Nursery Crops (Mark Langan)
» From Amber Waves to Market: Successfully Selling Your Organic Grain (Klaas & Mary-Howell Martens)
» Replacing Winter Honey Bee Losses (Dr. Joe Latshaw)
» Cooking Heritage Pork (Marilou Suszko)
» Granny's Common Sense Guide to Starting and Sustaining a School Garden Program (Roberta Paolo & Jodi Maher)
» Market Ready (Klaas & Mary-Howell Martens)
» Smart Insurance Choices for Niche Farmers (Jim McGuire)*
» Mastitis Treatment and Prevention (Ali Leaf)
» Ohio Produce Marketing Overview (Karl Kolb)
» Growing Great Garlic (Rich Tomas)

2:50-3:45 p.m.
» Homesteading with Dutch Belted Cows (Mary Lou & Tom Shaw)
» Maximizing Crop Quality (Natalie Bumpner & Matt Klevenhans)
» OEFFA Grain Growers Chapter Meeting (David Bell)
» Our Journey into Meat Goat Production: Been There, Done That, and What We Learned Along the Way (Christina Wieg & Rick Perkins)
» Natural Homemade Dyes (Vanessa Prent)
» Farm to School: Where We Are, Where We're Going (Chuck DeBurger & Greg Enskens)
» Are You Ready for Retail? (Andrew Ludd)
» Establishing an On-farm Licensed Commercial Kitchen (Jeff & Sandra Ashba)
» Dairy Calf Care (Ali Leaf)
» Update on the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board (Mike Bailey)
» Garlic: See It, Taste It, Sell It (Mantus Suszko)

Sunday February 20, 2011

9:30-11:30 a.m.
» Just Do It! (Joan Dye Gussow)
» Home Charcuterie (Alex Baillieul & Rachel Byse)
» Alternative and Local Food System Development: Answering Questions and Challenging Assumptions (Jeff Shoop)
» Pasture for Profit III: Nutrition and Organic Regulations (Bob Hendershot, Jeff McCutcheon, & Paul Duitter)*
» Green Building for Women in Agriculture (Karin & Jay Warmker)

9:30-10:25 a.m.
» An Ohio Seed-Starting Calendar: Beyond the Basics (Janell Baran)
» Growing Nut Trees (Paul Hogan)
» Using IPM for Insect Pests in Organic Vegetable and Fruit Crops (selecte Weby)
» Cover Crops in No-Till Grain Production (Brad Suhr & Brother Nick Remer)
» Successful Grass Fed Beef Farming: Production Tips (John Wiley)
» Brand Yourself! (Kristen Pool)
» Pricing for Profitability (Rachelle LeBert & J.B. King)
» Activism 101: Creating Positive Social Change Starts with You (Laurie Ketsham)

10:35-11:30 a.m.
» Developing a SARE Farmer Grant for Your Farm or Market (Mike Hogan)
» Growing Apples Organically (Charlie Fritsch)
» Growing Organic Celery (Tosh Mumm)
» Cover Crops in Organic Grain Production (Alan Sundermeier)
» If We Knew Then What We Know Now: Looking Back at 10 Years of Beekeeping (John Wiley)
» Finding Great Interns (Melinda O'Briant)
» Ecological Parenting (Tim Tanner)

1:30-2:30 p.m.
» Soils and Climate Change (Ryan Hatfield)
» The Diversity and Identification of Wild Mushrooms (Mark Stennettez)
» Growing Cut Flowers for Florists (Natalie Bumpner)
» Tricks of the Trade: Improving Efficiency on Organic Vegetable Farms (Nick Luke & Doug Sibert)
» Managing Soil Fertility in Organic Grain Production (Alan Sundermeier)
» Multispecies Mob Grazing (Lisa & Bruce Richard)
» Cooking with Whole Grains (Krisa Wheeler)
» Lessons from Terra Madre (Mike & Laura Laughtin)
» Tales and Tips on Farm Marketing in the Digital Age (Simon Huntley)
» Food with Integrity: Chipotle’s Vision of Sustainability (Emily Francis)
» Pasture for Profit IV: Infrastructure (Bob Hendershot & Jeff McCutcheon)*
» Food Safety Policy: Current Events, Consequences, and What We Can Do (Patty Laven)
» Building a Local Organic Food Co-op (Tom Rapan & Valerie Garrett)*

* These workshops are part of a special Grazing Track, designed for the producer and the resource manager. A certificate will be given to those that attend the entire track, which will be honored by USDA-NRCS as verification for points in EQIP. The Grazing School Reference Notebook will be available for $30.
**OEFFA Chapter Round Up**

OEFFA chapters provide a great way to meet like-minded people in your area. Each chapter is different and responds specifically to the needs and interests of its members. To be added to a chapter mailing list, send an email to oeffa@oeffa.org with your name, contact information, and the chapter name. For more information about getting involved in a chapter, contact the Chapter President listed below.

**Athens Chapter**

Athens, Hocking, Perry, Morgan, Washington, Meigs, and Vinton counties

It was a busy year for the Athens Chapter in Ohio’s foothills. The chapter organized two farm tours. In May, they toured Cantrell Honey and Candles. The Cantrells manage over 200 beehives and sell honey and candles at the Athens Farmers Market. In August, they toured Tillis Highlands Farm. Pat and John Tillis took 88 acres of undeveloped, strip-mined land and turned it into a productive farm, raising goats, cattle, and blueberries. In addition, OEFFA’s state-wide farm tour series made a stop at Starline Organics, the area’s newest organic farm.

Ed Perkins and Angie Starline participated in a Hocking County field day for area school children, showing the kids a worm box, compost, and providing bean seeds to grow. In addition, the chapter had a display at the three-day Pawpaw Festival in Albany and sold 25 boxes of locally-produced turkey and vegetables as part of their annual Thanksgiving box sale.

