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OEFFA Joins Lawsuit to End Monsanto's Practice of Intimidation

On March 29, OEFFA joined 60 family farmers, seed businesses, and agricultural organizations, in a lawsuit filed in a federal district court by the Public Patent Foundation (PUBPAT) aimed at stopping Monsanto's practice of suing farmers whose fields have been contaminated by the company's genetically modified seed for patent infringement.

The case, *Organic Seed Growers & Trade Association, et al. v. Monsanto*, was filed in federal district court in Manhattan and assigned to Judge Naomi Buchwald.

Plaintiffs in the suit, including OEFFA, represent a broad array of family farmers, small businesses, and organizations from within the organic agriculture community who are increasingly threatened by genetically modified seed contamination despite using their best efforts to avoid it. The plaintiff organizations have over 270,000 members, including thousands of certified organic family farmers.

"This case asks whether Monsanto has the right to sue organic farmers for patent infringement if Monsanto's transgenic seed should land on their property," said Dan Ravicher, PUBPAT's Executive Director and Lecturer of Law at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in New York. "It seems quite perverse that an organic farmer contaminated by transgenic seed could be accused of patent infringement, but Monsanto has made such accusations before and is notorious for having sued hundreds of farmers for patent infringement, so we had to act to protect the interests of our clients."

Once released into the environment, genetically modified seed contaminates and destroys organic seed for the same crop. For example, soon after Monsanto introduced genetically modified seed for canola, organic canola became virtually extinct as a result of contamination. Organic corn, soybeans, cotton, sugar beets, and alfalfa now face the same fate, as Monsanto has released genetically modified seed for each of those crops, too. Monsanto is developing genetically modified seed for many other crops, thus putting the future of all food, and indeed all agriculture, at stake.

"Consumers indicate, overwhelmingly, that they prefer foods made without genetically modified organisms," said Dr. Carol Goland, OEFFA's Executive Director. "Organic farms, by regulation, may not use GMOs, while other farmers forego using them for other reasons. Yet the truth is that we are rapidly approaching the tipping point when we will be unable to avoid GMOs in our fields and on our plates. That is the inevitable consequence of releasing genetically engineered materials into the environment. To add injury to injury, Monsanto has a history of suing farmers whose fields have been contaminated by Monsanto's GMOs. On behalf of farmers who must live under this cloud of uncertainty and risk, we are compelled to ask the Court to put an end to this unconscionable business practice."

In the case, plaintiffs are not asking for a monetary reward. Instead, they are asking Judge Buchwald to declare that if farmers are ever contaminated by Monsanto's genetically modified seed, they need not fear also being accused of patent infringement (like the Percy Schmeiser case).

"Some say transgenic seed can coexist with organic seed, but history tells us that's not possible, and it's actually in Monsanto's financial interest to eliminate organic seed so that they can have a total monopoly over our food supply," said Ravicher. "Monsanto is the same chemical company that previously brought us Agent Orange, DDT, PCB's, and other toxins, which they said were safe, but we know are not. Now Monsanto says transgenic seed is safe, but evidence clearly shows it is not."

By board request, Dan spent time with us at our annual conference to explain more of the specifics about the case to our membership. Before making the decision to proceed, OEFFA's board heard unanimous support from our members during the conference's business meeting.

As the case proceeds, we will keep you updated. We are proud to be stepping up and challenging Monsanto's practice of farmer intimidation and the impacts of GMO's more broadly.

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41 Crosswell Rd., Columbus OH 43214 (614) 421-2022 www.oeffa.org
Facebook: www.oeffa.org/facebook Twitter: www.twitter.com/oeffa

Carol Goland, Executive Director
(614) 421-2022 ext.202, cgoland@oeffa.org

OEFFA Education Program

Renee Hunt, Program Director
(614) 421-2022 ext. 205, renee@oeffa.org

Michelle Gregg-Skinner, Organic Education Program Coordinator
(614) 421-2022 ext. 204, michelle@oeffa.org

Lauren Ketcham, Communications and Membership Services Coordinator
(614) 421-2022 ext. 203, lauren@oeffa.org or newsletter@oeffa.org

Laura Wies, Special Projects
(614) 421-2022 ext. 206, laura@oeffa.org

Sean McGovern, SARE Outreach Specialist
(614) 306-6422, outreach@sare.org

OEFFA Certification Program

Lexie Stoia Pierce, Program Manager
(614) 262-2022 ext. 221, lexie@oeffa.org

Paul Dutter, Livestock Specialist
(614) 262-2022 ext. 224, paul@oeffa.org

Andy Hupp, Materials Reviewer
(614) 262-2022 ext. 225, andy@oeffa.org or materialsreview@oeffa.org

Kate Schmidt, Compliance Coordinator
(614) 262-2022 ext. 223, kate@oeffa.org

Kelli Natale, Program Assistant
(614) 262-2022 ext. 222, kelli@oeffa.org

Erin Kanuckel, Program Assistant
(614) 262-2022 ext. 226, erin@oeffa.org

Business Office

Carol Cameron, Accountant
(614) 421-2022 ext. 201, ccameron@oeffa.org

Diana Webster, Bookkeeper
(614) 421-2022 ext. 201, diana@oeffa.org

Newsletter Editor: **Lauren Ketcham**
Graphic Design: **Philip Marr**

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Opinions expressed in OEFFA news are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of the membership, officers, or directors.

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OEFFA shall be a democratic association of chartered grassroots chapters, existing within state bylaws, working together to create and promote a healthful, ecological, accountable, and sustainable system of agriculture in Ohio and elsewhere.

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OEFFA Chapter Contacts

Athens Chapter

Athens, Hocking, Perry, Morgan, Washington, Meigs, and Vinton counties
Angie Starline, President, (740) 517-1032, starlineorganics@live.com

Capital Chapter

Franklin County area
Lisa Large, President, (614) 878-7324, lislalarge56@yahoo.com

Grain Growers Chapter

Statewide
Michelle Gregg-Skinner, President, (740) 507-1064, michelledgregg@gmail.com

Heart of Ohio Chapter

Knox, Licking, and Delaware counties
Trish Mumme, (740) 924-4331, gardenpatchproduce@earthlink.net

Lake Effect Chapter

Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties
Jo Schaefer, President, (440) 255-6284, joahio1@aol.com

Miami/Oxford Organic Network (MOON) Chapter

Butler, Preble, and Warren counties
Harv Roehling, (513) 756-9272, locustrun@nuvox.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, muddyforkfarm@gmail.com

Southwest Ohio Chapter

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

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Letter from the President

I will resist the temptation to write about something serious, for once. It is not very easy. There are so many important and serious topics to write about, such as the fact that our committed staff continues to get better with each new hire and each passing day, not to mention their work, which includes:

- Monitoring and working with our members to ensure the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board protects the interests of sustainable and organic farmers, and the consumers that count on them;
- Operating one of the oldest and most respected organic certification programs in the country;
- Monitoring and working with our members to address food safety initiatives;
- Maintaining our right to know what is and is not in our milk;
- Holding our decision-makers accountable for inequitable sustainable agricultural funding cuts at the state and federal level;
- Ensuring our members' concerns and needs are part of the upcoming Farm Bill dialogue; and
- Providing educational opportunities for farmers, gardeners, and home-steaders looking to produce and offer sustainably and organically grown food.

That's just some of the meaningful work done by this organization, not to mention the important and often serious work that our local chapters do independently.

I'm not going to write about all that. Today, I am writing to inform those new to our family that OEFFA was built upon a foundation of optimism and is sustained in large part by fun, lots and lots of it. If you were at the conference, you know what I mean.

This summer, OEFFA-sponsored fun takes the form of farm tours, workshops, and chapter meetings. They are all very informative and very fun, which is why thousands of people participate in these events every year.

If you want to learn more, read on and check in at www.oeffa.org to get the latest news and schedules. Thank you for being an important part of OEFFA. Enjoy your summer!

Darren Malhame
Board President

THE OEFFA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM 2011 NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Linking Green Thumbs with Green Hands

OEFFA encourages you to consider our Farm Apprentice Program, where host farms and apprentice farmers can connect. Pre-planting season is an excellent time to consider listing your facility as a host farm. Many young people eagerly await the chance to learn from experienced growers, and alleviate some of your workload.

To create an apprentice or host farm profile, go to www.oeffa.org. Host farms simply create a listing through the "Good Earth Guide," then create a profile in the "Apprenticeship Program," both of which have links on the home page. Apprentice applicants can create a profile through the "Apprenticeship Program" link, and approved profiles will be posted for viewing only by registered host farms. Contact Michelle Gregg-Skinner at michelle@oeffa.org or (614) 421-2022 Ext. 204 for assistance.

OEFFA Conference Audio Recordings

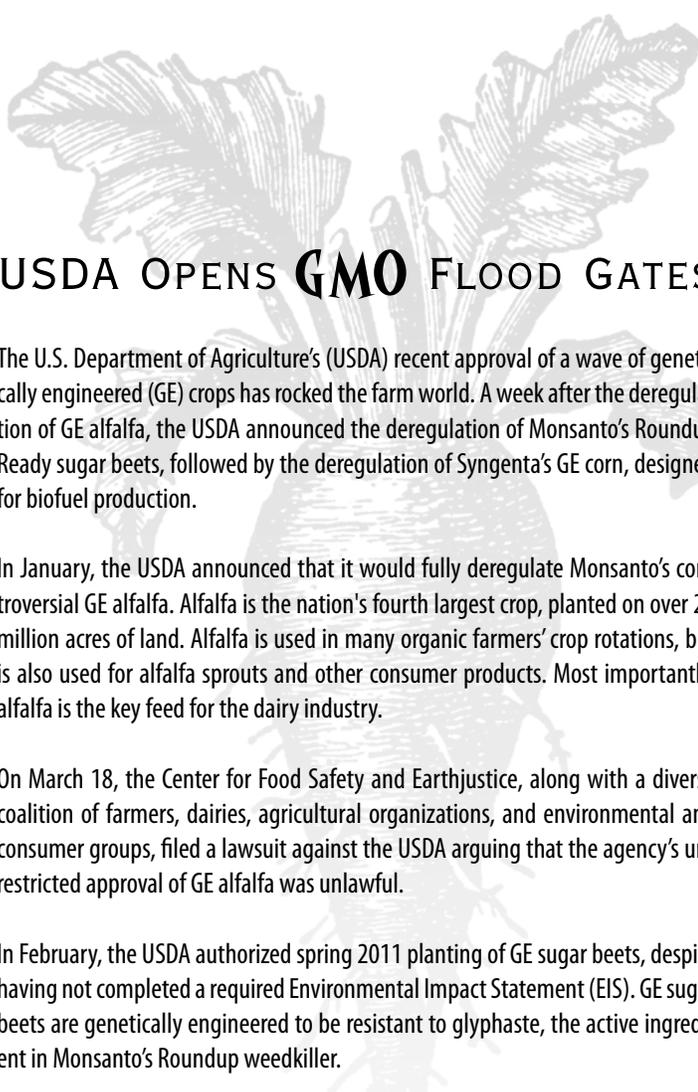
With more than 70 workshops and keynote addresses from Joan Dye Gussow and Klaas and Mary Howell Martens, OEFFA's 32nd annual conference was chocked full of great information on everything from farm record keeping to ecological parenting.

