Congress Takes Another Axe to Sustainable Agriculture Program Funding

On June 16, the House of Representatives passed its 2012 agriculture appropriations bill that turns back decades of progress to achieve a more sustainable and just food and farming system.

This 2012 bill makes a second round of steep cuts to conservation, extension, research, renewable energy, and rural development programs, even before Congress begins to take up the 2012 Farm Bill. The bill takes a total of $2.7 billion (13.4 percent) out of the food and agriculture budget.

Research programs were heavily cut. The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program was cut by $3 million, but the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (also known as ATTRA) which was eliminated in March, was restored at two-thirds of its most recent funding level. SARE and ATTRA provide farmers with the information, support, and incentives needed to profitably steward the land. Since 1988, SARE has funded 158 grants for $4.7 million in Ohio, including 88 farmer/rancher grants and 40 research and education grants. These grants have yielded strong results: 79 percent of producers said their SARE project resulted in improved soil quality and 64 percent said their project helped them increase their sales.

The National Organic Program (NOP) was kept at current funding—almost $7 million—although this is below the program’s need to keep pace with the strong growth in the organic sector.

Conservation programs took an enormous cut of over $1 billion. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) all experienced significant cuts. The bill would force the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to break contracts it has already signed with farmers enrolled in the CSP! These programs provide crucial benefits to us all—farmer and consumer—by helping farmers address key resource concerns, comply with regulations, and protect soil, water, and farmland to provide lasting food security.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, “In our view, attempts to throw entire segments of agriculture out of the tent, especially when they are growing and increasingly popular segments, are self-defeating and, to use the new favorite Washington term, job-killing.”

Doing the bidding of multinational meat and poultry conglomerates, the bill also included an amendment which forbids the USDA from using any funds to write or publish the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule to make livestock and poultry markets fairer and more competitive.

Additionally, the bill cut $685 million to the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) feeding program, which would result in between 200,000 and 350,000 women and children being removed from the program next year. All funding was stripped from the USDA’s Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative and the House passed an amendment to prohibit the USDA from conducting an assessment about how climate change might affect farmers. Finally, although when Congress passed the Food Safety Modernization Act, they authorized over $1 billion in funding for the Food and Drug Administration to implement the new law, the House bill cuts $87 million from their budget, on top of cuts that were part of the 2011 appropriations bill.

While the House has now passed its bill, the Senate must still develop and pass its own funding bill, those two bills must be reconciled, and the President must sign off on the final package.
The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association news is published quarterly as part of the educational mission of OEFFA, a nonprofit organization for farmers, gardeners, and citizens interested in ecological agriculture and creating a sustainable alternative food system.

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Editorial and advertising correspondence may be sent directly to OEFFA office or newsletter@oeffa.org. Unsolicited manuscripts welcome. Membership information is available on the OEFFA website at www.oeffa.org or from the OEFFA office (see address above).

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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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Next deadline September 15, 2011
Last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scrapped the much maligned “food pyramid,” which for more than 15 years played the role of visual nutritionist-in-chief, working to remind us of that our diet should be comprised of various “food groups,” including “fats, oils, and sweets.”

The new version, called “MyPlate,” the product of a $2 million dollar investment by the USDA to research and test the new icon (that’s the graphic—not the nutritional recommendations it depicts), create its website, and promote it, has gotten mixed reviews, although it seems that most folks are inclined to think it’s an improvement over the old pyramid. Especially welcome is the message that half of our plate ought to be devoted to fruits and vegetables.

In McWorld, this means we should be ordering the salad instead of the Big Mac. But this begs an important question: why does a salad cost more than a Big Mac? Or stated another way: why does the USDA draw nutrition infographics with one hand and with the other dole out farm subsidies that create a food system quite contrary to those recommendations?

Fruits, vegetables, nuts, and other specialty crops receive less than one half of one percent of federal farm subsidies. If we redrew this plate and apportioned the space to depict farm subsidies, you would need a magnifying glass to find those fruits and vegetables.

Even if imperfect (and politically charged), there’s a reason we have food guidelines. We all know that what we eat deeply impacts our health. We know that there is an epidemic of diet-related disease in our society. This is a public health issue. And public policy ought to reflect that as a priority.

Development of the 2012 Farm Bill is upon us. With only 1 percent of our population actively farming, the other 99 percent of us can’t sit idly thinking a “farm bill” has nothing to do with us. If we are what we eat, then in some metaphysical way, we are the Farm Bill. Please get involved.

Ohio has key decision-makers in Congress, and in the coming year we will be asking you to contact them and let them know you care about having policy that will create economic opportunities for family farmers, protect precious natural resources, and, yes, align farm policy with the good health of our families, friends, and neighbors. Please make the commitment now to be part of this process as it unfolds.

What is Food Sovereignty?

The theme of OEFFA’s 33rd annual conference is Sowing the Seeds of Our Food Sovereignty, but what does “sovereignty” mean?

The term was coined in 1996 by members of La Via Campesina, an international peasant movement of small farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants, and agricultural workers, working to defend small-scale sustainable agriculture as a way to promote social justice. The term was further developed during the Nyeleni 2007 Food Sovereignty Forum held in Mali.

Food sovereignty was born in response to a growing disillusionment with policies which promoted large-scale, industrialized corporate farming as a solution to global food insecurity, which undermined local food production; contaminated indigenous crops with genetically engineered, patented varieties; and degraded the soil, air, and water.

Food sovereignty means the right of peoples to define their own food, agriculture, livestock, and fisheries systems. It is the right to healthy food produced using ecologically sound and sustainable methods. It puts the needs of those who produce, distribute, and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. Food sovereignty prioritizes local food production, distribution, and consumption; social and economic justice; fair incomes for farmers; and the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition.

Today, working together, we are sowing the seeds of Ohio’s food sovereignty. Small family farms and beginning farmers are reclaiming Ohio’s farmland heritage, producing nutritious, fresh, and sustainable food and farm products that nourish our bodies, our communities, and the soil. Farmers are seeing pathways to profitability through organic and direct to consumer marketing. Local, healthy produce is being grown in community gardens and made available through urban farmers markets. Consumers are demanding food that is safe and humanely raised.

Mark your calendars for OEFFA’s conference on February 18-19, 2012, and join us to learn how we can build an agricultural future for Ohio that is local, organic, and fair.
Ohio’s Fracking Regulations (Or Lack Thereof!)
By Nathan Johnson

High volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” is a controversial new method of natural gas drilling undergoing a massive boom in Pennsylvania and around the country. The shale gas fracturing rush is now spilling into Ohio. Ohio’s farmers, in particular, should be concerned. Fracking contamination can cause severe damage to water supplies, livestock, and crops. Ohio law currently offers little protection from these risks.

Pennsylvania went from no fracked shale wells just a few short years ago to thousands today. In Ohio, land speculators have begun scooping up leases by the thousands and drilling permit applications are increasing at a steady pace. Ohio now has 10 active horizontal wells in the Marcellus and Utica shales. In addition, 53 vertical shale test wells have been drilled in the state.