In November, the chapter organized a talk by Warren Taylor of Snowville Creamery. The biggest event the chapter has ever organized, the lecture drew more than 200 people and raised more than $600 for the Art Gish Peacemaking Fund.

OEFFA members and local residents were saddened by the loss of a dear friend, long time organic farmer, and OEFFA member Art Gish, who was killed in a farm accident in July.

Ed Perkins will be stepping down as chapter president. Angie Starline will serve as president until elections are held.

**Chapter President:** Angie Starline, (740) 517-1032, starlineorganics@live.com

**Capital Chapter**

Franklin County area

The Capital Chapter began 2010 in the usual way, with a Fedco group order. They had their biggest order to date, with over $1,000 in orders, earning the maximum discount.

The chapter organized a successful series of Garden Tours Close to Home, where chapter members generously invited people to visit their gardens. Gary Cox set the pace in May, serving salad from his intensively planted garden. Lisa Large served gazpacho and winter squash cake. Bill Johnson elected to have a potluck at his large, diverse market garden with vegetables and fruit trees. He cooked a turkey and shared his homemade wine. Nancy Kangas also had a potluck at her urban garden, which showcased organically grown flowers sold directly to clients.

The chapter also represented OEFFA at several events, including a table at the Columbus Zoo Earth Day event, which featured activities for kids. Chapter members were also at the Market to Market Bicycle Ride, a 13 mile ride between the North Market and Hills Market, and planned kids’ activities at the Clintonville Community Market. Finally, the chapter had a table at the screening of Percy Schmeiser: David vs. Monsanto.

**Chapter President:** Lisa Large, (614) 878-7324, lisalarge56@yahoo.com

**Heart of Ohio Chapter**

Knox, Licking, and Delaware counties

The Heart of Ohio Chapter had a full schedule of meetings and events in 2010. They facilitated a group Fedco seed order early in 2010, which saved participating members 24 percent. The chapter also offered interesting programs with guest speakers for two spring and four fall meetings. In March, Ohio Department of Agriculture food safety specialists came for an informative program on food safety. Joan and Reed Richmond did a hands-on scything demonstration for a meeting held at Flying J Farm in April. After the summer break, the September meeting featured a panel presentation by local market masters and entrepreneurs on “Marketing in the Off Season,” geared at informing farmer’s market vendors of sales opportunities from November to May. In October, the chapter was treated to an inspiring presentation on “Teaching and Practicing Sustainable Agriculture” at Granville High School, where students, teachers, and business managers all cooperate in sourcing and even growing local food for the school cafeteria. At November’s meeting, Michelle Gregg-Skinner of Central Ohio Poultry Processing told the chapter about her new poultry processing operation. Finally, the December meeting featured a panel presentation on “Growing and Marketing Organic Grain” by three farmers who grow, grind, and direct-market their grain products.

At the chapter’s December 13 meeting, officers were elected for 2011. Trish Mumme will continue to serve as President, Joan Richmond will serve as chapter Board Representative and Vice President, and Paul Grimm will serve as Secretary. Jim Holtsberry provided logistics help, coordinating meeting space at the Hartford Library in Croton for most of the meetings.

**Chapter President:** Trish Mumme, (740) 924-4331, gardenpatchproduce@earthlink.net

**Lake Effect Chapter**

Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties

The Lake Effect Chapter held three farm tours in 2010, and also had a free-standing exhibit at the Earth Day celebration in April at Lake Metroparks Farmpark in Kirtland.

In June, the chapter visited Miller Organic Farm, a 20 acre Amish farm. While Andy and Laura have only owned the land for a little over four years, their accomplishment of building a fully functioning farm out of meadow land was incredible! Chapter members heard from other invited CSA’ers who, along with the Millers, are part of the Geauga Family Farms CSA.

In July, the chapter toured John and Rosemary Tai pale’s Orwell Farm. They had expanded their gardens significantly since the chapter visited in 2009. Wonderful hosts as always, chapter members were inspired by the Tai pales’ devotion and love of farming.

In September, they toured Marge and Mardy Townsend’s Marshy Meadows Farm in Windsor. In addition to seeing the Townsend’s vast holding of cattle and gaining...
knowledge about the work involved in tending these herds, chapter members were able to take in breath-taking views of Ashtabula County as they walked the hilly pastures.

Chapter President: Jo Schaefer, (440) 255-6284, joohio1@aol.com

MOON (Miami/Oxford Organic Network) Chapter
Butler, Preble, and Warren counties

In the spring, the MOON Chapter participated in Miami’s Green Tea Day, a Miami Health Day and in the local Earth Day event. That March, they organized an afternoon workshop featuring Craig Harkrider titled “Organic Gardening At Home.”

In June, the chapter toured the Children’s Garden at the Oxford Community Art Center, an organic garden used to teach local children the pleasure of growing things. Then they toured the market garden of Steve and Patrice Ellis.

In October, the chapter had its 4th annual Harvest MOON Festival in the Oxford Uptown Park, featuring vendors, music, children’s activities, live animals, and food. The sale of cookies, cider, and popcorn helped cover the chapter’s expenses. Members of the MOON Coop, which is about to open a store in Oxford, contributed much of the seasonal food.

The MOON Chapter will be teaming up with OEFFA’s Southwest Chapter to provide a workshop on tomato grafting early in 2011.

Chapter President: Harv Roehling, (513) 756-9272, locustrun@nuvox.net

OK River Valley Chapter
Brown and Adam counties, OH and Mason and Robertson counties, KY

In September, the OK River Valley Chapter had its sixth annual booth at the Brown County Fair. Instead of the usual tent provided by the Fair Committee, they constructed their own 17 foot hoop house from recycled materials, designed by one of OEFFA’s members. It was a big hit!