Whether you were unable to attend, or just weren't able to catch all the workshops you would have liked, you can now purchase audio recordings from this year's conference through Organic Voices. The pre-conference event, "The ABCs of CSAs," is also available. You can make individual selections or purchase the complete set for one low price. Available on CD or MP3. For more information, go to <http://www.organicvoices.com> or call (952) 432-3079.



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USDA OPENS **GMO** FLOOD GATES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recent approval of a wave of genetically engineered (GE) crops has rocked the farm world. A week after the deregulation of GE alfalfa, the USDA announced the deregulation of Monsanto's Roundup Ready sugar beets, followed by the deregulation of Syngenta's GE corn, designed for biofuel production.

In January, the USDA announced that it would fully deregulate Monsanto's controversial GE alfalfa. Alfalfa is the nation's fourth largest crop, planted on over 21 million acres of land. Alfalfa is used in many organic farmers' crop rotations, but is also used for alfalfa sprouts and other consumer products. Most importantly, alfalfa is the key feed for the dairy industry.

On March 18, the Center for Food Safety and Earthjustice, along with a diverse coalition of farmers, dairies, agricultural organizations, and environmental and consumer groups, filed a lawsuit against the USDA arguing that the agency's unrestricted approval of GE alfalfa was unlawful.

In February, the USDA authorized spring 2011 planting of GE sugar beets, despite having not completed a required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). GE sugar beets are genetically engineered to be resistant to glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup weedkiller.

That same month, Monsanto and the USDA won reversal of a judge's order to destroy GE sugar beet seedlings planted last year, in a federal appeals court decision in San Francisco. In November, a court had ruled that 256 acres of seedlings, which had been planted in violation of federal law, had to be destroyed. The initial court ruling found that past incidents of contamination were too numerous and current containment efforts were insufficient to allow the crop to remain in the ground.

Sugar beets, grown on 1.3 million acres in 10 states, provide half the nation's sugar supply.

Then, on February 11, the USDA approved the use of GE corn modified for ethanol production. Known as Event 3272, the corn is genetically engineered to contain high levels of a heat-resistant and acid-tolerant enzyme, which breaks down starches into sugars, the first step in conversion of corn to ethanol.

So, what does this mean for organic farmers and consumers who don't want to eat GE foods? The short of it is this: GE crops present real risks and fewer choices for both farmers and eaters.

One of the biggest problems GE crops present is the contamination of non-GE crops. GE sugar beet opponents have argued that wind-blown pollen from GE crops will contaminate non-GE sugar beets and other closely related plants, such

as Swiss chard. Corn is a particularly "promiscuous" pollinator and GE ethanol corn could easily cross-pollinate or become mixed with corn for food uses. GE alfalfa cross-fertilization would be especially disastrous for organic farmers. If organic fields are contaminated, an organic farmer's certification is at risk, since the use of GE crops is prohibited under the organic label. Organic livestock farmers are also at risk if their cattle consume contaminated alfalfa. Despite such concerns, the USDA approved the planting of GE alfalfa for a perennial crop this spring without a plan for preventing costly contamination.

What's more, once a crop is fully deregulated, the USDA conducts no monitoring of any kind to see if a GE crop has harmed the environment. Releasing GE crops without a full understanding of their impacts and without a plan to prevent contamination is gambling with our health, our environment, and livelihoods of family farmers.

OEFFA CONFERENCE LOCAL FOODS CHALLENGE

The meals at OEFFA's 2011 conference featured products from approximately three dozen Ohio farms and businesses. To make it even more locally-based, the OEFFA conference food committee is putting out a "Local Foods Challenge" to our membership and friends. The committee needs volunteers to help to source items, address storage issues, investigate food preservation possibilities, and serve on the food committee. More farmers and businesses are sought to donate items for the conference meals. Items desired include cabbage (for coleslaw), green beans (to freeze), kale (fresh or to freeze), and root vegetables, including beets.

We're asking folks to step up and help us grow this effort. Great ideas aren't enough—we need more participation! Contact food committee member Leah Rond at lrond@gmail.com or (740) 965-4524.



Download OEFFA's GoodSearch Toolbar

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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>.

32ND ANNUAL OEFFA CONFERENCE: INSPIRING FARMS, SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES

Over 950 people joined together in Granville, Ohio in February to attend keynote presentations by Joan Dye Gussow and Klaas and Mary Howell Martens, hands-on workshops, and other activities over the weekend. OEFFA's staff would like to thank everyone who came and made this year's conference the best event ever, especially the many volunteers, workshop presenters, sponsors, and exhibitors who made it possible. **Thank you!**



An OEFFA member selects a plate during lunch.

Children hold chicks and ducklings at the Ridgway Hatchery table in the exhibit hall.

Keynote speaker Joan Dye Gussow spoke at a Sunday workshop.



Marilou Suzko offers samples after her cooking demonstration.



Klaas and Mary Howell Martens at the podium during their Saturday keynote address.



Janell Baran offers a demonstration during her popular mushroom workshop.



Val Jorgensen of Jorgensen Farms and Lauren Genter of Ancient Roots Botanicals at their table in the exhibit hall.



EPA Data Reveals CAFO Emissions Unsafe

The Environmental Integrity Project released a report in March analyzing Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data on Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) emissions. Results of the survey indicate that air quality near CAFOs may be unsafe for workers and residents in the area, as levels of particulate matter, ammonia, and hydrogen sulfide were found to be at levels well above federal standards. EPA suspended enforcement of air quality laws against CAFOs five years ago for the duration of the study, and in 2008, EPA exempted CAFOs from most pollution requirements altogether. However, 11 of the 14 CAFOs studied released quantities of air pollutants that would trigger Clean Air Act and emission reporting laws in other large industries. Large hog and dairy CAFOs, for example, were found to release quantities of hydrogen sulfide comparable to those released by oil refineries. The two year air monitoring survey was jointly sponsored by the EPA and the livestock industry.

Senator Sherrod Brown Receives OTA Public Servant Award

The Organic Trade Association announced that Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown has been selected to receive the organization's highest honor, its Public Servant of the Year Award. Senator Brown sponsored the Organic Pilot Program, which authorizes \$10 million in grants for schools to incorporate organic foods in their lunch programs. He also sponsored an amendment to the Food Safety Modernization Act which helped protect organic farmers direct marketing their product from onerous traceability and recordkeeping requirements.

Food Freedom Ordinance Passed in Maine

On March 5, residents in the small coastal town of Sedgwick, Maine voted unanimously to adopt a Local Food and Self-Governance ordinance, setting a precedent for other towns looking to preserve small-scale farming and food processing. Sedgwick became the first town in Maine, and perhaps the nation, to exempt direct farm sales from state and federal licensing and inspection. The ordinance also exempts foods made in home kitchens, without caps on gross sales or restrictions on types of exempt foods.

Poll Shows Consumers Want GE Foods Labeled

A MSNBC poll in March asked, "Do you believe genetically modified foods should be labeled?" The result was overwhelming—over 96 percent of the 40,000 respondents answered, "Yes. It's an ethical issue. Consumers should be informed so they can make a choice." The results are consistent with previous polls, including a 2003 University of Maine/Ohio State University poll, which found 85 percent of respondents wanted genetically engineered (GE) foods labeled and a 2011 CBS/New York Times poll which found that 87 percent of Americans want labeling.



Farmland Lost to Development in Every State

The American Farmland Trust (AFT), using recently updated data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Inventory, has found that more than one out of every three acres of developed land in the United States was developed from 1982 to 2007. This lost acreage is equivalent to the size of the state of Indiana. The AFT analysis found that every state lost agricultural land to development, but that more efficient development slowed conversion and that purchase of agricultural conservation easement programs were effectively saving land for the future, particularly in states with active programs.

June and Bob Bargar 2011 Stinner Award Winners

The Innovative Farmers of Ohio have awarded their 2011 Stinner Award to June and Bob Bargar of Delaware, Ohio. The Bargar, OEFFA members, join a list of sustainable agriculture leaders in Ohio as winners of the Stinner Award. Since 1999, the Bargar have been involved in a number of agricultural-related projects and activities through the OSU Agroecosystems Management Program in Wooster, Ohio.

FDA Confirms Prolific Use of Antibiotics in Livestock Industry

A U.S. Food and Drug Administration report released in December found that nearly 29 million pounds of antibiotics and related drugs were given to farm animals in 2009, most of it as feed or water supplements. That figure validates the findings of a 2001 Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) report, which estimated that nearly 25 million pounds of antibiotics and related drugs were used in one year in cattle, swine, and poultry production, for just nontherapeutic purposes such as promoting growth and preventing diseases caused by crowded, unsanitary conditions. According to the UCS, only about 11 percent of antimicrobials are used to treat a human infection.



USDA Research Links Neonicotinoid Pesticide to Bee Deaths

Research by the USDA Bee Research Laboratory and Penn State University shows that the insecticide imidacloprid contributes, even when present at extremely low levels, to bee deaths and possibly colony collapse disorder, which has killed more than a third of the commercial honey bees in the U.S. Imidacloprid is a member of the neonicotinoid family of nervous system-disrupting pesticides, which are taken up by a plant's vascular system and expressed through pollen, nectar, and gutation droplets from which bees then forage and drink. Imidacloprid is used as a seed treatment, and is Bayer Crop Science's best-selling product and among the most widely used insecticides in the U.S.

Organic Farmer Wins in Pesticide Drift Case

In December, California's Sixth Appellate District Court upheld the right of Jacobs Farm to sue Western Farm Service for damages caused four years ago when organophosphate residues drifted from nearby conventional fields onto Jacobs Farm's organic herbs destined for Whole Foods. This precedent-setting court decision upheld the right of an organic farmer to sue and win damages to cover economic losses even when a conventional production input (in this case, insecticides) is applied legally. In short, according to the court, when an applicator applies a pesticide, the applicator owns responsibility for any adverse impacts associated with it.



Member Perspectives: Fracking and Ohio's Farms

By Mardy Townsend

Fracking, the high volume pressurized horizontal hydraulic fracturing of shale formations, has become one of the hottest new sources of domestic energy in regions of the United States underlain by specific shale formations. Among these are Marcellus shale, which lies under most of eastern Ohio, and the deeper Utica shale located under much of the rest of Ohio.