Each well frack involves the underground injection of several million gallons of water mixed with tens of thousands of pounds of toxic chemicals. Some of this water flows back out of the well after the fracturing process and is known as flowback water, or “brine.” Brine can be 10 times as salty as seawater and often contains high levels of radiation and naturally occurring heavy metals such as arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, and strontium. Methane released during the fracturing process increases soil acidity and can rob crops of nutrients. Contaminated water can migrate into groundwater through underground fissures, and can seep into the food chain through incidental spills and above ground containment pits. Unfortunately, livestock are often attracted to fracking wastewater due to its high salt content. Last year, Pennsylvania authorities quarantined 28 cattle that came into contact with leaked wastewater due to fears they were contaminated with radioactive strontium.

The year before that, 16 cows that drank fluid from a fracked well in Louisiana began foaming and bleeding at the mouth before finally dropping dead. Under Ohio law, drillers are not required to disclose the individual chemical compounds contained in fracking fluids, making well water monitoring and food safety testing difficult.

Shockingly, Ohio law allows brine and drilling wastes to be stored for several months in open earthen pits, where nothing more than a thin liner prevents these harmful substances from leaching into the soil. Making matters worse is the fact that Ohio is a destination state for fracking wastewater: there are roughly 170 active Class II injection wells in Ohio currently accepting fracking wastewater from in-state and out-of-state operations. These wells are essentially cracks in the ground where wastewater is absorbed into the surrounding geology. Moreover, a water treatment plant in Warren, Ohio accepts fracking wastewater and sells the resulting sludge as an ingredient in a highly popular (albeit, non-organic!) compost brand found in many Ohio supermarkets. If that weren’t disturbing enough, Ohio law allows local governments to spray fracking brine and wastes on roadways to control dust and ice!

So, just what remedies does Ohio law provide in the event that your water, crops, or livestock are contaminated by fracking wastes? If a landowner can prove that his or her water supply has been “substantially disrupted” by fracturing contamination, Ohio law requires the polluter to supply the landowner with water. Drilling companies can also elect to pay landowners for losses in property value caused by contamination if doing so would be cheaper than replacing water supplies. Of course, these “remedies” come after the productivity of one’s family farm has been compromised—perhaps permanently. More cold comfort: Ohio law limits the maximum regulatory penalty for ground and surface water fracking contamination to $10,000 per incident.

If all this weren’t bad enough, the Ohio General Assembly has just passed a bill that will open our state parks to fracking. I encourage concerned Ohio farmers and residents to contact their state senators and representatives and ask that they pass a statewide moratorium on fracking.

Nathan Johnson is an OEFFA member and staff attorney for the Buckeye Forest Council, an Ohio-based forest protection not-for-profit. Nathan can be reached at nathan@buckeyeforestcouncil.org.

Fracking and You:
For some family farmers, the promise of lucrative contracts from leasing land or selling mineral rights to energy companies can be tempting. Farmers who are offered contracts on their land may face a tough decision, with scant information on the risks of fracking or what they are legally committing to, and mounting financial pressures on the farm. As real life examples of fracking damage to farms in Pennsylvania play out, it’s imperative for Ohio farmers to understand the risks to air, land, and water, to the productivity of the farm, and to the safety of the food produced.

If you’re approached about a lease:
» Fracking is not your grandmother’s gas drilling. For example, a typical well’s surface footprint can be between 3 and 15 acres, including the drilling pad, storage pits, and other infrastructure. Learn more about fracking and how it could affect your land.
» Before signing any contract, you should always seek professional legal advice.
» If you are certified organic, you should contact OEFFA Certification at (614) 262-2022 to see how a lease, and any resulting soil or water contamination, could affect your certification status.
» Talk to your neighbors. Discuss how fracking could impact your community.

For more information about fracking:
» Buckeye Forest Council—www.buckeyeforestcouncil.org
» Food and Water Watch—www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/fracking
» Network for Oil and Gas Accountability and Protection—www.neogap.org
» Ohio Environmental Council—www.theoec.org/Fracking.htm

www.oeffa.org/quicklinks/penn
Donate Surplus Produce to Anti-Hunger Organizations

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks distributes tens of millions of pounds of food each year to Ohioans in need of emergency food assistance. Donations are always encouraged. Second Harvest operates 12 regional foodbanks and each county has facilities for food distribution. To find your local foodbank and arrange a donation, call (614) 221-4336 or go to http://www.oashf.org/foodbanks.html.

The Athens-based nonprofit Community Food Initiatives’ (CFI) Donation Station is also in need of financial contributions for fresh food purchases, fruits and vegetables from local gardeners and farmers, locally processed food items from area businesses, and bulk food items from regional buying clubs. CFI has distributed over 150,000 pounds of healthy, fresh food to local service agencies like food pantries, homeless shelters, and summer feeding programs since 2008. For more information, call (740) 593-5971, email cfi@frognet.net, or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.org.

Ohio summers are a time to enjoy the bounty of fresh garden vegetables, ripe off-the-vine berries, and orchard harvests bursting with juicy flavor. OEFFA’s Good Earth Guide can help bring these delicious tastes of summer to any kitchen.

The Good Earth Guide includes information on more than 315 farms and businesses that sell directly to the public, including more than 150 certified organic farms and businesses and more than 70 community supported agriculture (CSA) programs.

The directory identifies sources for locally grown vegetables; fruits; herbs; honey; maple syrup; dairy products; grass-fed beef, pork, and lamb; free-range chicken and eggs; fiber; flour and grains; cut flowers; plants; hay and straw; seed and feed, and other local farm products.

Print copies of this 62 page guide are distributed free to OEFFA members. Nonmembers and members wanting more than one copy can purchase the guide for $7.50 each at http://www.oeffa.org/store. Encourage friends to join OEFFA to receive a print copy of this amazing resource! Print versions are only available while supplies last. The Good Earth Guide is also available free to the public in an easy to use online searchable database at http://www.oeffa.org/geg.
Plan Your Fall Garden Now
By Trish Mumme

Most areas of Ohio allow two gardening seasons: spring-summer and fall. The fall season is underutilized by most gardeners, but if you act now, you can be harvesting fresh produce from your garden from September through Christmas.

From mid-July through the end of August is your planting window. If possible, plant your fall garden crops on a south facing slope to make the most of the waning sunlight. Some extra deer protection may be necessary, since deer get more motivated as winter approaches.

When it comes to fall gardening, think roots and greens. The roots have to come first. Around mid-July, plant a fall crop of carrots. Chantenay and Kuroda do particularly well, but almost any variety of carrot will sweeten up better than those planted in May or June. Dig carrots in October or November and keep them in the vegetable bin or in a root cellar all winter and well into the spring.

Beets should be planted by the first of August. Fedco’s Three-Root Grex beet did particularly well for me last fall, yielding huge multicolored beets that were sweet and delicious. They keep well too. Around the first week of August, when there’s a cool spell, plant turnips. A big row of turnips will hold in the garden until temperatures drop into the teens, and store reasonably well. At the same time, put in some Daikon or Misoto Rose radishes. Daikons are particularly gratifying to grow, growing quickly to 18 inches long.