The chapter received a SARE grant for low-tech food processing equipment which they are sharing with the community. So far, they have purchased two hand crank ice cream freezers, a large food dehydrator, a grain grinder, a 14 quart capacity pressure canner, a fruit crusher, and a cider press.

The chapter will cosponsor its fourth annual Local Foods Seminar this winter. It is an afternoon event featuring workshops on local food issues.

Chapter President: Julie Kline, (937) 392-1543, jkparsnip@yahoo.com

REAL FOOD (Farmers of Organic Delicacies) Chapter
Ashland, Holmes, Lorain, Medina, Stark, Summit, and Wayne counties

The REAL FOOD Chapter of OEFFA met actively throughout 2010. They organized group potato and seed orders resulting in considerable savings for members. They also participated in the Scarlet Gray and Green Earth Day Fair at the Ohio State University Agriculture Research and Development Center. The chapter invited speakers to several events. Bud Luers, from the Ohio Northern Nut Tree Growers Association, provided samples of Ohio nuts and educated the group on growing nuts in Ohio. Marion Yoder brought a teaching hive to a meeting and taught the group about beekeeping. They also had a presentation by Brad Masi on local agriculture and the new Mellinger farm that was given to Ohio State University.

Chapter President: Monica Bongue, (330) 465-1399, muddyforkfarm@gmail.com

Southwest Ohio Chapter
Hamilton and Clermont counties

In January, the Southwest Chapter presented the movie FRESH, attracting over 100 people to the showing. In March, they organized a panel discussion about eating seasonally. In April, they presented a program called “Factory Farms and You,” focusing on the reasons to eat food grown from local, small, sustainable farms. In May, the chapter organized another panel discussion on buying locally produced food, including questions to ask farmers about their products to ensure you are getting what you want. Finally in October, Richard Stewart led the chapter on a tour of his farm, Carriage House.

Chapter President: Melinda O’Briant, (513) 561-7400, mjobriant@netzero.com

CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We need volunteers to help set up the evening of Friday, February 18 and on Sunday, February 20, immediately following the end of the conference. Many hands make light work! Contact Renee at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205 or renee@oeffa.org.
Taxes and You: Resources for Farmers and Agricultural Businesses

Tax issues are important for agricultural businesses, which face unique challenges, including self-employment taxes. Moreover, tax savvy is becoming more important as a growing number of USDA programs are being linked to a producer’s federal income tax return.

With filing deadlines in April, here are a few resources designed specifically for farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs:

Rural Tax Education—This website, designed by Extension educators, Certified Public Accountants, and tax preparers, provides farmers and ranchers with an easy to understand and current source for agriculturally-related income and self-employment tax information. The website includes factsheets addressing issues critical to farmers and a sample farm tax return. http://www.ruraltax.org

Farmers’ Tax Guide—IRS Publication 225 is a guide developed specially for farmers by the IRS each year in conjunction with Extension educators who are members of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee. http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf

Summary of Recent Tax Law Changes—The Iowa State University Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation prepared an overview of tax law changes on December 17 following Congress’ passage of House Resolution 4853, the “Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010.” http://www.calt.iastate.edu/taxdealreached.html

QuickBooks for Agricultural Financial Records—This new online publication available through Oklahoma State University Extension is an excellent resource for farm business owners interested in getting started with QuickBooks Pro 2010. QuickBooks is a popular commercial accounting software used by many small businesses and accountants. QuickBooks can help small businesses build a transaction history that can be sorted and summarized easily for tax preparation, business management, and decision-making. http://agecon.okstate.edu/faculty/publications/3819.pdf

Great Nonprofits: Write a Review of OEFFA

Do you love OEFFA’s work? Then tell the world! Great Nonprofits is a website where people can share their stories about the nonprofits that have touched their lives. It works kind of like Yelp, Amazon Book Reviews, or TripAdvisor—when people are looking for reliable information, they look to their peers for advice.

Won’t you help us raise visibility and support our work by posting a review of your experience with OEFFA? All reviews will be visible to potential donors, foundations, and volunteers. It’s easy and only takes a few minutes!

Go to: http://www.oeffa.org/great/
We seek out culinary treasures from small, dedicated food artisans and growers who represent Whole Foods Market’s passion for excellence, tradition, purity and regional identity.

For more information on becoming a vendor send an email to madubContacts@wholefoods.com
This year I plan to plant a salsa bed, growing the ingredients in close proximity for inspiration and efficient harvest on the way to the kitchen.

Salsa recipes often start by listing Roma tomatoes, but other tomato varieties can also be used. Garlic, a featured ingredient in any good salsa, is easy to grow. White and red onions, scallions, and peppers of all colors and strengths are welcome in salsa. Personally, I enjoy the more mild taste of banana peppers to jalapeno peppers.

Most recipes call for lime or lemon juice. Salt, pepper, and olive oil are often also used. I can’t grow these in my Northern Ohio garden. Unusual ingredients appear in a few recipes. One is jicama, a wonderful, crunchy vegetable. Jicama is a tropical legume with an edible root. It requires a nine month growing season so I will buy jicama to peel, chop, and use in salsa. Tomatillos add to salsa flavor and can be grown in Ohio. They have about the same needs as tomatoes. Plant more than one for a good harvest.

Herbs are essential for flavor. Cilantro and parsley are ingredients in nearly every salsa recipe and are easy to grow. Another herb, chervil, likes cool, moist growing conditions, will tolerate a shaded space, and adds flavor. Chervil has a long tap root and should be planted where it will stay. Cumin is also mentioned in some recipes. Like jicama it requires a long, hot growing season, so it’s not well-suited for my garden.

I’ve read many recipes for salsa, but prefer a more free-form approach, using the vegetables I like and have on hand, along with cilantro and parsley. Chervil could replace the cilantro and parsley, and cumin can be used sparingly or to replace one of the other herbs according to personal taste.