Fracking uses directional or horizontal drilling and "stimulation" of a well to extract natural gas. Well stimulation is the highly pressurized injection of a mixture of water, chemicals, and sands that fractures the rock, allowing the gas to escape and flow into the well. It can take up to eight million gallons of water to frack a well. The water that returns to the surface is collected by the drilling company and usually trucked to municipal waste treatment plants. This waste water is contaminated with highly corrosive salts, carcinogens like benzene, and radioactive elements like radium.

On December 15, 2007, a house in Bainbridge, Ohio, less than 20 miles from my home, exploded. A drilling company had fracked a nearby well just a month earlier. The official report from the Ohio Division of Natural Resources concluded that the resulting accumulation of deep, high pressure natural gas over-pressurized the well casing. The over-pressurization caused the migration of natural gas into natural fractures in the bedrock below the base of the cemented surface casing, which then exited the aquifers through local water wells. Twenty two domestic wells and one public water supply were contaminated by this event. In the case of the house that exploded, gas had migrated to the water well of the house and was then ignited in its basement.

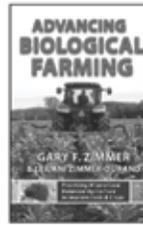
The implications for contamination of both surface and ground water are frightening. Most of the fracking fluid stays in the ground and can migrate to aquifers over a period of decades or more. There is no remediation for that. Municipal plants, not designed to treat waste water from fracking, generally discharge "treated" water into rivers. Additionally, waste water can be spilled during onsite temporary storage at the wellhead, or during trucking.

Representatives from energy companies are signing up land leases as fast as they can. The boilerplate lease is designed to favor the driller, not the landholder. No landholder should sign a lease without having a lawyer review it. Provisions must be clear about the driller's responsibility for truly fixing any environmental problems resulting from the drilling.

I strongly urge you to contact your representatives in the Ohio General Assembly and urge them to pass a moratorium on fracking until such time that these practices are demonstrated to be safe for the environment and human health and are properly and effectively regulated. To find your representative, go to <http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/>.

Mardy Townsend raises grass-fed beef cattle in Ashtabula County on OEFFA certified pasture and hay, and has three water wells for the livestock. Mardy can be reached at mltownsend56@yahoo.com.

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MAKING SENSE OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM REGULATIONS

NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM (NOP)

A series where OEFFA staff answers frequently asked questions and offers suggestions for working within the NOP regulations. We hope this column will be helpful to our organic producers and consumers.

By Lexie Stoia Pierce, Andy Hupp, and Michelle Gregg-Skinner

Seed and Grain Cleaning: When Handling Needs to Be Certified

Retaining and cleaning seed from a grain harvest is an excellent way to preserve and duplicate desired seed traits. Maintaining the organic integrity of seed stock is an important consideration when preparing for seed cleaning, storage, and sale. Likewise, the handling and processing of seeds and grain for livestock feed or human consumption must be evaluated as part of the management plan to ensure grains and seed maintain their organic status from crop to sale.

Regulations pertaining to seed cleaning and grain handling for organic operations are outlined in sections §205.270, §205.102 (b), and §205.272 of the NOP. Seed and grain cleaning is typically done on-farm by the grower or a mobile seed cleaner, or contracted out to off-farm operations. The *OEFFA Policy Manual* defines “on-farm” as the site of the certified organic land, managed by the producer who is certifying the land under his/her name. If the cleaning is done on-farm for the producer’s use, then these practices should be documented in the Post-Harvest Handling section of the *Organic System Plan for Producers*. If cleaning is conducted on-farm for sale, then the *Organic System Plan for Handlers* must be completed, but producers may qualify for a price reduction. OEFFA Certification will make some exceptions for small amounts. Please contact the office and we can review your situation.

Q I have my seed/grain cleaned at a local cleaner. I know the equipment is clean. Why do I need to hassle with a Handling Certification?

NOP regulations dictate what is allowed and what is not with regard to seed cleaning and grain handling. Once certified organic product leaves the certified operation where it is grown or raised, then it must be handled and processed by a certified entity, or risk losing its organic status. Cleaning grain and seed at a certified operation (if on-farm options are not available) ensures the proper chain of custody and generates an audit trail verifying the organic status of the handled product.

Q Another farmer in my area has a mobile seed cleaning unit. Do I need a Handling Certification to use it?

If grain and seed cleaning is done on-farm by the operator of a mobile cleaning unit, a handling certificate is not necessary. The owner of the organic crop should be present to verify that the equipment is clean of debris or residue prior to running the grain. Custom cleaning services should be recorded in sections 7 and 8 of the *Organic System Plan for Producers*. Though a handling certificate is

not necessary, documentation of proper equipment cleanout and purge is required per NOP §205.103, and needs to be maintained on file. The *OEFFA Audit Trail Booklet* has a convenient template for this purpose and is available from the OEFFA office.

Q What documentation do I need to keep to verify that my seed and grain have maintained their organic integrity through the handling process?

If grain and seed is cleaned on-farm with a mobile seed cleaner or stationary unit, then an affidavit or log signed by the equipment operator and owner of the crops is sufficient. This document needs to include the date of cleaning, the equipment used, and contain signatures verifying that the equipment was clean prior to contact with organic product. A purge should be conducted as part of the cleanout and the disposition of the purge documented (i.e. fed to conventional livestock, composted, sold on conventional market, etc.), and sales receipts retained. For cleaning done off-farm, the certified handler’s certificate should be maintained on file. Always ask for the most recent certificate on file, and make sure the certificate clearly states that they are certified for grain and seed cleaning or processing. These documents need to be readily accessible and made available to your inspector per NOP §205.103.

Q How do I show that my equipment is clean prior to loading organic product? What are some acceptable cleaning methods?

Any equipment cleaning practices and purges need to be documented per NOP §205.103. The *OEFFA Policies and Procedures Handbook* has valuable examples of cleaning methods for different pieces of equipment. Per NOP §205.272 (a), equipment must be cleaned between use in non-organic and organic production to ensure that no commingling or contamination of certified land or products occurs, and the cleaning procedures documented. If equipment is used for both organic and non-organic production and handling, the equipment must be cleaned before coming into contact with certified organic product or land. For equipment that can be washed, high pressure washing is acceptable. Equipment that is not readily washable (such as combines, balers, feed grinders, roasters, seed cleaners) should be cleaned of residue manually or with high pressure air followed by a product purge. Templates for equipment cleanout are available in the *OEFFA Audit Trail Booklet*.





Two Farms Available for Lease in Cuyahoga Valley National Park
By Darwin Kelsey

This summer, Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP), located between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to lease two additional farm properties in the park.

These farms are part of CVNP's Countryside Initiative, an innovative program begun in 1999 to rehabilitate and manage the park's "rural landscape." Eleven farms are already operating under long-term leases of up to 60 years as a result of earlier RFPs in 2001, 2005, 2006, 2008, and 2009.

Current farms range in size from 2 acres to 35 acres, and include a vineyard and winery, intensive vegetable production, a pick-your-own berry farm, livestock (meat goats, sheep, pigs, turkeys, layers, and broilers), and medicinal herbs.

The Countryside Initiative is a three-way public-private partnership. As "owner," CVNP is ultimately responsible for the care and management of the farms operating on parkland. The Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy, a non-profit organization, provides technical information and guidance on sustainable agriculture to both CVNP and farmers in the park. Selected farmers become responsible for practical day-to-day stewardship of their farm property and for managing them as successful business enterprises.

The farms available for leasing in 2011 are among the best in the Countryside Initiative in terms of soils, scale, and location. Both are situated in the midst of tens of thousands of potential customers and lend themselves to diverse, integrated, and intensive production of fruit, vegetable, or livestock for direct, local, retail sales. On-farm processing and marketing are attractive options for the current offerings as well.

Edgar Farm is a 32 acre farm located at 6885 Canal Rd., Valley View, Ohio.

Holland Farm is a 26 acre farm located at 1019 State Rte. 303, Peninsula, Ohio.

For additional information, including details about the Countryside Initiative and the Edgar and Holland farms, go to www.cvcountryside.org or call (330) 657-2542.

Darwin Kelsey is the Executive Director of the Countryside Conservancy. He can be reached at dkelsey@cvcountryside.org.

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Food Safety Legislation

What it means for you Part 2

By Gary Cox

In the last issue, I explained some of the impacts of the “Food Safety Modernization Act” (hereinafter “Act”) that was signed into law in December 2010. Under this new legislation, CSA’s, roadside stands, farmers’ markets, and other “direct sales platforms” (even if the sale occurs at a location other than the farm) are not required to register with the FDA as a “facility.” Another important feature of the Act is that a producer would be exempt from the HACCP requirements of the Act if (1) the total sales of its products directly to “qualified end users” (e.g., consumers, and those restaurants and retail food establishments that are located in the same state or within 275 miles of the producer) exceeds the total sales of its products to all other purchasers (e.g., distributors, warehouses, auction barns, etc.), and (2) its total sales to qualified end users and all other purchasers combined do not exceed \$500,000.

In this article, I want to highlight some of the other provisions of the Act that pertain to fruit and vegetable growers. Specifically, Section 6105 of the Act authorizes the Secretary of the FDA to issue a proposed regulation and a final regulation that deals with “science-based minimum standards for the safe production and harvesting” of fruits and vegetables. These standards are required to “provide sufficient flexibility” for all types of entities engaged in production and harvesting. They would include standards for “soil amendments, hygiene, packaging, temperature controls, animals in the growing area, and water” use, and they must take into account and must consider “hazards that occur naturally,” whether those hazards are intended, unintended, or result from “acts of terrorism.” However, these standards would not apply to anyone who grows their own food for their own personal consumption.

Section 6105 gives the FDA the authority to “prioritize” which standards for which fruits and vegetables should be implemented first, based on their “known risks” and their “history and severity of foodborne illness outbreaks.” In other words, the riskier foods would get the first standards. The proposed rule would need to be issued after receiving input from the public from at least three public meetings and would need to be published “not later than 1 year”

from the effective date of the Act (which was effective on January 4, 2011). The final rule, on the other hand, would need to be adopted “1 year after the close of the comment period” of the proposed rule. However, the FDA would have the authority to exclude from such standards “small businesses” and “very small businesses” (terms that have not yet been defined) that produce and harvest fruits and vegetables that are of “low risk” and that “do not present a risk of serious adverse health.”

In addition to “small businesses” and “very small businesses,” farms that engage in “direct farm marketing” may be exempt on an annual basis from all of these “science-based minimum standards.” To qualify for this exemption, the farm during the previous three calendar years must have (1) average annual total sales of its products directly to “qualified end users” that exceeds the average annual total sales of its products to all other purchasers, and (2) its average annual total sales to qualified end users and all other purchasers combined do not exceed \$500,000. For farms that qualify for this “direct farm marketing” exemption, the farm would need to display “at the point of purchase” a label, placard, poster, sign, or other form of “notification” to the consumer specifying the name and business address of the farm where the “produce” was grown, or, if the farm is already subject to the FDA’s labeling requirements, include on the label itself the name and business address of the farm where the produce was grown.