Leafy greens are particularly easy to grow in the fall, and are much less likely to bolt than the same crops planted in the spring. Those pesky flea beetles disappear by the end of August, so all those brassicas they love can be planted under row cover, and removed around Labor Day. First on my list to plant the first of August is arugula. This will yield prolifically until well into October. Turnip greens, red giant mustard greens, rapini, and various oriental greens, planted around the middle of August under row cover, will yield enough to stock your freezer for hearty soups this winter.

Don’t forget the fall lettuce. I plant Batavian lettuce up through July, then switch back to fall lettuces like Romaine around the first of August. Leaf lettuce types and mesclun can be planted (preferably during a cool spell) the latter half of the month. Don’t forget escarole and endive, which will make huge heads that won’t bolt and will hold well under row cover through November. Radicchio, started in late July, makes lovely heads in October and November. Start these crops in flats in the shade of a tree, since lettuces are reluctant to germinate in temperatures over 75 degrees.

Trish Mumme lives in Licking County. She owns and operates Garden Patch Produce, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) business offering pesticide-free vegetables, herbs, cut flowers, honey, and fruit. She can be reached at gardenpatchproduce@earthlink.net.
In Our Fields and On Our Plates: What You Should Know About Genetically Engineered Foods

Genetic engineering (GE) refers to a set of technologies used to change the genetic makeup of cells and move genes across species boundaries to produce novel organisms. Through genetic engineering, organisms are given new combinations of genes—and therefore new combinations of traits—that do not occur in nature. This relatively new technology has brought with it many new problems and risks for farmers and consumers.

Dangers of GE Food

Seed and Crop Contamination—GE and non-GE seeds cannot coexist. Once released into the environment, pollen from GE crops can contaminate organic and non-GE crops. As a result, farmers of organic canola—a crop at particularly high risk of contamination—are no longer able to grow this important crop. Corn, cotton, sugar beets, and alfalfa are also at risk, not only from pollen drift, but also from contamination during storage, transporting, and processing.

Organic Farmers at Risk—Because GE crops are prohibited under the organic label, if organic fields are contaminated by cross-fertilization or organic livestock consume contaminated feed, a farmer cannot sell those products as organic. Alfalfa contamination is particularly dangerous for organic farmers since it is used in many organic farmers’ crop rotations and as a key feed for livestock.

Ownership of Nature—Ethically, GE foods offer many challenges. Seed, once common property of past, present, and future generations, has been privatized, patented, and made into a corporate intellectual property right. GE seed commodifies life and turns a renewable resource into a non-renewable, non-reproducing product. Furthermore, many people believe that the transfer of genes between species is unnatural and unethical.

GE Foods Not Shown Safe to Eat—The scientific literature on long-term human safety is divided, but many of the studies arguing that GE food is safe were conducted by the biotechnology companies that commercialized the crops. Monsanto has systematically prevented rigorous independent scientific research on GE foods by using patent rights to restrict access to seed. The health effects of GE foods could take decades to become known, just as it took decades for the damaging effects of trans-fats to be recognized.

Pesticides, Herbicides, and Human Health—GE seeds are directly responsible for the increased use of pesticides and herbicides. GE crops require over 26 percent more pounds of pesticides per acre than conventional varieties. A common herbicide, glyphosate, has been linked to non-Hodgkin lymphoma, endocrine disruption, multiple myeloma, DNA damage, immune suppression, and miscarriage.

The Rise of Super Weeds—Much like the overuse of antibiotics has created antibiotic-resistant super germs, the pervasive use of glyphosate has created weeds resistant to the herbicide, including pigweed, horseweed, and giant ragweed. Farmers are now having to resort to more labor-intensive weed management strategies and more toxic and complex mixtures of herbicides to combat these weeds.

How to Avoid GE Food

Considering that over 80 percent of the soybeans, corn, cotton, sugar beets, and canola grown in the U.S. contain Monsanto’s patented genes, avoiding GE ingredients, particularly in processed foods, can be difficult.

Because GE products are not required to be labeled, the best way to avoid them is to buy organic, since organic producers are prohibited from using GE seed or feed. Look for the organic label.

For produce, a savvy shopper can also use information on the product’s Price Look-Up (PLU) code. According to the International Federation for Produce Standards for bulk, if the PLU code begins with 9 and has five digits, it is organic. If it begins with 8 and has five digits, it is genetically modified. Conventionally grown fruit and vegetables have a four digit PLU code.

More Plaintiffs Join Monsanto Patent Lawsuit, PUBPAT Files Amended Complaint

Twenty-three new plaintiffs have joined with OEFFA and the original 60 plaintiffs in a lawsuit against Monsanto filed in the Southern District of New York by the Public Patent Foundation (PUBPAT). The plaintiffs in the suit, titled Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association, et al. v. Monsanto, now include 36 family farmer, food, agricultural research, food safety, and environmental organizations representing hundreds of thousands of members including several thousand certified organic and sustainable family farmers.

Soon after the March filing of the lawsuit, Monsanto issued a statement saying they would not assert their patents against farmers who suffer “trace” amounts of transgenic contamination. In response, PUBPAT attorneys wrote Monsanto’s attorneys asking the company to make its promise legally binding and to clarify the meaning of “trace amounts.” Monsanto responded to PUBPAT’s request by hiring former solicitor general, Seth Waxman, who rejected PUBPAT’s request and instead confirmed Monsanto may indeed make claims of patent infringement against organic farmers who become contaminated by Monsanto’s GE seed. PUBPAT then filed an amended complaint to make the defendant’s position fully clear to the court.

The lawsuit seeks court protection through a declaratory judgment to protect organic farmers and other growers of non-GE crops from liability should unwanted contamination occur in their fields.

Monsanto investigates approximately 500 farmers each year for patent infringement. Between 1997 and 2010, Monsanto filed 144 lawsuits against farmers in 27 states for alleged patent infringement. Monsanto has an annual budget of $10 million and a staff of 75 devoted to investigating and prosecuting farmers for “seed piracy.”

“If organic farmers, seed growers, and companies have no assurance that technology they have never asked for, never signed a licensing agreement to use, have no desire to be a part of, and in fact, go to great lengths to avoid, can still trespass on their farms and subject them to a lawsuit by the patent holder who seemingly escapes all liability for that trespass, then it is not only morally wrong, ethically unjust, but also legally perverse,” said Marty Mesh, Executive Director of Florida Organic Growers, a plaintiff in the case.

The suit also argues the invalidity of Monsanto’s Roundup Ready patents under both statute and case law precedent requiring patented products to demonstrate clear social utility and not be dangerous to health.
Getting Started with Backyard Chickens
By Rachel Tayse Baillieul

We are “that family,” the one with chickens roaming the edible landscape of our urban central Ohio backyard.

Fortunately we are not alone. There is a growing movement to keep city chickens among people who like to eat locally. I want to share how my husband, daughter, and I raise our birds for those of you who may be considering putting a coop in your backyard.

Our Set Up
We keep four hens in a homemade coop near our garage. We change the water daily, adding fresh water more often in the summer and winter. Our feeder needs to be refilled every two or three days. Because we share a very small backyard with them, we clean waste daily.