Planting a garden bed with a theme, in this case salsa, contributes to looking for-ward to the harvest and to using it efficiently.

**A Small Kitchen Garden Can Save You Money**

By Ruth C. Ham-Hale

Do you think eating locally and organically has to be expensive? Not if you grow your own! Starting a small kitchen garden could reduce your grocery bills by hundreds of dollars a year. Here are a couple of examples of how you can beat grocery store prices, and enjoy fresher, tastier meals.

**Basil**

A package of fresh basil (a clump of whole plants wrapped in plastic and ready for use) costs about $2.69 in a grocery store. By comparison, you can buy a package of basil seeds for about $1.59 and a bag of potting soil for $2 or less. Plant just a few seeds in an empty yogurt container, and you’ll match the grocery store basil in six to eight weeks. If you plant a yogurt container every two weeks, you’ll have ten or twelve going from one package of seeds. That’s plenty of basil to season many meals, and maybe even make pesto.

**Grocery Store Basil:** $27 for 10 meals  
**Home-Grown Basil:** $3.59 for a year’s supply

**Tomatoes**

When on sale, tomatoes in our local grocery store cost $1.99 per pound. Since an average-sized grocery store tomato weighs half a pound, I’d pay $1 per tomato when they’re on sale. A flat of young tomato plants (six plants that are already growing and ready to transplant into a garden or flower pot) costs around $3 at the beginning of the growing season.

Transplant just one of those plants and raise it to maturity and it can produce from 25 to 100 pounds of tomatoes, depending on the length of the growing season, the size and variety of tomatoes grown, the amount of water applied, and other factors. So, conservatively, you can harvest $50 worth of tomatoes from one plant. If you grow all six plants from a flat, again assuming 25 pounds of tomatoes per plant, you could harvest 150 pounds of tomatoes worth $300. And, some tomato varieties might produce 100 pounds of tomatoes per plant!

But here’s a sad truth about grocery store produce: Your chances of buying a good tomato in a grocery store are close to zero. Sure, you can buy very nice grocery store tomatoes, but these are distant cousins of truly good tomatoes. The worst ripe to-mato you grow in a home kitchen garden is dramatically juicier, sweeter, tastier, and all-around more enjoyable than the very best grocery store tomato.

**Grocery Store Tomatoes:** $60 for 10 weekly tomato salads  
**Home-Grown Tomatoes:** $3 for a flat of plants and all the tomatoes you can eat

**Start Your Own Home Kitchen Garden**

Basil and tomatoes provide an inkling of the savings you can realize by growing your own produce. If you have enough space, you can grow dozens of varieties of vegetables and fruit at similar savings over grocery store prices. And, in most cases, the things you grow taste dramatically better than what you buy in a store.

Ruth Ham-Hale, the original growing blogger, works to help people grow produce at home. Her workshops, Home Kitchen Garden and Containers At Their Best, explore vegetable and fruit gardening for people with limited space. She is organizing the Midwest Symposium and Organic Vegetable Conference this month. See pg. 20 for more details. She can be reached at ruththegrower@aol.com.
Homemade Bread for a Cold Winter’s Day

Cold and snowy winter days are a perfect time to make homemade yeast bread. If breadmaking isn’t something you do regularly, you may benefit from the tips below, courtesy of OEFFA member Janell Baran of Blue Owl Garden Emporium in Licking County. Janell makes the best bread I’ve ever tasted, and has perfected the no-knead, slow-rise method.

Some people think kneading dough is therapeutic; others think it’s just messy work. If you’re in the latter category, and are willing to wait a day for the delicious results, try Janell’s no-knead bread recipe below. For traditional, kneaded bread, Janell says the “windowpane” test is one way to tell when the dough is through rising. If you can stretch a small piece of dough out into a membrane so thin you can almost see through it without it tearing, it’s ready. If you make bread regularly, you might want to invest in a stand mixer with a dough hook, which takes a lot of the work out of mixing and kneading the dough.

Crustiness is a function of both ingredient mix and the steam effect while baking. For a professional baker’s crust, Janell suggests putting a small skillet in the oven while it’s preheating and then, when the dough is ready to bake, pour about a cup of water into the skillet to create a cloud of steam. Another option is to bake your breads in a Dutch oven with a tight-fitting lid at a high temperature, as with the slow-rise method. Listen for a hollow sound when you rap on the crust.

Though Janell would never do it, I have used a bread maker for the Prairie Rye and Challah. If you have the time, use the breadmaker dough cycle only and bake it in the oven for the best results.

Janell’s Slow-Rise, No-Knead Bread

3 cups bread flour, plus more for dusting
1 1/2 tsp. instant yeast
1 1/2 cups water

Combine flour, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Add water and stir until blended. Dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with a lid or clean cloth and let rise 12-18 hours at room temperature, until the dough surface is dotted with bubbles. Scrape dough out of bowl onto a floured work surface; sprinkle with a little more flour. Fold dough over on itself once or twice. At this point, sun-dried tomatoes, parmesan cheese, pesto, bacon bits, or other flavorings can be folded into dough if desired. Dust with more flour. Cover the dough with the upturned bowl it rose in and let it proof for about 2 hours. Janell sometimes pokes it down, reshapes slightly, and lets the dough rise again, especially if other ingredients were added. The dough will be very soft and sticky; add more flour as necessary to handle it. Preheat oven and an enameled dutch oven or stoneware casserole dish with a lid to 475°. Quickly open oven door, remove lid, and flip dough in. Don’t worry if it looks messy. Cover and close oven quickly. Bake 15 minutes covered, then remove lid, reduce heat to 450° and bake another 15-20 minutes until browned. Remove from oven and cool on a rack for at least 45 minutes before eating.