In any event, Section 6105 makes it clear that FDA does not have the authority to “include any requirements that conflict with or duplicate the requirements of the national organic program” for operations that are certified organic. However, the FDA would have the authority of “providing the same level of public health protection” that would be available under “guidance documents” and “action levels” issued under the Act.

So, whether or not you are a certified organic grower of fruits and vegetables, you may expect some heightened regulation of your products. At a minimum, you would need to have at the place of sale some form of notification of your farm name and business address or, if you are already required to put labels on your product, your label would have to include the name and address of the farm where the product was grown. If you are not certified organic, you can expect some form of “science-based minimum” standard unless you can qualify under the “small” or “very small” business or “direct farm marketing” exemptions. Food that is produced for one’s

own personal consumption is not subject to regulation under Section 6105.

Gary Cox is General Counsel for the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund, a national non-profit 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.

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This Certified Organic Life: Elmwood Stock Farm

By Kate Schmidt

I assumed that Ann Bell Stone had known from the start that she belonged on a farm. Specifically, Elmwood Stock Farm, where she and her brother John were raised. Farming is in Ann's genes, born into a family that had been growing tobacco and raising beef cattle in central Kentucky for at least five generations. Therefore, I was slightly taken aback when Ann said that, unlike her brother, she had not always known she would be a farmer. She had first needed to figure out what it was that she didn't want to do, before the road led her back to the farm. Now though, she cannot imagine doing anything else.

Today, Ann and five members of her family manage one of the largest certified organic farm operations in Kentucky, a diversified 350 acre family farm, 312 of which are certified organic.

The impetus behind the Bell family's decision to diversify Elmwood Stock Farm in the early 1990s was a combination of their desire to move away from growing tobacco and their exposure to information regarding personal nutrition and livestock health. They began by growing a few basic vegetables and attempted to determine the most lucrative niche for the farm by experimenting with both wholesale and retail markets.

Enter Mac Stone, Ann's now-husband, who was managing the Research Farm at Kentucky State University and farming organically on his own when he and Ann met. Mac introduced the Bells to new organic production ideas, and they decided to pursue organic certification.

The family felt that certification was the best way to articulate their growing practices to their customers. Having a set of standards to follow and point to helps demonstrate how and why their methods are conscientious and sustainable and their products, safe and nutritious. Although the learning curve of organic certification was a challenge, Ann said that building their production from the soil up, taking a holistic approach, and continually assessing their systems has made them better-equipped to anticipate problems and deal with challenges as they arise.

Each year since becoming certified, the Bells have increased the size and diversity of the farm. This growing season, Elmwood Stock Farm plans to produce more than 70 different varieties of crops and raise certified organic beef cattle, turkeys, broilers, and layers. With the help of their dedicated farm labor and market helpers, Ann and her family will harvest produce and distribute CSA boxes; sell products at five different farmer markets; produce compost; rotate the livestock through the pastures; assess growing cycles; respond to climate, pest, and disease pressures; make wholesale deliveries to restaurants; speak at events; tend to the chickens and sheep; navigate the nuances of the NOP regulations and undergo their annual organic inspection; raise 100 turkeys for Thanksgiving tables; plan for the future; keep records; attend community development meetings to halt plans for the building of a highway that would bisect their farm, and, throughout it all, work to keep the farm fertile and productive, and the livestock healthy.

If I was slightly taken aback to hear that Ann didn't come to be a farmer along a straight path, I was downright *flabbergasted* to learn that she and her family ever manage to sleep!

Elmwood Stock Farm Organic Production Profile:

Location: Georgetown, KY

Certified Organic Acreage: 312

Certified Organic Crops, Livestock, and Products: Mixed vegetables, herbs, fresh cut flowers, edible flowers, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, alfalfa, corn, tobacco, rye, wheat, pasture, beef cattle, turkeys, broilers, layers/eggs

Certified Organic Since: 2000

Certified Organic by OEFFA Since: 2004

Organic Methods Emphasized: Crop diversification, building healthy soils through crop rotations, cover cropping, compost incorporation, resource conservation, rotational livestock grazing

Primary Markets: CSA (produce and meat shares), Lexington area farmers markets, and restaurants

People Involved: Three families (Mac and Ann Bell Stone, John and Melissa Bell, Cecil and Kay Bell), between 10-250 seasonal farm workers, farmers market helpers, and CSA distributors

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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 then, the LCSB has been meeting regularly developing animal care standards.

Beef, Dairy, Veal, Goat, and Sheep Standards

On February 22, the LCSB adopted standards for dairy, beef, sheep, and goats. A two week public comment period for these sections of the standards was open through March 10.

OEFFA and many OEFFA members submitted comments concerning the dairy and goat standards. The standards were written to require all dairy producers selling milk to provide milking facilities and housing designed and maintained in com-

pliance with the federal Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) and meet Grade A production requirements. As a result of the comments the board received, they voted to remove this language at their April 5 meeting, allowing the continued production of Grade B milk, and milk produced for home consumption and value-added products, such as soap and lotion.

Additionally, on March 2, the LCSB adopted standards for veal calves, including a controversial language change which removed the requirement that veal calves in individual stalls be able to “turn around.”

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) indicated that the board’s decision was a violation of a June agreement reached between HSUS and eight agricultural trade organizations, including the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, which kept a HSUS-backed measure off of the ballot last November.

After receiving 4700 comments, most in favor of allowing veal calves to turn around, the LCSB reversed their March 2 decision and reinserted the turn around language at their April 5 meeting.

Other Species Standards

The board has also reviewed draft standards for equine, alpacas, and llamas, which received approval on April 5, opening a two week public comment period. Standards for swine, layers, broilers, and turkeys have been adopted and will be filed with the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) when all other species standards have been approved. They are likely to go into effect in July.

Livestock Board Communications

The LCSB has formed a communications working group, comprised of representatives from farm organizations and OSU Extension, to help develop a plan for educating farmers about the new standards, ensuring that they are communicated clearly, and making sure that farmers have resources available to get the answers they need about how the standards will impact them. OEFFA has been invited to participate in this group, and will work to make sure our members have the information they need to be in compliance with the state’s new animal care standards.

What You Can Do

(1) *Contact the Livestock Care Standards Board.* For more information, or to contact the LCSB, go to: <http://ohiolivestockcarestandardsboard.gov/>.

(2) *Contact us.* If you would like to see a draft of the standards, our written comments, sample talking points, or would like more information about the process, please contact us. 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.

(3) *Attend a LCSB meeting.* To find out more about meeting times and locations, or to be put a list to receive meeting notices, contact Mike Bailey at (614) 644-5812 or mbailey@agri.ohio.gov.



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Organic Certification Cost Share Data Published

On February 9, the National Organic Program (NOP) published updated financial information on its two organic certification cost-share programs: the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) and National Organic Certification Cost Share Programs (NOCCSP). The publication, which is updated twice yearly, provides a state-by-state overview of all program activity from 2008 through the present. According to the NOP, allocations to organic cost share programs ranged from \$5,000 to \$1,050,000 per state in 2011. The programs experienced a 10 percent increase in participation and in the funds disbursed between 2009 and 2010. In 2010, over 5,000 organic producers from 48 states participated for a total funding amount of over \$5 million.

The NOCCSP, typically administered by state departments of agriculture, reimburses eligible producers and handlers for up to 75 percent of their annual organic certification costs, up to a maximum payment of \$750 per year, and must be certified by a USDA accredited certifying agent, such as OEFFA.

NOSB Sets Fall Meeting

The NOP has announced the fall 2011 meeting of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). It will be held November 29 through December 2 at the Hilton Savannah DeSoto in Savannah, Georgia.

House Organic Caucus Formed

The House Organic Caucus has been registered as a Congressional Member Organization for the 112th Congress. The bipartisan caucus will help members of Congress and their staffs that have an interest in organic agriculture stay up to date on issues through industry presentations and encourage collaborations when working on organic issues.

Final Rule Extends Allowable Use of Synthetic Methionine

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has adopted as final an interim rule that extends the use of synthetic methionine in organic poultry production until October 2012. Based upon the NOSB recommendation and comments received, the NOP adopted the interim rule without change.

NOP Revokes Accreditation of Two Certifiers

On March 2, the USDA announced that two organic certifiers—Certified Organic Inc. (COI) and Guaranteed Organic Certification Agency (GOCA)—are no longer accredited to the NOP. As a result, the companies do not have authority to certify operations as meeting the USDA organic standards. The Agricultural Marketing Service found both agencies failed to address noncompliance items. Operations formerly certified under COI or GOCA are being certified by other accredited certifying agents or have surrendered their certifications.



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2011-2012 OEFFA BOARD ELECTIONS RESULTS

OEFFA board members were elected for the 2011-2012 term at the February membership business meeting, held during OEFFA's 32nd annual conference. The board, which is also comprised of chapter representatives, brings together the talents and commitments of farmers, restaurateurs, farmers' market managers, and consumers. The OEFFA Certification board is comprised of those members of the board who do not have holdings in any entity certified by OEFFA.

PRESIDENT: DARREN MALHAME, UPPER ARLINGTON

TREASURER: JOHN SOWDER, COLUMBUS

SECRETARY: MARY IDA COMPTON, CINCINNATI

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: MIKE LAUGHLIN, JOHNSTOWN

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: CHARLIE FRYE, SULLIVAN

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: AMY BODIKER, COLUMBUS

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Edward Snavelly, Fredericktown

Lake Effect Chapter Representative

Mardy Townsend, Windsor

Real FOOD Chapter Representative

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Joan Richmond, Bellville

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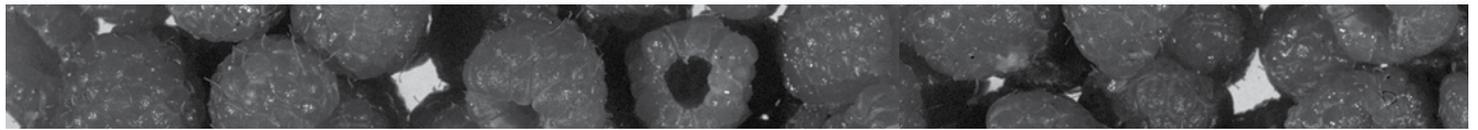
Tom Redfern, Athens

Southwest Ohio Chapter Representative

Steve Edwards, Cincinnati

OK River Valley Chapter Representative

Steve Daugherty, Ripley



Growing Brambles Successfully

By Dr. Gary Gao

Raspberries and blackberries are collectively known as brambles. There is strong consumer demand for blackberries and raspberries. Brambles are a high value crop, which can produce 4,000 to 6,000 lbs or more per acre while others produce around 2,500 lbs per acre. There is a good potential for profit if farmers can grow high quality, fresh berries and market them successfully.