Benefits
In exchange for feed and water, our four hens give us three to four eggs a day. Our chickens free-range in the backyard and run most of the day, turning kitchen scraps, foraged greens, and insects into tasty and nutritious food for us.

Even their perpetual digging and kicking can be put to good use. We place the chickens in our raised beds in the fall after vegetables have been harvested. They kick up the soil, fluffing and fertilizing it.

Common chicken predators, such as coyotes and weasels, are crowded out of the city. Hawks do not have enough room to land among the wires that overhang our yard. Dogs and cats can take birds; we combat that risk by having our protective but chicken-friendly dog discourage intruders.

Child’s Play
My five year old daughter sees the chickens not as food producers but as feathered pets and companions. She carries and cuddles them. She leads them around the garden in parades. She insists on collecting eggs.

My daughter studies the birds, picking up details of their habits I don’t notice. She shares her vast repertoire of chicken facts with anyone who will listen. Beyond companionship and anatomy, I am thrilled that my child is learning exactly where her food comes from.

Considerations
While our hens do mow weeds from the lawn, they are also efficient consumers of our garden crops. We keep our raised beds wrapped in hardware cloth to protect gleaming tomatoes and luscious chard from the nosy beaks.

Many communities have regulations about keeping chickens. Contact your city council about the rules in your area before taking ownership.

Travel is a little difficult because hens cannot be kenneled. We are fortunate to have a generous neighbor who is happy to watch over them for us when we leave.

Because chickens are unusual in the city, owners must be prepared to educate friends and neighbors. We have conversations over the alley fence at least once a week with people who have happened by and seen the birds. I relish the opportunity to talk about the importance of local food and all the good I experience from keeping hens in my yard.

Rachel Tayse Baillieul is a backyard gardener, home cook, and food educator living in the Clintonville neighborhood of Columbus, Ohio. She shares lessons from her family’s urban homestead at http://www.HoundsInTheKitchen.com and teaches cooking and preserving classes to cooks of all ages.

Backyard Chicken Resources


Rules and Regulations:
Local ordinances—Cities often have ordinances regarding poultry within city limits. For example, the city of Columbus requires a permit from the Columbus Board of Health, an annual inspection, and that poultry owners submit a care and waste management plan and meet certain house flooring and waste management requirements. Because of noise, many cities have rules against owning roosters. Contact your local board of health or city council office about the rules in your area.

State animal care standards—The Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board has developed mandatory standards for the care of poultry, including housing, management, euthanasia, and slaughter, which will go into effect this summer. For more information go to http://ohiolivestockcaresstandardsboard.gov.

Mortality composting and waste disposal—A hen’s egg production will begin to drop off after two years. It’s important to have a plan for spent hens, whether they are staying on as pets, are consumed, or will be composted. Individuals performing mortality composting on their property will need to attend a mortality certification course, offered for $10 by OSU Extension. Contact your local extension office for details. For information about composting regulations, go to http://bit.ly/p5dQW. To find a licensed composting facility, go to http://bit.ly/0B6lv5.
“Ag Gag” Bills Would Prevent Farm Photos
In Florida, New York, Minnesota, and Iowa, legislators have recently considered legislation which would prohibit photographs of factory farms taken without the explicit consent of farm owners. The laws are aimed at activist whistleblowers who have gone undercover at factory farms and intended to shield large-scale animal agriculture from public scrutiny. Although defeated elsewhere, Iowa’s legislation is still pending and would make even the possession and distribution of farm photos—even those taken from a public right of way—a crime, and penalties would range up to 10 years in prison.

USDA Moves to Let Monsanto Perform Its Own Environmental Impact Studies
Last August, a federal judge ruled that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) practice of deregulating genetically engineered (GE) seed varieties without first performing an environmental impact study violated the National Environmental Policy Act. To satisfy this requirement, the USDA announced a program in the Federal Register on April 7 which would let Monsanto and others in the industry conduct their own or pay other researchers to conduct environmental impact studies.

Monsanto Renews Interest in GE Wheat
Over the past two years, the agricultural biotechnology giant Monsanto has renewed its interest in wheat, committing more resources to creating new traits and seed varieties. The company has built a “seed chipper” for wheat—a proprietary and prohibitively expensive machine that speeds the process of identifying beneficial crop traits—and in 2009, the company paid $45 million to buy WestBred, a Montana-based wheat seed company. Genetic research and modification has been slower for wheat compared to soy and corn because of the grain’s genetic complexity and lower potential monetary returns to commercial seed companies, which discourage investment in research. Wheat is grown on more acres globally than any other crop and provides roughly 20 percent of the world’s calories, according to the United Nations.

Athens Farmer Testifies Before Congress
On April 14, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, and Credit held a hearing to review credit conditions in rural America. Among the witnesses was Matt Starline, a young farmer, OEFFA member, and owner of Starline Organics in Athens, Ohio. Starline is a full-time farmer, and sells his produce, grain, and meat within 20 miles of his farm. As the only farmer to testify during the hearing, Starline spoke about the credit needs of beginning farmers and the importance of investing in them through the Farm Bill as a way to help create jobs and grow a new generation of farmers. Starline also met with the ranking member of the committee, Representative Marcia Fudge (OH-11) during his visit (pictured).

Toxin from GE Crops Found in Human Blood
Canadian researchers writing in the journal Reproductive Toxicology report that Cry1Ab, a Bt toxin used in GE crops to make plants toxic to pests, has been detected in human and fetal blood samples. Testing 69 pregnant and non-pregnant women, the researchers found Bt toxin in 93 percent of maternal blood samples, 80 percent of fetal blood samples, and 69 percent of non-pregnant blood samples.

Pfizer Suspends Use of Poultry Arsenic Drug
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced on June 8 that the major drug company Pfizer voluntarily agreed to suspend U.S. sales of an arsenical drug, 3-Nitro, used in poultry production. This step follows an FDA study that found higher levels of arsenic in the livers of chickens treated with 3-Nitro than in untreated chickens. Approved in 1944, 3-Nitro is routinely fed to broiler chickens to help control parasitic disease, and improve weight gain, feed efficiency, and pigmentation. According to the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, more than 70 percent of all chickens raised for meat in the U.S. are fed arsenic.

OEFFA Member Visits D.C. to Advocate for Sustainable Agriculture
In March, long time OEFFA member and certified organic farmer Marty Warnecke of Putnam County represented OEFFA for the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition’s Farmer Fly-In to Washington D.C. With other delegates from Ohio, Warnecke visited offices of key Ohio members of Congress, including Senator Sherrod Brown and Representatives Marcia Fudge, Bob Gibbs, and Marcy Kaptur. Warnecke, who grows certified organic corn, soybeans, wheat, and spelt, urged Congress to protect funding for important sustainable agriculture programs, sharing his own experience using the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for land conservation practices.

Edible Communities Receives James Beard Award
Edible Communities has been awarded the 2011 James Beard Award for “Publication of the Year.” Edible Communities has more than 70 publications across the country, including two in Ohio: Edible Columbus and Edible Ohio Valley.