Prairie Rye Bread

1 cup raisins
2 1/4 tsp. salt
Boiling water to cover
1 tsp. sugar
3 cups warm water
2 cups rye flour
3-4 Tbs. water
6 cups unbleached bread flour
1/3 cup molasses
2 Tbs. cornstarch
1 Tbs. or 2 pkgs. active dry yeast
2 Tbs. butter
1/2 cup yellow corn meal, plus more for kneading
1 Tbs. caraway seeds, plus more for sprinkling on outside

Cover raisins with boiling water and soak 10 minutes. Drain and set aside. Combine 3 cups water, cornmeal, molasses, yeast, butter, salt and sugar in a large bowl. Stir until yeast is dissolved. Mix in rye flour and caraway seeds. Add enough bread flour to form a soft dough. Knead until almost smooth, adding more flour if sticky, about 4 minutes. Pat flat, spread raisins over, and roll up, enclosing raisins. Knead 5 more minutes. Let rise covered with a cotton cloth in a greased bowl in a warm place until the dough has doubled, about an hour. Knead again on a cornmeal covered surface. Form into 2 round loaves and turn each onto a greased pie pan. Let rise, covered, 30 minutes or so, on cookie sheet until doubled. Make a glaze of cornstarch and water and brush on loaves, while oven preheats to 350°. Sprinkle loaves with caraway seeds and bake about 45 minutes.

Challah

4 tsp. or 2 pkgs. active dry yeast
1 1/2 cup lukewarm water
1 Tbs. salt
3/4 cup sugar
4 Tbs. vegetable oil
2 Tbs. or 2 pkgs. active dry yeast
1 cup very hot water
Grated rind of 1 lemon
2 eggs
Poppy or sesame seeds

Dissolve yeast in the 1/2 cup warm water with 1 Tbs. sugar. Set aside. Combine rest of the sugar, hot water, lemon peel, salt and oil in a large bowl. Stir to blend. Beat eggs separately with a fork. Add yeast and eggs to mixture. Add 4 cups flour at first, and mix well with a large spoon. Gradually work in remaining flour. Use your hands to form a stiff dough. Knead in bowl for 10 minutes. Wash another large bowl in warm water and oil it. Place dough in bowl and turn it to coat all sides with oil. Cover bowl with a damp towel. Put oven on 200° for 2 minutes, then turn off. Let the dough rise in the oven for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Punch dough down and divide in 2 parts. Divide each half into 3 equal parts. Form each part into a long rope and braid the 3 parts together, tucking ends under. Place braids on a greased cookie sheet, leaving plenty of room for each. Let rise again in oven (off) for 45 minutes to an hour or until doubled in bulk. Brush loaves with egg wash and sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds while preheating the oven to 350°. Bake for 20-25 minutes. Cool on rack and enjoy.

Bread machine method: Cut the recipe in half and set machine to dough cycle. Add ingredients in the order your bread maker suggests. When dough is ready, punch down and divide in three parts. Braid and follow instructions above to form one loaf.
Upcoming Events

2011 Ohio Farm Management Conference
Tuesday, January 25—Wednesday, January 26
University Plaza Hotel
Columbus, Ohio
OSU Extension and OSU’s Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics Department will be offering their annual Ohio Farm Management Conference. The conference is designed to strengthen farm business owner’s employee management, financial decision making, long-range planning, and communication skills. For more information, go to http://ohioagmanager.osu.edu/2011-ohio-farm-management-conference/.

North Central Ohio Dairy Grazing Conference
Thursday, January 27—Friday, January 28
Buickeye Event Center
624 Henry St., Dalton, Ohio
This two day event features a producer panel, information sessions, and presentations by Oregon dairy grazier Jon Bansen, Pennsylvania dairy grazier Cliff Hawbaker, US Dairy Forage Researcher Geoff Brink, Holmes County dairy grazier Noah Yoder, and Tuscarawas dairy grazier John Mark Troyer. Cost: $45. Price includes trade show admission and meals. For more information, call (740) 545-6349, email leah@smallfarminstitute.org, or go to http://smallfarminstitute.wordpress.com/upcoming-events/.

Midwest Garden Symposium and Organic Vegetable Conference
Friday, January 28—Saturday, January 29—3 p.m.
McDonald/Marlite Conference Center
143 McDonald Dr. NW, New Philadelphia, Ohio
This symposium will examine timeless principles of design, whether applied to the creation of a residential garden or a public space, by engaging the public in a conversation about the importance of growing fruit and vegetable gardens. The event will feature lectures, panel discussions, workshops, cooking demonstrations, and gourmet meals. Hosted and sponsored by April Showers Greenhouse. Cost: $155. Price includes lodging and meals. For more information, call (330) 473-8603 or email ruththegrower@aol.com.

Webinar: Improving Efficiency on Your Organic Farm
Monday, January 31—7-8 p.m.
Join Jon Cherniss of Blue Moon Farm in Illinois and Jim Crawford of New Morning Farm in Pennsylvania to hear about how these farmers have improved the efficiency of their farm operations by hiring and managing labor and by carefully evaluating and investing in capital improvements like buildings and machinery. Specialty crop webinars offered by OEFFA and Countryside Conservancy. Cost: Free. Pre-registration required. Limit 20. To register, go to https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/178199998. For more information, contact Mike Anderson at (614) 421-2022 Ext. 204 or mike@oeffa.org.

Design a World Class Website in 60 Minutes
Wednesday, February 2—10 a.m.—4 p.m.
Blue Rock Station
1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio
Join Jay Warmke for an informational workshop that will cover the basics of setting up a website for your small farm business. Cost: $49. For more information, call (740) 674-4300, email annie@bluerockstation.com, or go to www.bluerockstation.com.