Successful bramble production depends on several factors, such as cultivar and site selection, proper planting techniques, fertilization, pruning, and pest management. It is very important to select disease-resistant cultivars, whenever possible. Brambles require 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight per day. Soils with good drainage are critical for success and it is highly recommended to have the soil tested and amended before planting.

About 1,000 to 2,500 plants are needed per acre depending on the type of bramble and the spacing. Additional costs for trellises, fertilizer, labor, water, and other materials should be accounted for. The pick-your-own approach is a good way to get around the demand and high costs of labor. Cultivar selection and production systems are other ways to reduce costs and increase profit.

Annual pruning is required for good fruit size, more consistent yield, effective pest management, and plant winter hardiness. The ideal time for dormant pruning of brambles is in March. Summer tipping is also needed for black and purple raspberries and blackberries. Some everbearing types, such as Heritage, can be pruned to the ground in March for a fall crop. This is one of the best ways to reduce labor costs and produce high quality berries.

An effective pest management program is critical for successful bramble production. Japanese beetle, raspberry cane borer, red-necked cane borer, and raspberry crown borer are some of the common pests. Fungal diseases, such as anthracnose, cane blight, orange rust, and Phytophthora root rot, can also cause serious problems.

For more information about growing brambles, go to Ohio State University Extension's eStore at <http://estore.osu-extension.org/>. Several good reference guides are available, including Bulletin 940, "Midwest Home Fruit Production Guide;" Bulletin 782, "Brambles: Production Management and Marketing;" Bulletin 780, "Controlling Diseases and Insects in Home Fruit Plantings," and Bulletin 506B2, "Midwest Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide."

Dr. Gary Gao is an associate professor and a small fruit research and extension specialist with OSU South Centers in Piketon. He is the editor and a co-author of the award-winning "Midwest Home Fruit Production Guide." If you are starting a new bramble operation or have an existing bramble operation, Gary can be reached at Gao.2@cfaes.osu.edu.

Photos by Ken Chamberlain



By George Roark

As temperatures begin to warm, spring fever can take over and coax you into planting warm weather plants outdoors before the danger of frost is past. A cold snap can stunt or kill plants that are put into the ground too early. So pass up the temptation to buy cucumber, pepper, or tomato plants now and channel your energy into starting seeds indoors.

There are some very good reasons to start seeds indoors. Start planning now to enjoy these benefits:

- » Save money!
- » Share the fun and fascination with the family!
- » Grow vegetable varieties that aren't available from local nurseries or box stores!

First, you need to learn the last frost date for your area to determine when to start the seeds (Google the date for your area). For Medina, Ohio where I live, the last frost date is approximately May 25.

Next, determine when you should start each vegetable or flower indoors. Start dates are determined by how long a seed takes to germinate and when it needs to go into the ground relative to the last frost date. A great resource for finding these dates is the Seed Starting Calculator at www.johnnyseeds.com. Just plug in the last frost date and the calculator will provide the start date for a wide variety of seeds. For example, in my area I should start tomatoes April 6, peppers April 13, cucumbers May 4, and squash May 11.

Now the fun part—go shopping for seeds! It's amazing how many shapes, sizes, and colors of vegetables are available when you start from seed.

You have a few options for planting your seeds. The easiest route is to use peat pellets that expand with water to form individual seeds tubes. You can buy a plastic tray that includes 72 pellets and a plastic greenhouse dome for about \$6. Another option is to place seed starter mix in a plastic tray or recycled plastic food container and cover it with a plastic bag. Follow the seed packet instructions.

To germinate, the seeds need heat and moisture. A good temperature range is 75-85 degrees. A common seed starting location is on top of a refrigerator in the



house. If you don't have a warm location, consider buying a plant heating pad. These don't use much electricity and will allow you to start seeds in the basement.

Once the seeds sprout they will need a source of light. At this time of year a south facing window works well, or consider placing the seedlings under a fluorescent light fixture with a warm and cool white tube or two grow tubes. Keep the bulbs about 1 inch above the seedlings—they like lots of light!

Once the plants have their first set of true leaves, remove the plastic dome. Feed the seedlings with either an organic or a half-strength synthetic fertilizer every other week. Be careful not to overwater the seedlings. The mix should be moist but not soaking wet.

Once the seedlings mature and the weather warms, you can harden off the plants so that they acclimate to outdoor conditions. Weather permitting, move the plants into a bright but shady location that is protected from the wind, first for a couple hours and then gradually increasing to a full day over a two week period.

Your plants are now ready for the garden. In addition to satisfying that early urge to garden, you also earned bragging rights for those unusual vegetable varieties. Come harvest time, those vegetables will taste extra good!

George Roark is an avid vegetable, fruit, and flower gardener in Zone 5 Ohio. He chronicles his annual gardening projects on his web site at www.thegardenhound.com. George can be reached at george@thegardenhound.com.

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The Outward Focused Gardener: Community Gardens

By Wes Duren

*Neighborhood Gardens
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The above Haiku encapsulates the essence of community gardening. In an age where individualism seems to dominate, many are reaching out for ways to reconnect with their fellow man, as well as Mother Earth.

Growing food not only brings people together, but also reconnects us with soil and the origins of our food. Community gardens can also help to reduce travel time to and from grocery stores as well, saving gas and reducing our carbon foot print.

Few activities bridge the gap between young and old like community gardening, because it is an activity that almost anyone can enjoy, no matter what age, race, gender, or level of ability. We can empower ourselves and our community when we work together to cultivate hope, health, and holistic living through edible gardening.

We have seen that community gardens are a great way to serve those in need, by providing nutritious produce for food pantries that may otherwise only have access to canned and processed foods. Such gardens can be built on vacant lots within inner city communities or in suburban neighborhoods.

There are many simple considerations once you have decided to take the plunge into community gardening. The location you select must have at least six hours of direct sunlight per day. Access to water is imperative, whether you are using a faucet from a neighbor's home, catching rain water in rain barrels from a nearby roof or tool shed, or working with the local fire department to fill large water containers weekly. Compost and mulch are other essential ingredients in successful community gardens. Having a solid commitment from volunteers can be challenging, so creating incentives like a

share of the harvest may help to attract more consistent helpers. Many businesses may be willing to donate or provide low cost tools, seeds, and other gardening supplies if they know you are building a garden to serve the community. Offer to put company names on a sign in front of the garden if they can donate materials.

Beautification is an important element in community gardens. By planting many varieties of perpetually blooming annuals and perennials throughout the community garden, you will enhance the seasonal interest of the garden areas, transforming an often dull looking vegetable garden into a colorful and fragrant point of pride for the community. Flowers can be cut and arranged in bouquets to be shared at local hospitals and nursing homes. Many blooming herbs, annuals, and perennials are also edible, and can be selected for their palatability. Flowering perennials and annuals are often the best form of pest control, luring pests away from valuable crops, or outright repelling them from your garden.

Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, local businesses, student organizations, and nonprofit organizations are always looking for community service projects. You may be able to solicit their help with the building and maintenance of a community garden. Also, such groups may be able to help build bird houses, benches, tool sheds, arbors, trellis, and other useful features that will enhance the appearance and function of the community garden. Such groups may only be able to work for a short time, so having a plan in place before they come is important, as well as devoted community garden members that can help oversee the projects.

Successful community gardens take a certain level of leadership and commitment. It is crucial to have an individual or individuals who are willing to take charge in the organization of the community garden from seed to harvest. Such leaders will need to plan days for bed preparation, plantings, mulching, bed maintenance, and harvest. Having a list of every participant's email and phone number will make it easier to rally the troops when help is required.

Community gardens plant seeds of peace wherever they sprout. The outward focused garden is a fun and exciting way to join together with your friends, neighbors, coworkers, family, and others to create and nurture something bigger than ourselves, and reap the joy and abundance that comes with that collaboration.

Wes Duren is the Landscape and Construction Vice President for Marvin's Organic Gardens. He can be reached at (513) 932-3319 or wes@marvinsorganicgardens.com.



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BOOKS, GUIDES, AND REPORTS

Organic Seed Report—The Organic Seed Alliance has released a new report, *State of Organic Seed: Advancing the Viability and Integrity of Organic Seed Systems*. The report, available for free download, is the first comprehensive analysis of the organic seed sector. It shows that although the National Organic Program requires the use of organic seeds when commercially available, the organic seed industry has not caught up to meet the increased demand for organic seed.

 <http://www.seedalliance.org/Publications/>

WEBSITES AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Presentation—A recent presentation by Dr. Tracy Leskey, entomologist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Appalachian Fruit Research Station, is available for online viewing, and addresses this growing pest problem.

 <http://freshandlocalcsa.com/videopage.html>

Rural America Data Set—The USDA's Economic Research Service released the *Atlas of Rural and Small Town America* data set. The interactive mapping application, provides spatial information (national to county level) of socioeconomic factors on four broad categories of: people, jobs, agriculture, and county classifications.

 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/ruralatlas/>

Food Environment Atlas—The USDA has recently released an updated version of its *U.S. Food Environment Atlas*, an online mapping tool that compares U.S. counties in terms of their "food environment," or the set of factors that help determine and reflect a community's access to affordable, healthy food. The updated atlas assembles 168 indicators of the food environment, and allows users to visualize and geographically compare a wide range of demographic, health, and food access characteristics.

 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/FoodAtlas/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Environmental Education Grants—The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a Request for Proposals for its 2011 Environmental Education Grants Program. The purpose of the grant program is to increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues. Approximately \$194,300 per EPA region is available. Applications due May 2.

 <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html>

Farmers Market Great Barn Giveaway—Yankee Barn Homes, the Farmers Market Coalition, and the American Farmland Trust are offering a national contest inviting farmers markets to share their story for a chance to win a post-and-beam barn specially designed and built by Yankee Barn Homes. Deadline is May 16.

 <http://www.yankeebarnhomes.com/index.php/the-great-barn-giveaway.html>

Professional Development Grants—The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program has issued a Call for Preproposals for their 2011 Professional Development Program. The program provides funds for professional development projects that provide sustainable agriculture training to agricultural professionals and educators in the Cooperative Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, other governmental agencies, and educators in the profit and non-profit sector serving the food and fiber system. Up to \$75,000 available per project. Deadline is May 18.