Global Food Waste Study Released
About a third of all food produced for human consumption each year—equal to about 2.9 trillion pounds—is lost or wasted, according to a new study commissioned by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The report, Global Food Losses and Food Waste, found food waste is a problem in rich countries, while food loss during production is a larger issue in poor countries.

USDA Announces Rule Encouraging Schools to Partner with Local Farms
A new rule enacted in late April by the USDA encourages schools to bring in more “unprocessed locally grown and locally raised agricultural products” by allowing them to give local providers preference when they bid for school food contracts. This “buy local” rule is part of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act President Obama signed into law last December.
One day last August, my dear ol’ dad shows up at my door cradling a watermelon in his arms. “This is from Sam’s Club,” he proudly announced, “and it’s delicious!”

I looked around, hoping that none of my neighbors saw what was transpiring on my porch, hurried dad into the house, and thanked him for the very thoughtful gift. Then I asked him if he still had a copy of my book, *Farms and Foods of Ohio: From Garden Gate to Dinner Plate*.

At this point in my life, I’m always happy to see my dad even if he’s bringing me forbidden fruit—a melon that wasn’t grown in an Ohio field during the height of melon season. I think he gets my preference for seasonal, local, and organic foods but unlearning the convenience and instant gratification style of food shopping and eating he’s embraced for over half a century has to be done gently and respectfully, something I’m not always subtle at doing. Every now and then, he lovingly calls me a “food snob”—and I’m not all that offended.

I’ll admit, I turn my nose up at a strawberry served up out of the local growing season, won’t eat a tomato between Ohio’s tomato harvests, and I eat Ohio sweet corn until I don’t think I can eat any more—then I have just one more ear. Most out-of-season fruits and vegetables are rarely worth my time, money, or taste buds.

I like to think that I’m an important part of a new food culture, one that’s growing at a healthy clip and commanding attention, and I do tend to surround myself with like-minded individuals. My guess is you do the same.

So are we the new “food snobs?” Perhaps. But for this new culture of “snobs” our food choices are not just about what’s good or reserved for us personally. It’s about what’s good for all: our families, farmers, the workers, the land, the animals, and the environment.

We are part of a large and growing community of American consumers who at no other time in our history have been so unhappy or suspicious about the integrity of our food system. We consistently express our preference for food grown or raised close to home, more specifically on small family farms in our own communities. We value quality and want our food to be safe, wholesome, and flavorful.

We’re the “snobs” who challenge our school districts on how they are feeding our children. We want to know if the food we buy, whether from 1,000 miles away or just down the road, is wholesome and nutritional. We want to know about the use of pesticides, GMOs, and safeguards against contamination in handling and processing. We ask the questions and look for the answers that help us make those choices.

People who choose to eat local foods may do so for one reason (flavor) or a variety of reasons including supporting the local economy, eliminating long transport of foods, or even as a nostalgic return to the way we used to eat more than 50 years ago. Yet every time we choose to buy local foods ourselves we move toward a deeper sense of responsibility toward others. It says in no small way that we care about what we all eat.

And if that makes me a “snob,” I think I’m okay with that.
Traceability is key in a certified organic system. A certified organic product must be traceable from field to sale per §205.201(b)(2). Records must “fully disclose all activities and transactions of the certified operation in sufficient detail as to be readily understood and audited.”

The NOP standards define a lot as “any number of containers which contain an agricultural product of the same kind located in the same conveyance, warehouse, or packing house and which are available for inspection at the same time.”

A lot number is simply a unique code assigned to a lot (whether a case of canned tomato sauce or 1,000 bushels of corn), which allows for the crop or product to be tracked at every step of storage, transportation, or production. The number should be created by the producer or processor in such a way that it cannot be confused with other codes. It can be made up of numbers and/or letters that represent specific pieces of information. Lot numbers at the farm level can be used on storage bin records, clean truck affidavits, bills of lading (documents of transfer of ownership), invoices, transaction certificates, and labels.

Below is an example for corn being stored in a bin: Lot #SM15CN05-10.

This lot number will then be written on the bin register (a record of what is being stored), which can be as simple as a notebook, or on a sales invoice if it is sold out of the field.

At the processed product level, say the farmer above sells corn to a flour processing mill, with an invoice indicating 1,000 bushels of corn with the lot #SM15CN-10.

That mill will likely be receiving corn from many different sources with invoices showing all the lot numbers. Any time lot numbers are combined—in the case of blending ingredients—a new lot number must be assigned to the incoming lots and recorded to ensure traceability. The documentation should show the old lot numbers as well as the new lot number.

The Julian date can be incorporated into a lot number. This is a number 1-365 (or 366 for leap years) assigned to each day of the year. Processed products are often given lot numbers that include the Julian date, case number, and even the specific time the product was packaged. With a multi-ingredient processed product, things can get complex quickly to say the least.

But, why should a small producer who grows sprouts in three greenhouses, or processes a small amount of maple syrup care? Per §205.307(b), “Nonretail containers used to ship or store raw or processed agricultural product labeled as containing organic ingredients must display the production lot number of the product if applicable.” So in shipping those sprouts to a grocery store, that sprout producer would include a lot number on the container tying the shipment back to the sprout harvest date and greenhouse number, for example. Direct to consumer sales, such as farmers’ market and roadside stands, do not require the use of lot numbers. While using lot numbers does require more documentation, many certified organic growers have commented that these recordkeeping steps have improved the overall management of their operation.

This article only covers lot numbering as it pertains to organics. You should check with state and federal authorities regarding traceability requirements for the retail sale of processed products to ensure compliance with food safety and other regulatory requirements.

This Certified Organic Life: Peart Organic Farm
By Kate Schmidt

As a farmer, Matt Peart spends most of his time outside, particularly this time of year, making hay. However, on the day I spoke with him, he had been laboring indoors for quite awhile. He had just finished completing his 22nd Organic System Plan (OSP), the 17 page management blueprint for his organic farm that he sends to OEFFA each year as part of the organic certification renewal process.

The OSP Matt submitted to OEFFA in 1989, the first year he became certified, looked very different from the one he’s sending in this year. At that time, he was farming 60 acres and the OSP was just one page long. Matt had decided to make the switch to organic production methods and seek certification because he found that he was just breaking even growing and selling crops on the conventional livestock feed market. He also had become aware of the environmental benefits of farming organically and wanted to stop using pesticides.

Initially, Matt says he was only able to sell his organic crops to large out-of-state distributors. Then, about four or five years ago when Organic Valley began establishing a strong presence in his area, the demand for locally-produced organic feed crops came knocking at Matt’s door. Now, after more than 20 years in organic production, Matt has nearly 450 acres of certified organic cropland and pasture in Wayne County, and produces hay, spelt, corn, and soybeans in accordance with the USDA’s National Organic Program (NOP) standards. He feels that he has truly found his niche supplying an ever-growing number of local organic dairy farmers with quality feed to sustain their cattle.

Matt’s background is in agricultural mechanics and he just retired three years ago from a second full-time job as manager of physical facilities at Ohio State University’s Agricultural Technological Institute in Wooster. As a self-proclaimed “people-person,” Matt wasn’t sure how content he’d be “just farming,” given the solitary nature of the occupation. However, he’s found that he actually feels quite connected with his community and has a voice in the organic industry through his daily farm work, as much of organic agriculture involves collaboration and integrated production and market systems. Other organic producers in the region look to Matt as a mentor and friend, and even the OEFFA staff knows that Matt is the one to call if you happen to get in over your head while attempting to fix your tractor.