4th Annual Winter Permaculture Design Certification
Friday, February 4—Sunday, March 27
Various locations: Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Southwest Indiana
This in-depth multi-weekend series will help you turn your farm or yard into a self-sustaining “organism unto itself.” Cost: $600. Scholarships available. For more information, call (513) 403-4613, email OMValleyPermaculture@gmail.com, or go to www.OMValleyPermaculture.wordpress.com.

OEFFA Pre-Conference: The ABCs of CSAs
Friday, February 18, 2011—10 a.m.—4 p.m.
Granville Inn
314 E. Broadway, Granville, Ohio
This workshop will provide guidance on the logistics of CSA coordination and management including: challenges and benefits of CSAs; planning and record-keeping strategies; member recruiting and education; working members; opportunities for partnering with other farms, and more. Workshop presenter Beth Knorr co-managed one of Northeast Ohio’s most successful CSAs and currently manages farmers’ markets and provides workshops for the Countryside Conservancy. Beth will be joined by CSA growers, who will share their experiences. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email renee@oeffa.org, or go to http://www.oeffa.org/conference2011.php.

OEFFA’s 32nd Annual Conference: “Inspiring Farms, Sustaining Communities”
Saturday, February 19—Sunday, February 20
Granville, Ohio
OEFFA’s 32nd annual conference will feature nationally recognized keynote speakers Joan Dye Gus-sow and Klaas and Mary-Howell Martens; more than 70 informative, hands-on workshops; a trade show; a fun and educational kids’ conference; great homemade meals featuring local, organic foods; a child care area; and Saturday evening entertainment. For more information, contact Rebecca Cole at (330) 657-2542 or rcole@cvcountryside.org.

Webinar: Building Mutually Profitable Relationships with Independent Chefs and Restauranteurs
Thursday, February 24—10 a.m.
Join Chef Douglas Katz from Fire Food and Drink for a first-hand look into how farmers can connect with restaurants in their area. He’ll take participants through the entire process, from approach- ing a restaurant, to average volumes of produce ordered in a typical week. Specialty crop webinars offered by OEFFA and Countryside Conservancy. Cost: Free. Pre-registration required. Limit 50. To register, go to https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/247897358. For more information, contact Rebecca Cole at (330) 657-2542 or rcole@cvcountryside.org.

Raised Bed Natural Gardening 101
Sunday, March 27—1-4 p.m.
Blue Rock Station
1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio
Join Jay and Annie Warmke for a workshop about making raised bed gardens. Learn about creating the right space, starting plants, natural insect control, and how to raise lots of food in a small space. Cost: $35. Cost includes tour of Blue Rock Station and tea. For more information, call (740) 674-4300, email annie@bluerockstation.com, or go to www.bluerockstation.com.

OEFFA News Winter 2011 20
Visit www.oeffa.org for more information on upcoming events and activities.
Environmental Markets Guide—The American Farmland Trust has released A Guide to Environmental Markets for Farmers and Ranchers, a new publication designed to help farmers and landowners assess environmental market opportunities, or markets in which the products being bought and sold are environmental resources. Some examples of environmental markets include reducing greenhouse gasses, improving water quality, restoring wetlands, protecting wildlife habitat, conserving water, and generating renewable energy.

www.farmland.org/documents/GuidetoEnvironmentalMarketsforFarmersandRanchers.pdf

Guide to Shaping USDA Conservation Programs—The Organic Farming Research Foundation has released a new guide designed to provide producers with information on how they can shape federal conservation programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Organic Initiative and the Conservation Stewardship Program, so that they work better for organic farmers and ranchers. Specifically, the guide focuses on how producers can participate in National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Technical Committees and Local Working Groups, two entities that serve in an advisory capacity to NRCS.


WEBSITES AND ONLINE MEDIA

Farm Transition Tool—The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the Transition Incentives Program (TIP) Net, an online tool to help link retiring farmers who have expiring Conservation Reserve Program contracts with beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers who want to buy or rent land for their operations. The USDA estimates that contracts covering 4.4 million acres expired in 2010, with nearly the same number of acres due to expire in 2011. Retired or retiring owners or operators with expiring CRP contracts can receive up to two additional annual rental payments if they sell or lease the CRP land to farmers who are interested in bringing the land into production using sustainable grazing or crop production methods, including transitioning to organic.


Small Poultry Processing Plants Directory—The National Center for Appropriate Technology maintains a self-listing online directory of poultry processors that serve independent growers.

http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/poultry_processors/

National Farmers’ Market Directory—The USDA has announced a series of enhancements to the National Farmers’ Market Directory, including a mapping feature, reformatted data sets, and a downloadable Excel file. Farmers’ markets can be found by state, county, zip code, and participation in federal nutrition assistance programs. The directory is the department’s official tally of the nation’s farmers’ markets. In 2010, the site listed 6,132 operational farmers’ markets in the United States.


MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Ohio Proud Passport Program—Ohio Proud and Ohio Magazine are partnering to promote local products through their Ohio Proud Passport Program. Consumers will have the opportunity to remove the passport from the June issue of Ohio Magazine. Once consumers get their passport stamped at six of Ohio’s farm markets, farmers’ markets, or wineries, they can return the completed passport to Ohio Proud to receive a sampling of products. The program will be offered from June through December 2011. To participate in the program, contact Donna Gilbride at (614) 644-5783 or dgilbride@agri.ohio.gov. Deadline to respond is April 1.

www.farmland.org/documents/GuidetoEnvironmentalMarketsforFarmersandRanchers.pdf

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NCR-SARE Graduate Student Grants—The 2011 North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NCR-SARE) Graduate Student Grant Call for Proposals is now available online. Graduate students can submit proposals for up to $10,000 to fund sustainable agriculture research projects. NCR-SARE expects to fund about 15 projects in the 12-state region. Proposals are due January 27.