 <http://sare.org/ncrsare/PDP/pdp.htm>

America's Favorite Farmers Market—The American Farmland Trust is now accepting applications for its 2011 America's Favorite Farmers Markets contest. Promotional tools are also available.

 http://action.farmland.org/site/PageServer?pagename=farmers_market_managers_tools

Grant Advising for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers—The Michael Fields Agricultural Institute is now offering free grant advising and assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers. The advisor will help first-time grant seekers choose a grant program, outline a work plan to meet the deadlines, and prepare the proposal. For more information, call Dierdre Birmingham at (608) 219-4279 or email deirdreb@mindspring.com



OEFFA-Kenyon Certificate Program in Ecological Agriculture Gives Students Hands-On Experience

On February 19, OEFFA recognized three Kenyon College students who completed the OEFFA-Kenyon Certificate Program in Ecological Agriculture.

Daniel Tebes completed his internship with mentor John Marsh of Zion Gate Farm in Gambier, Ohio. Marika West and Sara Bush worked with mentors Bruce and Lisa Richard of Fox Hollow Farm in Fredericktown, Ohio.

"Students repeatedly describe their experience in the program as the defining moment of their Kenyon careers by enabling them to meaningfully integrate coursework with life beyond the college gates," said Dr. Howard Sacks of the Kenyon College Rural Life Center.

The certificate program works to grow the next crop of organic farmers through an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach which combines formal coursework and a 10 week on-farm summer internship with OEFFA farmers. Under the guidance of Kenyon faculty and skillful farmers, students develop their knowledge base and gain practical experience in sustainable farming.

"A liberal arts education is a perfect complement to sustainable farming. Both require holistic ways of thinking and problem solving," said OEFFA's Executive Director Carol Goland. "I'm so pleased we have this partnership with Kenyon and for the last four years have been changing lives as a result."

For more information, contact Dr. Howard Sacks at (740) 427-5850 or rurallife@kenyon.edu.



The Urban Organic Gardener

Ruth A. Evan

Container Gardening

I plant some of my vegetables in containers. I am able to place them wherever is convenient such as at the back door or along a well-used path for easy and quick maintenance and harvest. As they are raised above the surface of the ground, the dirt in the containers warms earlier in the spring and cools later in the fall, extending the season. They are easy to cover on a cool night or protect all winter. In my case, containers eliminate competition from tree roots.

I choose the largest containers I can find and almost never use a container less than 12 inches tall. I check to make sure each container allows for sufficient drainage and drill more holes if needed. Next I cover the holes with newsprint (no glossy or colored print) and add gravel, sticks, and sand to help with water collection and movement. If I'm not in a hurry to plant, I compost in the container, adding sand, potting soil, and worms as I go. When it is half full, I add potting soil. I add some dirt from the garden as well and perhaps granular fertilizer; I like to buy OMRI approved materials. Then I'm ready to plant!

Two years ago I planted kale in the largest container. It lived over the winter and grew strongly last summer. What a beauty it was! Part of it went to seed and I see seedlings now under what is left of the plant. It was great to harvest kale early last spring, through the summer and fall, and into this winter. I even found a few tender leaves to harvest in February.

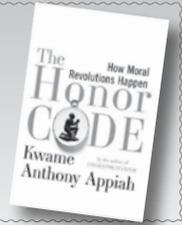
Tomatoes do well in the largest containers. I plant lettuce and other greens in front and basil behind. The basil seems to appreciate filtered sun during the hottest part of a summer day. I've also grown many other herbs, peas, eggplant, beans, par-cel, and carrots in pots.

Some routines are a little different with pots. Because I use a potting medium, I add instant compost (kitchen scraps mixed with water and chopped in a blender kept for that purpose) and liquid seaweed regularly. I renew the medium yearly, using what I dig out in other parts of the garden. Moisture also requires attention. On hot, dry summer days, containers need to be watered once a day and maybe twice.

Container gardening can add to the convenience of gardening, allow urban gardeners to maximize small spaces, and extend the season in both directions. It can be a helpful addition or alternative to planting directly in the ground.

Ruth Evan is a home gardener in Berea, Ohio. She can be reached at evanr@wowway.com.

BOOK REVIEW BY GERRY HENDEY



The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen

By Kwame Anthony Appiah

Published by WW Norton & Co., September 2010

When I first saw the title, I was skeptical and intrigued. Skeptical because history is full of examples when honor has been used as pretext for aggression and murder. Intrigued because the book's title challenged my assumption. I was curious about what I may have missed. I have been frustratingly mystified at the lack of a workable coherence, a unified understanding, as to what, when, and how society changes. Does honor play a significant role as the title suggests? Is honor an unopened door in our moral revolution?

The author argues that cultural change happens when societies redefine what is honorable. Appiah develops this thesis by examining honor in the context of four cultural revolutions: the end of duels, foot binding, and the Atlantic slave trade, and finally, the continuing social practice of honor killings. In each of these movements there was already a moral and rational argument for change but the reform did not become effective and permanent until honor was redefined—to act in the old way became dishonorable.

What relevance or not do his insights have for us as farmers and conscientious consumers? Do we need to redefine honor? Am I acting as a local farmer or as an informed consumer not because of a lifestyle choice but out of duty to honor the earth? Does this honor supersede other values and commitments?

The author would argue that it is only when honor is linked to a higher or broader code of ethics that moral revolutions take hold. Like other movements, we have a plethora of moral and rational arguments. Like other movements, we seem to be charging at windmills year in and year out. The author argues that cultural change happens when it becomes a duty, and not to adopt the new standard would be a dishonor to oneself and one's community.

When people used to ask me why I farmed when there is little financial reward and a tremendous amount of work involved, I said it was a lifestyle. Yet now it seems that it has more to do with honor. My code of honor has expanded to include honoring the earth, an honor that a generation before equated with mindless tree-hugging. Now for me, to engage in profit by poison is unthinkable as it would be a betrayal of loyalty, a dishonor. Sustainable farming has become the greater duty. Do sustainable, local food systems need to be redefined as a duty and not a lifestyle, in order for a moral revolution to take hold?

Gerry Hendey lives in Franklin County. He operates Gerry's Garden, selling market garden vegetables through a CSA. Gerry can be reached at gerryhendey@yahoo.com.



Farm to Table

Savoring the Seasons

by Trish Mumme

Eggs and Greens for Spring

Got eggs? Signs advertising “fresh eggs for sale” have been popping up along country roads in the last month. With the lengthening days of spring, hens crank into full production. So whether you get your free range, pastured eggs from your backyard flock, the farmer down the road, or the grocery store, now is the time to enjoy them. Spring is also the time for home-grown fresh greens. Enjoy the first garden spinach teamed up with eggs in quiches, frittatas, and soufflés. Here’s one example.

Spinach and Carrot Quiche

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 2 tsp. vegetable oil | 1/2 cup milk |
| 1 medium onion, diced | 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg |
| 10 oz. chopped spinach (fresh or frozen, thawed) | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/3 cup shredded carrots | 1/4 tsp. black pepper |
| 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack or Swiss cheese | 1 9 inch pie crust |
| 3 eggs | |

Sauté onion and garlic in oil in a skillet over medium heat for about 3 minutes. Add spinach and carrots and cook until the spinach liquid has evaporated. Remove from heat and pour into pie shell. Beat eggs, milk, and seasonings with a whisk or in a blender. Pour into pie shell and top with cheese. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350° until a toothpick inserted in the center of the quiche comes out clean.

B Y P O P U L A R D E M A N D

Butternut Squash Lasagna

This recipe, developed by Mustard Seed Market, was featured at the 2010 and 2011 OEFFA conferences, and received rave reviews. We’ve received lots of requests for the recipe, and Mustard Seed Market was generous enough to share it! They make this in large batches, but you can cut down the recipe to fit your needs.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 12 lbs butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and shredded | 1 cup all purpose unbleached flour |
| 2 ½ lbs sheet pasta (about 18 strips) | 12 cloves garlic, minced |
| 12 cups 2% milk | 4 shallots, peeled and minced |
| 8 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded | 1 ½ tsp. salt |
| 4 cups fresh basil, cut into thin ribbons | ½ tsp. pepper |
| 2 cups unsalted butter | 1/8 tsp. nutmeg |
| 2 cups parmesan cheese | 5 sprays canola spray oil |

Sauté the garlic and shallots in 1 cup butter. Add squash and cook lightly to caramelize. Spread mixture on tray covered in parchment to cool. Boil pasta sheets until done. Drain. Make cream sauce by melting 1 cup butter. Add flour and cook until light brown, stirring constantly. Slowly add the milk to the mixture and stir until the sauce is thick with no lumps. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Spray the pan with oil and build your pasta. Place about 1 ½ cups of squash mixture on the bottom of the pan. Then, add a layer of pasta, followed by a layer of sauce, then a layer of mozzarella, a layer of squash, and finally a thin layer of parmesan. Repeat. Then add the layer of fresh basil. On top of the basil, add a third layer of pasta, sauce, mozzarella, squash, and parmesan as described above. Finish with the remaining mozzarella and parmesan. Wrap in saran wrap and cover in foil. Bake at 300° for 40 minutes. Uncover and continue baking until brown, bubbly, and delicious.

Local Medicine: The Dandelion

By Leah Rond

As the earth's annual trip around the sun brings back longer days and the greening of the lawn, I find myself anticipating that bright, cheerful appearance of the lowly dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*). That bane of the suburban lawn is one of my favorite gifts of spring. Besides the sheer beauty of the joyful yellow after months of gray and brown, the pollinators love them and they have many medicinal and culinary uses.

All parts of the dandelion can be eaten—the flowers, the leaves, and the roots. Everything from cookies to a coffee-like drink can be made from this plant. It is loaded with Vitamins A and C and rich in minerals such as calcium, potassium, and iron. As a first aid plant, the flowers can be used to bring relief for a wide range of problems, from sunburn to sinus headaches. The flowers can be made into a simple tea, compress, skin toner, or infused oil. The leaves are used as a medicinal tea and the root is used to support the skin, the liver, and digestion.

Here are a couple of easy things to try with dandelions this spring:

Dandelion Sauté

- 4 cups chopped dandelion leaves
- 2 cups grated wild or regular carrots
- Several cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbs. wine
- 1 Tbs. tamari soy sauce
- 3 cups chopped onions
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- Pepper to taste

Sauté the onions in the olive oil. When soft, add the dandelions, carrot, garlic, wine, and soy sauce. Cook for 10 to 20 minutes until all the flavors blend.

Recipe from Identifying and Harvesting Plants in Wild (and Not so Wild) Places.

Dandelion Infused Oil/Salve

Dandelion flowers (Green part removed. This takes a bit of time and gives your hand a lovely yellow tint.)

- Olive oil
- Mason jar
- Ring lid

Loosely fill a jar with dandelion petals. Pour oil over petals until completely covered. Stir to make sure all petals are covered. Place paper towel over jar and screw on ring lid. Let sit for two weeks. Check daily the first week to see if more oil needs to be added. After two weeks, strain the oil which should be a deep yellow color and compost the flowers. This oil can be applied to cuts, scrapes, and bruises. It can also be rubbed on sore muscles, applied to painful sinuses, or used as a base for a salve.