At this point in time, Matt is content with the current size of his organic operation and doesn’t have plans to get any bigger. However, he doesn’t see any reason why the organic industry won’t continue to grow. Whenever there’s a food scare, he says, more and more people are looking to organic producers. In the face of challenges presented by unpredictable weather patterns, diseases and pests, climate change, and economic volatility, these growers continue to demonstrate that their farming systems are resilient and are readily able to supply their communities with ecologically-produced fresh, healthy food.

Matt will tell you though, he is not a person who says that organic production is the only way to farm. He chooses not to assert that conventional farming methods are “wrong” because he believes that “you’ll never convince anybody to do it your way if that’s the way you look at it.”

With this approach, Matt has been able to form respectful and supportive relationships within the conventional farming community. He feels that there’s room for everybody to find their “little place in the world.” Working with others and having everyone come to the table is Matt’s way of impacting change. A number of his conventional neighbors have even adopted some of his organic methods on their own accord. Now, if only he could convince them to come to the table to help him fill out his organic certification paperwork next year. Alas, some of this gregarious organic farmer’s tasks will probably always be of a solitary nature.

Peart Organic Farm Production Profile:
Location: Burbank, Ohio (Wayne County)
Certified Organic Acreage: 442.1
Certified Organic Crops, Livestock, and Products: Hay, spelt, corn, soybeans, pasture
Certified Organic Since: 1989
Certified Organic by OEFFA Since: 1989
Organic Methods Emphasized: Crop rotation, holistic farm management, incorporation of livestock
Primary Markets: Supplies organic livestock feed to local dairies

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Organic Sector Shows Strong Growth, Creating Jobs

The Organic Trade Association’s 2011 Organic Industry Survey reveals new data about the growth of the organic sector. The organic industry has grown from $3.6 billion in 1997 to $29 billion in 2010. Growing by 8 percent in 2010 alone, organics dramatically outpaced the food industry as a whole, which grew by less than 1 percent. The organic industry supports 14,540 organic farms and ranches across the country. A total of 4.1 million acres of land are currently in organic management, and there are organic farms in all 50 states. Forty percent of organic operations added jobs in 2010, with 96 percent planning to maintain or increase employment levels in 2011.

NOP Proposes Rule Requiring Periodic Residue Testing

The National Organic Program (NOP) has released a proposed rule requiring that certifying agents conduct periodic residue testing of organically produced agricultural products. The rule would require that certifying agents conduct periodic residue testing for a minimum of 5 percent of the operations they certify annually in addition to pre-harvest or post-harvest testing when there is reason to suspect contamination with a prohibited substance. Submit comments online at www.regulations.gov (Docket# AMS-NOP-10-0102) or by mail to Lisa M. Brines, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, USDA National Organic Program, Room 2646-So., Ag Stop 0268, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0268.

NOP Releases Memo on Textile Labeling

The NOP has issued a policy memorandum addressing the labeling of textiles containing organic ingredients. According to the memo, the NOP does not restrict the use of the term “organic” in the labeling of textile products certified under third-party bodies as long as all the fibers identified as organic are produced and certified according to NOP regulations. Textile products produced in accordance with the Global Organic Textile Standard may be sold as organic in the United States but may not refer to NOP certification or display the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) organic seal. Any textile product labeled with the USDA seal must be produced and processed in full compliance with NOP regulations.

Studies Show Benefits of Organic Poultry Farming

An unrelated study, published by the University of Georgia, found that there is a significantly lower rate of salmonella contamination in organic chickens compared to conventional chickens. The researchers found that 38.8 percent of fecal samples from conventional farms contained salmonella, compared with only 5.6 percent from organic farms. For feed, the results were similar: 27.5 percent of feed on the conventional farms had salmonella, while only 5 percent of organic feed was contaminated.

Taken together, the results of these two studies reveal the potential for organic poultry farming to significantly reduce the risk of salmonella-related illness and death.

Exemptions Proposed for Two Parasiticides

The USDA has published a proposed rule to establish exemptions for the use of two synthetic substances in organic livestock production—fenbendazole and moxidectin—as parasiticides consistent with the recommendations of the National Organic Standards Board. Public comments are now being reviewed as part of the final rulemaking.

Organic Production Extends Celery Shelf Life

According to a study published in the Journal of Food Science, celery grown using organic sources of nitrogen extended the shelf life of packaged celery from 30 to 37 days, or by about 23 percent. A large body of research shows that organic production systems increase total antioxidant activity in fruits and vegetables as a result of higher levels of various phytochemicals. Many of these biologically active chemicals also have anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties, one of the possible reasons why organic vegetables and fruit typically have longer shelf-life than conventionally grown produce.

USDA Publishes Guidance on Composting, Other Topics

In May, the USDA published guidance for the organic industry concerning the issues of compost and vermicompost; wild crop harvesting; commingling and contamination prevention; and the use of chlorine materials in organic production and handling. The final guidance is available on the NOP’s website.

USDA Releases Notice on Ruminant Slaughter Stock

In May, the USDA issued a Federal Register notice on the ruminant slaughter stock provision of the access to pasture rule. It explains that the NOP will not take any further action to amend the provision on ruminant slaughter stock. As of June 2011, all organic livestock operations must be in full compliance with the rule.
SPROUTING INTEREST IN VEGGIES

By Wes Duren

What would you think if you could harvest vegetables in less than one week after sowing your seeds? While this may defy logic, the Chinese have been sprouting vegetable seeds, and eating their young shoots and roots as a valuable source of nutrition for over 5,000 years. Accounts of sprouting appear in the Bible in the books of Ezekiel and Daniel, and health food stores now commonly sell sprouts and sprouted products such as breads, crackers, cereals, supplements, and sandwich wraps.

The sprouting process is simple, fun, and a great way to get many of the benefits from vegetables without waiting months for a garden harvest. The best part: seeds are inexpensive, and you do not need soil, fertilizer, or even a yard to grow edible sprouts.

There are many edible seeds you can sprout, such as: all bean varieties, alfalfa, sunflower, broccoli, clover, radish, arugula, cress, dill, fenugreek, mustard, and grains such as barley, wheat, rye, oats, spelt, millet, amaranth, corn, and rice!

The method for sprouting all seeds is the same, though the germination time will vary depending on the size and variety of seed. Simply fill a wide-mouth, quart-sized mason jar one-third full with any edible seed you desire to grow. Then, add filtered water to the top of the jar, about three parts water to one part seed. You may wish to purchase an official sprouting lid, which is a simple plastic screen, or just use basic cheesecloth, and then fasten the screen or cheesecloth tightly on the jar with the ring lid or a rubber band.