http://sare.org/ncretsare/cfp.htm

Federal Organic Research Grants—The USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) released a Request for Applications for the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI). NIFA estimates that $19 million in funding will be available for OREI projects in 2011. OREI funds four distinct project types: integrated research and extension projects, conference proposals, research and extension planning proposals, and extension proposals. Eligible applicants include colleges and universities, federal agencies, private organizations, and individuals. Matching funds are required. Proposals are due February 10.

http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/OREI.html

EQIP Organic Initiative Grants—The NRCS EQIP Organic Initiative is now accepting applications for 2011. Fifty million dollars in funding is available nationwide to help organic producers and those transitioning to organic production implement resource conservation practices. Funding is limited to $20,000 per year and $80,000 during a six year period. Producers are paid 75 percent of the cost of the measures they implement. Eligible producers include those certified through USDA’s National Organic Program, those transitioning to certified organic production, and those who meet organic standards but are exempt from certification because their gross annual organic sales are less than $5,000. Applications must be submitted through your local NRCS Service Center. Applications are due March 4.


ODA Agriculture Revolving Loan Fund—Two million dollars in low-interest loans is now available through the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s newly created Agriculture Revolving Loan Fund. Loans are available for the creation and expansion of businesses and industries that support agriculture and rural Ohio, focusing on aquaculture, food processing, biofuels, and other areas. Loans will range from $10,000 to $100,000, and will finance up to 90 percent of the total project cost.


Download OEFFA’s GoodSearch Toolbar

What if OEFFA earned money every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. In addition, each time you shop at more than 1,300 stores (from Amazon to Zazzle!) a percentage of your purchase is automatically donated to OEFFA— at no cost to you!

Best of all, the OEFFA GoodSearch toolbar is quick and easy to install. To download the toolbar, go to http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/ohio-ecological-food-and-farm-association-oeffa.
For Sale: 3 BR brick home with 1,600 sq. ft garden (can be certified). The house has central air, gas heat, 200 amp electric, 1 BA, and combined living-dining room. Property includes detached garage, built-in storage, trees, 300 gal. rain water collection system, and fenced back yard. Call Harley in Franklin County at (614) 853-0278.

For Sale: Large 35x18 walk-in cooler. Works great. Two Bonn evaporator units and a Witt condenser/compressor unit. Currently assembled; buyer would need to disassemble and move it. Panels connected by camlocks for easy disassembly. Make an offer. Call Josh in Licking County at (740) 817-4098.

For Sale: Certified organic seedlings, including tomatoes, peppers, and onions, and organic and untreated seed. Competitive pricing. Call Marvin in Geauga County at (440) 693-4632.

For Sale: Certified organic oats (200 bushel), stubble hay (200 bales), food-grade open-pollinated corn (150 bushel), food grade soy beans (150-200 bushels), non-food grade soy beans suitable for seed (350 bushels). Can bag oats and beans. Call William in Wood County at (419) 619-1215.

For Sale: Organic red clover haylage 4x4 bales, organic first cutting red clover dry hay, and second cutting alfalfa dry hay 4x4 bales. Call Steve in Marion County at (740) 361-4965.

For Sale: Certified organic hay, alfalfa orchard grass, square bales at 3x3x8. 1st-4th cutting. Call Dale in Preble County at (513) 267-5314.

For Sale: Certified organic hay, 4x4 round bales, stored inside, first cutting, mixed grasses with lots of red clover, tested. $140 ton or $40/bale. Will help with loading or delivery. Call Lynn in Washington County, PA at (740) 424 0446.

For Sale: Large round third cutting hay bales. Organically managed (not certified). $45/bale. Call Michelle in Richland County at (419) 886-4422.

Help Wanted: Small vegetable farm located near Granville seeking partner to run the farm operation in 2011 and beyond. About 2.5 usable acres with barns, small orchard, chicken coop, and pasture. Sells at Granville, Clintonville, and Worthington farmers market. Experience is necessary. Pay based on profit sharing with option for on-farm housing. Email Andrew in Licking County at andrew_semler@hotmail.com.

Help Wanted: Experienced professional grower wanted to operate 3 acre (1.3 acres certifiable land) farm. Historic property is close to Brunswick, Ohio and includes an apartment and outbuildings. Email Cynthia in Medina County at cbarnes304@yahoo.com.

Farm Opportunity Wanted: Young couple with farm, livestock, and mechanic experience looking for a farmer with 500+ acres that wants to slow down, partner, or retire with option to take over or buy them out. Call Ben in Wyandot County at (419) 294-8598.

Quick Tip: Winter Pruning Makes Spring Row Markers

Winter is a great time to do fruit tree pruning. You can get double benefit from your efforts by bundling and saving the “suckers” or “water sprouts” (the branches that grow straight up two to six feet tall in a single growing season). In the spring and summer they snap easily to create garden row markers, and taller ones can be used for trellising. If you have a tree or two you will never run out!

--Bill Johnson, Columbus, OH
Welcome New OEFFA Members
as of 12/14/2010

Business
Heffter’s Company Store
Joshua & Rebekah Johnson
Blake Suzelis, Healthy Treasures, Inc.