So, instead of cursing when those showy heads make their appearance, go out and pick some and try some local medicine from your own yard.

Leah Rond is the owner of Bad Dog Acres and a certified herbalist that has worked with clients for more than 12 years. She started her herbalist studies as a child with her grandmother and has always loved to pick dandelions. Leah can be reached at lprond@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

High Tunnels for Season Extension

Wednesday, April 13—9:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m.

Sauder Heritage Inn

22611 State Rte. 2, Archbold, Ohio

This workshop includes a morning session on tunnel types, best crops to grow, and more with OSU vegetable crops extension specialist Matt Kleinhenz. The afternoon session takes place at nearby Kinsman Farms where attendees will see high tunnel structures and learn about site preparation. Cost: \$45. For more information, call (419) 337-9210 or email labarge.1@osu.edu.

Permaculture and Agroforestry Lecture

Friday, April 15—7 a.m.

Glen Helen Ecology Institute

405 Corry St., Yellow Springs, Ohio

Join Mark Shepard for this introduction to permaculture, agroforestry, and ecological living. Mark will share experiences gleaned from the conversion of a 100 acre monoculture farm into a perennial crop permaculture Eden. Cost: Free. For more information, call (937) 470-9153 or email radrootsfarm@gmail.com.

Sustainability and Profits in Small Spaces

Friday, April 15—10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Youngstown, Ohio

Join PASA, Grow Youngstown, the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation, and NCAT for this workshop designed especially for urban farmers. Andy Pressman, Agriculture Specialist with NCAT, will describe what it takes to use SPIN farming, permaculture, and biointensive methods to maximize efficiency in your existing space. Topics will include business planning, site design, bed preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting techniques, tool choice, and marketing considerations. The lecture will be followed by hands-on work. Cost: \$15 PASA members, \$25 non-members. Lunch included. For more information, go to <http://bit.ly/erqags>.

Permaculture and Agroforestry Design Workshop

Saturday, April 16—9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Radical Roots Farm

3343 W. Jackson Rd., Yellow Springs, Ohio

Join Mark Shepard to learn about the principles and techniques of permaculture and agroforestry. Topics will include alley cropping, silvopasture, multi-story forest cropping, riparian buffers, windbreaks, and integrated speciality crops. The workshop includes classroom presentation and hands-on experience. Cost: \$50. Lunch included. Free camping available. For more information, call (937) 470-9153 or email radrootsfarm@gmail.com.

Women and Tools Workshop

Saturday, April 16—8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Blue Rock Station

1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio

Learn how to use the ten most common garden tools, with an emphasis on women's needs. For more information, call (740) 674-4300 or go to <http://www.bluerockstation.com>.



GMOs: Who Profits, Who Bears the Cost?

Sunday, April 17—2 p.m.

Civic Garden Center

Cincinnati, Ohio

Join OEFFA's Southwest Chapter and speaker Dr. David Fankhauser, biology and chemistry professor at Clermont College, to learn about the consequences of our food choices. Cost: Free. For more information or to RSVP, email swoeffa@gmail.com.

Herbal Study Group

Saturday, April 23—9-11 a.m.

Tuesday, May 10—1-3 p.m.

Saturday, May 28—9-11 a.m.

Stratford Ecological Center

3083 Liberty Rd., Delaware, Ohio

Each month, Stratford's herbal study group examines a different herbal topic and works together in the herb garden, tending, harvesting, and learning from the plants. This is a hands-on, participant-led group. All skill levels welcome. Cost: \$10/year. For more information, go to <http://www.stratfordecologicalcenter.org/programs/>.

Earth Day at Blue Rock Station

Saturday, April 23—1-4 p.m.

Blue Rock Station

1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio

Take a tour of Blue Rock Station, home of Ohio's first Earthship, to learn about green building, green cleaning, goat milking, rare breed chickens, and natural gardening. Cost: \$10. Includes refreshments. For more information, call (740) 674-4300 or go to <http://www.bluerockstation.com>.

Fabulous Lawns and Landscapes without Chemicals

Friday, April 29—8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Cleveland Botanical Garden

Cleveland, Ohio

Beautiful and healthy lawns, landscapes, playing fields, and public spaces do not need to rely on toxic pesticides and herbicides. Chip Osborne of Osborne Organics will discuss safe and affordable natural turf care, Alec McClellan of Good Nature Organic Lawn Care will describe new organic turf methods for homes and public spaces, Andy Pratt of the Cleveland Botanical Garden will discuss integrated pest management for perennials, and Barry Zucker of Beyond Pesticides Ohio will discuss the human and environmental impacts of pesticide use. Cost: \$25 for botanical garden members, \$35 for non-members. Refreshments included. For more information, call (216) 721-1600 or go to <http://www.cb garden.org/Events/LawnsLandscapeswithoutChemicals.html>.

Earthships 101

Saturday, April 30—1-4 p.m.

Blue Rock Station

1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio

Take a tour of Blue Rock Station, home of Ohio's first Earthship, to learn the techniques used to capture water, create indoor wetlands, make mud plaster, and use tires as structural material. Cost: \$55. For more information, call (740) 674-4300 or go to <http://www.bluerockstation.com>.

Annie's Project Workshops

Thursday, March 31-Thursday, May 5—6-9 p.m.

Morgan and Washington counties

Annie's Project, a multi-part risk management course offered by OSU Extension, is designed to strengthen women's role in modern farm enterprises. Annie's Project focuses on five broad aspects of risk management typical in the agricultural setting: human, financial, marketing, production, and legal. Cost: \$65. For more information, call (740) 962-4854 or email penrose.1@osu.edu.

Complete Seven Day Straw Bale Workshop

Saturday, May 28-Saturday, June 4

Blue Rock Station

1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio

Learn to build a 12 x 20 building with a living roof and finish work on last year's project, and get experience starting and completing a project. These projects will incorporate most of the skills and techniques needed to tackle bigger projects. Cost: \$475. Includes lunchtime discussion topics, guest speakers, and an off-site visit. For more information, call (740) 674-4300 or go to <http://www.bluerockstation.com>.

The Very, Very Basic Straw Bale Weekend Build

Saturday, July 2-Monday, July 4

Blue Rock Station

1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio

From start-to-finish we will learn all the skills necessary to build a small garden outbuilding, using the same skills required for a larger project. Participants will use recycled and salvaged materials, rammed earth tire foundations, and earth plastering. Cost: \$195. For more information, call (740) 674-4300 or go to <http://www.bluerockstation.com>.



Haulin' Hoof Farm Tour

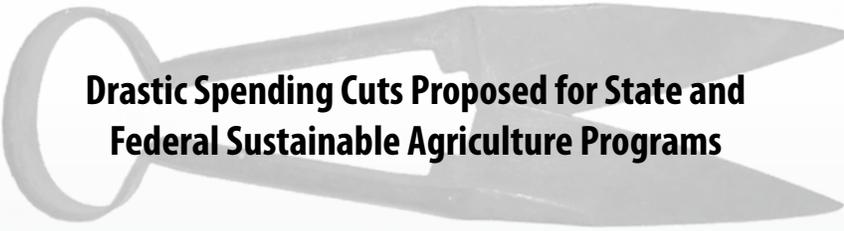
Sunday, July 10—3 p.m.

Haulin' Hoof Farm

New Marshfield, Ohio

Join OEFFA's Athens Chapter for a tour of Haulin' Hoof Farm, a small diversified family farm owned by Christopher and Valerie Fox, and their two daughters, Adallie and Elsie. The Fox family raises grass-fed beef and lamb, mixed vegetables, and fiber using sustainable farming methods. For more information, call (740) 517-1032 or email starlineorganics@live.com.

Visit www.oeffa.org for more information on upcoming events and activities.



Drastic Spending Cuts Proposed for State and Federal Sustainable Agriculture Programs

Budget battles are underway in Washington, D.C. and Columbus.

On February 19, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a government funding bill, House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1) that would slash more than \$60 billion from the federal budget for the last half of fiscal year 2011, including a 22 percent cut from the agriculture budget.

The bill unfairly targets programs that serve sustainable, organic, beginning, and minority farmers without making any cuts to commodity or crop insurance funding, two of the biggest line items in the agriculture budget.

The bill authorizes radical cuts to popular programs including the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). H.R. 1, which passed without one Democratic vote, would also slash about 10 percent from the 2011 budget for the Special Supplemental Feeding Program for Women, Infants and Children, commonly known as WIC.

The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA); Organic Transitions Research Program; Farm Service Conservation Loans; Office of Advocacy and Outreach, which coordinates policy and outreach to beginning, women, and minority farmers; and the Office of Tribal Relations Program would all be completely eliminated.

"These cuts are reckless and unfair," said Carol Go-land, OEFFA's Executive Director. "If cuts must be

made then everything must be on the table. Cuts must be fair, equitable and made based on the merits of each program," she said.

OEFFA was one of more than 150 organizations to sign on to a letter to the U.S. Senate urging them to reject the House's budget bill. At the time of this writing, the Democrat-controlled Senate has yet to act on the House-passed spending cuts.

Meanwhile, President Obama has released his budget proposal for 2012, which does not unduly cut organic agriculture programs but significantly reduces conservation program spending. The President's 2012 budget keeps funding for organic research at the same levels as 2010, and proposes budget increases for the National Organic Program (NOP) and the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. However, the budget includes permanent cuts to conservation programs like EQIP and CSP.

At the state level, on March 15, Ohio Governor John Kasich released his fiscal year 2012 and 2013 budget. The governor's budget includes a 9 percent cut in general funding to the Ohio Department of Agriculture, including a 10 percent cut to Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC), and a 63 percent cut to the Farmland Preservation Program. Ohio Proud and the state's county soil and water districts also face significant cuts under the budget proposal, which now heads to the legislature, where lawmakers will decide how to fill the state's \$8 billion budget shortfall.

3 easy ways

to stay up-to-date on food and farming events, workshops, resources and news



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To sign up, go to:
www.oeffa.org



Planning is underway for the 33rd annual OEFFA conference.

We're taking suggestions and ideas for conference titles, workshop topics, and workshop and keynote presenters. If you'd like to be part of workshop, food, book table, raffle, or kids' conference planning, please let us know. Workshop applications are also available. Don't wait to apply if you want to be considered. Contact Renee Hunt at renee@oeffa.org or (614) 421-2022 Ext. 205.

Have you got something to say about OEFFA or any of the articles you see here? We want to hear from you! Send your Letters to the Editor to newsletter@oeffa.org.

UN-CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: Half acre urban micro-farm near Westerville/ Hoover Reservoir. 3 BR home, garden, orchard, chickens, and coop. Contact Cheri in Franklin County at burtja117@gmail.com.