Allow your seeds to soak for 8-12 hours and then pour off all water. Rinse your seed under a faucet with lots of room temperature water at high pressure. The high pressure helps to clean the seeds (soon to be sprouts), infuse them with oxygen, and keep them from clumping, which helps with drainage. Once rinsed, invert the jar and let it sit at an angle so it can drain and allow air flow. The seed needs to be rinsed a minimum of 2-3 times per day for optimal sprouting. Leave your jar inverted after each rinse, so that it thoroughly drains. Consider your sprouting vessel a micro-garden, which prefers sunshine, 70 degree temperature, good air circulation, drainage, and regular moisture for best success.

Within one day to two weeks, your sprouts will be ready to eat. You can tell that sprouts are ready by looking for visible roots and shoots that will emerge from the seed. Allow the shoots to grow at least one quarter inch before consuming, though waiting for shoots and roots to grow longer may be more to your liking. Experiment, and decide at what stage you prefer to eat your sprouts. Once they are ready to devour, drain off all excess moisture, and replace your screen lid with the original solid lid, and store the sprouts in the refrigerator.

Some seeds such as baby salad greens, wheat grass, and sunflower can be sprouted and harvested for their vegetation. Though a bit more involved, the process is still easier than growing a backyard garden, and the results can be amazing.

Prepare a horticultural planting tray by filling it with a medium of vermiculite, soilless organic potting mix, or a sheet of coconut fiber, better known as coir. The vermiculite or potting soil needs to be approximately 2 inches deep, or simply cut and lay the coir fabric to fit flush across the entire base of the tray. You will need a drip tray beneath your horticultural flat to catch the water that drains off after each watering.

Then, simply soak the desired seeds in room temperature filtered water for 8-12 hours. Rinse and drain seeds 4-5 more times over the course of the next two days. The goal is to have small roots before planting seeds in your tray. Thoroughly saturate vermiculite, organic potting soil, or coir pad with water prior to sowing seeds in the tray. Sprinkle seeds evenly across the growing medium heavily, allowing seeds to touch one another for best coverage. Once seeded, cover the tray with an inverted nontransparent tray to keep light out and moisture in. A hand sprayer works best to keep trays moist. An organic liquid sea kelp fertilizer diluted with water and mixed in your hand spray bottle is suggested to apply every other watering for maximum flavor and health of your sprouted greens.

After 3-4 days, when your sprouts reach 2-3 inches tall, remove the inverted lid and place your sprouted greens near a sunny window or under a florescent light, and watch them grow! You will need to add more water during this period of rapid growth, once or twice daily, as they are prone to drying out. It takes about 10 days to be ready for harvest. Your shoots will be 4-6 inches tall, and will have their first set of leaves (cotyledons) unfurled, and typically the hulls will have fallen away. If the second set of leaves emerge (the true leaves), then you have waited too long to harvest, and your sprouted greens may taste bitter. To harvest, simply cut the greens just above the medium and enjoy. While best eaten fresh, sprouted greens can be stored in your refrigerator for 1-2 weeks. Mix them in a stir fry, whirl them in soup, or sprinkle them atop your favorite salad.

Sprouts contain large quantities of vitamin and minerals, including vitamins A, C, E, B2, B5, and B6, and carotene, calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, phosphorous, zinc, and niacin. As significant, sprouts aid in digestion and help neutralize phytic acid, helping our bodies absorb calcium, magnesium, iron, copper, and zinc. Sprouts are a powerhouse of nutrition, and they taste great too!

Wes Duren is the Landscape and Construction Vice President of Marvin’s Organic Gardens in Lebanon, Ohio. He can be reached at (513) 932-3319 or wes@marvinsorganicgardens.com.

Need Advice? Ask a Farmer!

OEFFA’s Farmer Information Network is an information network that connects individuals with specific questions about sustainable and organic food production and marketing with experienced farmers who have the answers. To ask a question of a fellow farmer, or to volunteer to be a part of the network, contact Michelle Gregg-Skinner at (614) 421-2022 or michelle@oeffa.org.
Food Safety Dispute 2.0

Remember the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) that passed last year? OEFFA and our national partners worked hard to secure scale-appropriate food safety rules for small to mid-sized farms and processors producing fresh, healthy food for local and regional markets.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is now drafting food safety rules under the FSMA and their standards for leafy greens and other fresh produce is expected to be out by the end of the year.

Yet, out of left field, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has issued a proposed national food safety rule for spinach, lettuce, and cabbage called the National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA). This proposed rule was issued despite the fact that AMS does not have food safety jurisdiction or staff, and the rule will likely cause confusion and conflicting layers of food safety standards and audits.

And the protections for the small and mid-sized farms and organic farmers that provide some of the nation’s safest food? … Not there.

The governance structure for this agreement is dominated by processors and distributors and provides only token representation for farmers and consumers. The standards developed under this rule are likely to be driven by the most powerful voices and the largest players in the leafy greens market to the detriment of small and mid-sized farmers and processors.

AMS emphasizes that the rule is “voluntary.” But once a seller, processor, or distributor signs on, as nearly all are expected to do, it is mandatory for the farmer or grower who sell to them.

This national agreement is modeled after the California Leafy Green Marketing Agreement, which has proven to be an ineffective tool to achieve food safety and has prompted the indiscriminant and unnecessary removal of conservation buffers, water bodies, and wildlife habitat deemed, without any scientific basis, to be incompatible with food safety.

As an alternative to the one size fits all NLGMA, Ohio has been working to develop a proposed Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement, an Ohio-specific produce safety standard designed as a three tier system, to take into account the size and market methods used by the farm.

Conference Presenters, Ideas Wanted

Planning is underway for the 33rd annual OEFFA conference, Sowing the Seeds of our Food Sovereignty, February 18-19, 2012. Workshop presenter applications will be accepted through the summer but space is limited. If you would like to be considered for this year’s conference, please apply now. Contact Renee Hunt at (614) 421-2022 or renee@oeffa.org for an application, or to suggest a workshop idea or presenter.
Look for OEFFA and Community Shares in Your Workplace Giving Campaign: Another Way You Can Support OEFFA's Work

Community Shares connects people to local nonprofits working on the issues and causes they care about most. Community Shares member agencies are community-based, volunteer-led nonprofits that prevent family, school, and neighborhood violence, homelessness and hunger, child abuse and neglect, and environmental devastation; protect civil and human rights; and increase adult and children’s literacy, healthful living, safety, and social justice.

Employees can easily support nonprofits, like OEFFA, by making a paycheck donation in their workplace giving campaign.

Community Shares and its member agencies, including OEFFA, will be participating in these workplace campaigns in 2011:

**Public Workplaces** (OEFFA’s campaign code)
- Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), City of Columbus Combined Charitable Campaign, City of Dublin, Columbus Metropolitan Libraries, Columbus Public Schools, Combined Federal Campaign of Central Ohio (82902), Combined Federal Campaign of North Central Ohio (82902), Franklin County Combined Charitable Campaign, Hilliard Public Schools, Miami Valley (Dayton area) Combined Federal Campaign (82902), The Ohio State University “Bucks for Charity,” Columbus State Community College, South Western City Schools, State of Ohio Combined Charitable Campaign, Three Rivers Combined Federal Campaign (82902), Upper Arlington City Schools, Westerville Public Schools, Worthington Public Schools

**Private Workplaces**
- Battelle Memorial Institute, COSI, Denison University, Edison Welding Institute, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA), Ohio Historical Society, Hahn Loeser and Parks

**What You Can Do**
You can help by remembering Community Shares and your favorite member agencies, like OEFFA, in your workplace giving campaign. It’s easy to give and easy to help through payroll deduction. You can direct your campaign gift to one or several specific nonprofits.