Non-Profit Organization
Bob Cohen, Business Development Center
Diocese of Toledo, Catholic Charities
Andy Pressman, National Center for Appropriate Technology

Family Farm
Dale Hillman, Morning Sun Organic Farm
Melinda Fedor
Grayville Farm
Louis Hettkamp
Henry Hersberger, Schontal Farm
Lester Hersberger, Hersheberger Farms
Reuben Hersberger
Mervin Hochstetler, Spring Acres
Curtis Hostetler
Gary & Wilda Knobloch
Kenneth Knobloch & Sons, Hilltop Farm
Virgil Knobloch
Beth & Timothy Knor, Crown Point Ecology Center
Barry Leventritt
Derek Looker
Michelle & Danny Lutz, Maple Creek Farm
James Martin, Cedar Lake Farm
Isaac Martin, Jr.
Alvin Mast, Oak Ridge Dairy
Ray & Betty Mast, Snow View Farm
Katherine McLeod & Joshua Walker, Walker Dairy
Allen & Marilyn Miller, Miers Dairy
Ben & Anna Miller, Elcot Ridge Farm
Billy Miller
Devin Miller, Nature’s Best Farmstead, Ltd.
Harvey Miller, Spring Valley Farm
Jeff & Ina Miller, Beav Cave Farm
Norman Miller, Meadow Valley Farm
Paul & Leah Miller, Fountain Valley Farm
Robert Miller, Son Shine Acres
Wayne Miller
Jeremy Moughtester, MSU Student Organic Farm
Robert Napier, Napier Family Farms
David Nedwed, Nedwed Family Farms
Clay Nielsen
Monroe Nisley, Sonic View Dairy
Linda Zimmer & Donald Olson, Blue Rock Farm
Michael Osterloh
Kurt Ringlerhofer & Nathaniel Progowski, K & P Farms
Stas Priebe, Priebe Family Organic Farm
Myron Ruber, Flat Ridge Dairy
Gordon & Joanna Rhoades, Main Stream Farms
Cindy & Joey Rodak, Blue Ridge Farm
Daniel Schlabach, Green Patch Farm
Paul Schmitmeyer, Nourishing Meadows
Andrew Showalter, Hidden River Dairy
Larry Shock, Lakeview Farm
Susan Siemers, Ceres & Co.
Jonathan Smith, Jonti’s Organic Farm & Produce
Leann Landgrebe Stephens, Crema de la Crop
B. Stachels
Ralph Straats & Sons, Straats Brothers
Joseph Stutzman
Monroe Stutzman, Stutzman Farms
Angie Surtains, Produce Packaging, Inc.
Amos Wagler
Henry Wagler
John Wagler
Harry Wanner, Jr.
El Weaver
Erwin Weaver, Weaver Family Farm
Raymond Weaver, Locust Lane
Virginia Wenger, Cedar Springs Farm
Rex West, West & West Farms
Brad & Judy Wickers, DDS Farm
Steve Williams, Healthy Acres Farm
Mark Wilson, Hidden Acres
Aaron Yoder
David Yoder, Yoder Farm
El Yoder
Erwin Yoder, Hidden Y Farm
Joe Yoder
Jonas & Mary Yoder, Daughtrey Creek Jersey
Mark Yoder, M.A.T. Farm
Phillip Yoder, Pine Ridge Dairy
Raymond Yoder
Titus Yoder, Brookside Farm
Toby Yoder, IT Farm
James Young, Sharon Valley Farms
Steven Zehr
Glen & Norman Zimmerman, Rolling Acres Dairy
Jason & David Zimmerman

Family
Gene Ammannell
Jim & Hannah Bidigare-Curtis
Michael & Kate Hass
Teena Jennings
Matanane Stanley & Moise Oren
Kathryn Ann & Zachary Rapeon
Carmen, Mary, Rees & Constance-Waun
Glenda Yoder

Individual
Ardith Bieley
Rhoda Brooks
Michael Cay
George Davet
Erica Delvento
Jen Duda
Leslie Dybek
Elizabeth Franks
Jenny East
Charles Geofflin
Kitty Leatham
John Leininger
Susan Logan
Matthew McCarthy
Ed Merza
Timothy Michael Dowling
David Rudemiller
Adam Schweigert
Judy Simmons
Chris Spitzer
Antonia Von Hirschberg
Ben Willoxy
Holly Winwood

Student
Lucas Arnold
Justin Monter

OEFFA Welcomes New Staff
Erin Kanuckel, Program Assistant

OEFFA would like to welcome Erin Kanuckel, our new Certification Program Assistant, to the staff. Erin hails from Howard, Ohio and has been working in Milwaukee for the last three years as Executive Director of Milwaukee Urban Gardens. Along with administrative chops, Erin brings a passion for sustainable agriculture and a desire to help farmers move through the certification process with ease. Erin’s other interests include cooking and preserving food, art, and volunteering.
OEFFA and the Countryside Conservancy are offering a three part webinar series designed for specialty crop farmers. Individual sessions will address advanced production techniques, season extension, and market connections. These free, web-based interactive seminars deliver training directly to a participant’s computer, with audio available by phone.

◆ The first webinar titled, “Improving Efficiency on your Organic Farm,” will be held Monday, January 31 at 7 p.m. Two successful organic vegetable producers with more than three decades of experience will lead this webinar: Jon Cherniss of Blue Moon Farm in Illinois and Jim Crawford of New Morning Farm in Pennsylvania. They will describe how they have improved the efficiency of their farm operations by hiring and managing labor and by carefully evaluating and investing in capital improvements like buildings and machinery. To register, go to: https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/178199998.

◆ The second webinar titled, “Building Mutually Profitable Relationships with Independent Chefs and Restauranteurs,” will be led by Chef Douglas Katz from Fire Food and Drink located in Shaker Heights, Ohio on Thursday, February 24 at 10 a.m. Chef Katz will take participants through the entire process, from approaching a restaurant, to providing samples, the ordering process, customer service expectations, and average volumes of produce ordered in a typical week. To register, go to: https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/247897358.

◆ The third and final webinar in the series titled, “Effective Weed Management Strategies for Organic Farming Systems” will be led by Dr. Matt Liebman, Henry A. Wallace Chair for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. This webinar will be held in March; details, including the date, time, and registration link to be announced.

Registration for each webinar is limited to 50 participants. Pre-registration required. Partial funding for this webinar series is provided through the Ohio Department of Agriculture Specialty Crops Block Grant.

For more information, contact Mike Anderson at (614) 421-2022 or mike@oeffa.org.