For Sale: Certified organic spelt cleanout. Small quantities, 1,000-2,000 or more. Reasonable prices. Contact Kenn in Indiana at (260) 341-3871 or fpseeds@adamswells.com.

For Sale: Jersey cow with dwarf gene produces miniature calves, bred to Lowline Angus bull. Dexter and Lowline Angus/Dexter cows and heifers. Contact Steve in Hamilton County at (513) 706-4792.

For Sale: Holland Rotary One Transplanter, 3 pt, carousel, water. \$1,400. Contact Steve in Hamilton County at (513) 706-4792.

Help Wanted: The New Agrarian Center is looking for an experienced full-time, seasonal farmer to manage 70 acre farm in Oberlin. Salary: \$15,000 plus 40% of profits. Contact Chester in Lorain County at (440) 647-3927 or bowling.43@osu.edu.

Help Wanted: New health center in NE Columbus seeking experienced farmer or gardener to develop up to 4 acres of gardens and market plan with nutrition education component. Stipend is likely. Contact Donna in Franklin County at (740) 587-2569 or herringd@mchs.com.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION PRIZE WINNERS

Thanks to everyone who turned in their evaluation form after February's conference! We value your feedback and will use the comments and ideas to help us plan for next year.

Completed evaluations were entered into a prize drawing. This year's winners are

**DEBBIE MILLER
AND
KRISTEN POOL**

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"Give fools their gold, and knaves their power; let fortune's bubbles rise and fall; who sows a field, or trains a flower, or plants a tree, is more than all."

-John Greenleaf Whittier

WELCOME NEW OEFFA MEMBERS

as of 3/14/2011

BUSINESS

Dan & Leah Adams, *Earthineer*
Elizabeth Blessing & Matt Ewer, *GreenB.E.A.N. Delivery*
Darren Grieves, *Third & Hollywood*
Ellen Grinsfelder, *Inn & Spa at Cedar Falls*
Rick Lopez, *Knead*
Dan Masters, *Hiland Naturals*
Kohn Merriman, *Hartzler Dairy Farm*
Richard Cartwright & Mary Meyer, *Water Your Landscape*
Matt Prokopchek, *Trattoria Roma*
Jonah Schneider, *Center City International Trucks, Inc.*
Victor Trost, *Trace Plus Organic*

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Erin Chacey, *Green Columbus*
Jim Converse, *Common Wealth & NEO Food Hub*
Doug Doohan, *OSU OARDC*
Don Guindon, *Olney Friends School*
Scott Lenthe & Lynn Wells, *Zane State College*
Krista Magaw, *Tecumseh Land Trust*
Roy & Kelley Fitts Messing, *KSU Cooperative Development Center*

FAMILY FARM

Dustin & Erin Bender
Jeni & Doug Blackburn
Kristina & Gilbert Bundy, *Bundy Farm*
Brian Coen
Deborah Dean, *Dean's Greenhouse*
Brian & Charlotte Downes, *Old Orchards Farm*
Robert Ebright & Ness Mayker, *Valhalla Acres Fiber Farm*
Maggie Fenton & Mike Furbee, *Berryfield Farms*
Wendell & Rebecca Filbrun, *The Maker's Meadow*
Mike & Sherry Foran, *Fern Ridge Farm*
Joanna Hattery & John Borden, *Hattery Farm*
Jeff Holbrook
Lila Hope Greer, *South Forty*
Valerie & Doug Kinsman
Jim & Leslie Kuebler
Greg Kuss, *Kuss Farm*
Glenn & Veronica Lamb, *Lamb's Family Farm*
Rob MacGregor & Lisa Rose, *New World Horticulture*
Robert & Pamela McCoy
Randy & Pam Moore, *Webb Valley Farm*
Thomas & Julie Nagy
Nita & Cory Olson, *The Little Red Truck Farm*
Catherine Orsini, *Knorrcroft*
Tessa & Dennis Schmidt
Stephen Sehlhorst, *Greenacres*
Jay Smith
Lewis Thornburg
Jason & Kristin Wish, *Wishwell Farms*
James Woodard

FAMILY

Jeremy, Rhonda & Susanna Beachy
Jared & Jaime Boyd
David Danner & Rahel Hahn
Mark Feitlinger
Sara & Michael Gallagher
Sandra & Richard Gilson
Jane Goldberg Rehner & Michael Rehner
Josh & Beth Goran
Sam & Joyce Hammett
Elizabeth & Isaac Hartlaub
Julie Hotchkiss & Mike Flanders
Jan & Diane Jaeger

Julie & Charles Koontz
Kirsten & John Marihugh
Thomas & Gale McMahon
Sheryll & Michael Perry
Mark & Torey Reed
Lee & Jennifer Ruff
Sandy Coen & Florence Jain
Hannah & Jason Spiegel
Jeff Valyou & Sean Caldwell
Richard & Barbara Wantz
Lorna & John Williamson
Lisa Wurm & Joseph Wendell
Frederick & Rita Young

INDIVIDUAL

ABE Center
Barbara Adams
Thomas Adams
Elizabeth Amos
Kim Bailey
Nancy & Sarah Baker
Mark Bennett
Stephanie Benway
Dana Berchtold
Amanda Blanton
Mark Bonneville
Donald Breece
Edward Burns
John Carnes
Donald Chafin
Valerie Claggett
Jamie Clark
Patrick Collins
Troy Cooper
Penryn Craig
Bradley Cramer
Maureen Crossmaker
Laura Davenport
Nancy Downs
Kit Duffield
Susan Duve
Daniel Dye
Denise Ellsworth
Shirley Ferris
Jennifer Fether
Betty Finney
Bob & Lisa Flanary
Julie Fox
Benjamin Franz
Elaine Fujimura
Glenn Gall
Kristy Gerlich
Jeremiah Gregg
Wendy Gregory Kaho
Erin Harvey
Dana Hatcher
Ralph Hayes
Tom Henshaw
Megan Hill
Michael Hribar
Laura Joseph
Anna Kluznik
Janice Kobi
Lori Kumler
Dani & Sally Lachina
Erin Laffay
Rich Lehwald
Susanna Leithart
Patti Leupp
Suzanne Lucas

Luella Porter
Craig Markley
Robert McCall
Robert Michael
Robin Mullet
Molly Murray
Laura Nein
Russell O'Bryan
Brian Parsons
Casey Parthemore
David Persinger
Gina Petruziello
Michael Polansky
Ariella Reback
Wayne Reinhard
Ann Reinthal
Matthew Reitman
Alicia Rocco
Steven Roggenkamp
Gina Sabatelli
Susan Sivey
Ann Stahlheber
Molly Jo Stanley
Olivia Sundin
Wendelin Taylor
Peter Townsend
John Troche
Jennifer Ward
Linda Wasil
Susan Weber & Susan Frey
Gretchen Weiher
Nancy Whisler
Dana Williams
Natalie Wise
Michon Woods
Sara & Adam Zwickle

STUDENT

Julia Barton & Patrick Turner
Jessica Bilecki
Stephanie Blessing
Laura Rose Brylowski
Elizabeth Cannon
Rebecca Som Castellano
Kelly Collins
Alyssa D'Amico
Justin Domingus
Scott Fisher
Meggie & Jennie Hanzlik
Eliza Hudson
Heather Irwin
Emily Kennedy
Aubury Longenecker
Melissa Millerschoen
Morgan Powers
Hadley Sinclair Cluxton
Karisa Taylor
Stephanie Wedryk



OEFFA Welcomes New Staff

Michelle Gregg-Skinner, Organic Educator

Michelle Gregg-Skinner has joined the staff as OEFFA's Organic Educator. Many of you may already be familiar with Michelle, who worked as the Program Assistant in our Certification program from June 2009 through September 2010. Michelle has been active in OEFFA and the Ohio organic community more broadly for many years. As a third-generation farmer, Michelle brings a lifetime of experience in the organic production of horticultural and grain crops and livestock.

Michelle holds a degree from the College of Agriculture at The Ohio State University. She has organic certification experience both as a reviewer and crop inspector. She is the operator of a licensed composting site and owner of an organic poultry processing facility. She also has a long history of involvement with 4-H and FFA programs.

As our Organic Educator, Michelle will be responsible for organizing the farm tour series and other educational events throughout the year. She will also be available for direct assistance to growers with production questions, as the voice at the end of our "farmer hotline." As Michelle settles back into life in the office, we extend a warm "welcome back" to her!

Diana Webster, Bookkeeper

We are pleased to welcome Diana Webster to the OEFFA staff. Diana, who has the soul of an artist and the mind of an accountant, has taken over bookkeeping and office manager duties.

Diana is a part-time artist creating custom ceramic tiles for primarily residential customers. In addition, she has held a variety of positions using her wonderful organizational skills.

We were fortunate to have Diana apply for our opening, but what drove her to OEFFA was the alignment of our mission with her beliefs. Diana told us, "Food and education truly are the most valuable resources needed to sustain communities, and it is my hope to be helpful in this cause, surround myself with people who hold similar values, and learn from those who have already been working to improve our food system."

We are all enjoying getting to know Diana better and appreciate her constant smile and quick laugh. Welcome, Diana!





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Deborah Stinner



Ed Snavelly

Ed Snavelly and Deborah Stinner Receive OEFFA's 2011 Stewardship Award

OEFFA has bestowed its highest honor, the Stewardship Award, on Ed Snavelly of Knox County and Deborah Stinner, Ph.D. of Wayne County. The announcement was made on February 19 as part of OEFFA's 32nd annual conference, *Inspiring Farms, Sustaining Communities*. The award recognizes "outstanding contributions to the sustainable agriculture community."

Dr. Stinner is a Research Scientist and Administrative Coordinator for the Organic Food and Farming Education and Research Program (OFFER) at The Ohio State University's Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center (OARDC) in Wooster, Ohio.

Stinner's research specialty is organic farming systems, with a focus on specialty small grains, including hard wheat and spelt, for artisan bread and pasta products. She helped found the OFFER program in 1998, which is now internationally recognized as a leader in organic farming research.

Ed Snavelly owns and operates Curly Tail Organic Farm, a 114 acre farm in Fredericktown, Ohio. One of Ohio's longest continuously certified farms, Ed has been certified organic since 1989 and raises pastured pork and feed for livestock.

Snavelly has been a member of OEFFA since 1989 and currently serves on the Board of Directors as the Grain Growers Chapter Representative and Vice President. Snavelly has hosted numerous farm tours; spoken as a featured presenter at OEFFA, the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA), and American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (ALBC) meetings, and has been an honored delegate at the first and second Slow Food Terra Madre conferences in Italy.

"Both Deb and Ed care deeply about creating a sustainable food system. We should all be sincerely grateful for what they have done to advance sustainable agriculture in our community," said OEFFA Executive Director Carol Goland.