Then, please encourage your family, friends, and coworkers to consider giving to Community Shares and OEFFA at the workplace. Contact us at oeffa@oeffa.org if you would like Community Shares brochures to distribute.

If your company does not include Community Shares and OEFFA, please consider asking that they are included. Visit www.communityshares.net or contact Community Shares at (614) 262-1176 or office@communityshares.net to find out how you can make charitable giving a part of your workplace.
Learning of my first vegetable garden, my friend Rachel said, “Read as many books as you can find but always remember that your own land will be a wonderful teacher. Study it. Observe what works and what doesn’t. Adapt the methods you learn from books and people to the needs of your own land.” It’s been helpful advice applied over many gardening seasons.

I also learn when I visit other gardens. For example I’ve always harvested leaf lettuce one outer leaf from each plant at a time over about a 4 month period. Recently a friend showed me she cuts the entire lettuce plant about an inch above the soil in her garden using the “cut and come again” method. The plant then produces another crop of leaves to harvest.

Another gardener told me she harvests leeks by cutting them a half-inch above the soil. The following year a ring of leek seedlings appear around the mother plant and are ready for transplanting.

Home gardeners can also learn from visiting farms. The 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop Series (see pg. 22), organized by OEFFA and other organizations, is a great resource for gardeners to hone their skills, gain inspiration, and to build community with others in the local food movement. Sometimes a gardener can form a partnership with a farm, each producing what they grow best. For example, while I grow berries, grapes, and winter salad crops, I buy carrots, potatoes, winter squash, and storage onions from a nearby farm. At times I’ve joined a CSA to increase produce variety and for storage and preserving, while continuing to garden at home.

Garden wisdom develops over time by studying our land, reading all we can, attending workshops and conferences, visiting other gardens, talking with gardening friends, and touring farms.

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

**Organic Conference Sessions**—Live recordings of the sessions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) first-ever Organic Farming Systems Research Conference, held March 16-18, have been posted online.  
quicklink: http://www.oeffa.org/quicklinks/ofc

**State Poultry Processing Regulations**—The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network has introduced a Guide to State Poultry Processing Regulations that provides a summary of state laws and regulations related to poultry processing, links to useful state-specific resources, and agency contact information.  
quicklink: http://www.oeffa.org/quicklinks/ppr

**Cover Crops Decision Tool**—The Midwest Cover Crop Council has released the Cover Crop Decision Tool, a web-based system to assist farmers in selecting cover crops to include in row crop rotations.  
http://www.mccc.msu.edu/selectorINTRO.html

**Ohio Farm Fresh Directory**—Ohio State University (OSU) Extension has developed a directory to find local fruit, vegetables, meat, livestock, and value-added products in northeast Ohio.  
http://www.ohiofarmfresh.com/

**Organic Apple Disease Management**—The Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center has prepared a report, Disease Management Guidelines for Organic Apple Production in Ohio.  
http://www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/organic-apple.html

**Prairie Restoration Handbook**—A handbook for establishing and managing prairies on farmland, Incorporating Prairies into Multifunctional Landscapes, is available free online or in print.  
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/store/

**National Farmers Market Directory**—Farmers market managers can update or add their farmers markets to the directory, the official count of farmers markets in the nation. The directory lists more than 6,100 farmers markets nationwide and serves as a resource for consumers, small producers, and policymakers.  
http://www.usdagovernmentupdate.com/

**Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Webpage**—Michigan State University has developed a webpage and grower forum for producers affected by the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.  
http://www.bmsb.opm.msu.edu

**Injury Prevention Factsheets**—The Ohio AgrAbility Program has produced a series of factsheets on injury prevention on topics including farming with a pacemaker, safety for senior farmers, ergonomics, injuries caused by lifting, heat stress, and more.  
http://ohioline.osu.edu/l.Lines/farm.html#SAFE

**Funding Opportunities**

**Young Farmer Agricultural Program**—The Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation is offering grants to farmers age 20-38 who reside in the 22 southern Ohio counties the foundation serves. Up to eight grants for on-farm projects at a maximum of $25,000 each will be awarded. Applications, including a business plan, are due August 31.  
http://www.soacdf.net

**Agricultural Economic Development Grants**—The Center for Farmland Policy Innovation at OSU has announced a request for proposals for the 2011 Community-Based Agricultural Economic Development planning grants. Funds will be awarded to entities that propose a process to incorporate agricultural economic interests in their community. Four to seven projects will be funded for a total of $35,000. Applications are due August 1.  
http://cffpi.osu.edu/program11.htm

**Salad Bar Grants**—The Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools program supports First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! initiative by awarding 6,000 salad bars to schools over the next three years.  
http://saladbars2schools.org

**Community Resources**

**Care and Share Time Bank**—The Care and Share Time Bank of Columbus is a service exchange system that allows individuals to exchange skills and services using “time credits.” Some of the services offered so far are: foreign language conversation, graphic design, clothing alterations and mending, cooking and baking, business development, medical troubleshooting, driving, and shopping help.  
http://community.timebanks.org/findtimebanks.php

**Drying Laundry the Old Fashioned Way**

Want to save money, lighten your environmental footprint, and have clean clothes? Get out those clothespins!

Machine drying clothes is the largest laundry energy use. By using a clothesline to dry laundry outside, according to Project Laundry List families can save an average of $25 per month! Plus, clothes are disinfected when dried in the sun since the ultraviolet radiation from the sun kills germs, and clothes last longer.
**Upcoming Events**

**Canning Basics Workshop**
Monday, July 18 — 7 p.m.
ACEnet
94 Columbus Rd., Athens, Ohio
Join Marjie Shew from Shew’s Orchard for an overview of basic home canning. For more information, call (740) 593-5971, email kurtcfi@frognet.net, or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.com.

**Farm Tour: Ohio Prairie Nursery**
Saturday, July 23 — 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
11961 Alpha Rd., Hiram Ohio
Join Bob Kelhers of Ohio Prairie Nursery to experience butterfly, hummingbird, and rain gardens and learn more about the production and distribution of native plants, seeds, and seed blends. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

**Farm Tour: Miller’s Organic Produce**
Tuesday, July 26 — 6:30-8 p.m.
17201 Bundyburg Rd., Middlefield, Ohio
Andy and Laura Miller run a certified organic farm, specializing in produce, poultry, dairy cows, horses, and maple syrup. Andy, board president of the Geauga Family Farms CSA, will discuss his success using this cooperative approach. This event is organized by Innovative Farmers of Ohio and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (800) 372-6092 or go to www.oeffa.org.

**Pest Identification Workshop**
Thursday, July 28 — 6-8 p.m.
Benjamin Franklin Community Garden
1905 Spring Rd., Cleveland, Ohio
Join OSU Extension to learn how to identify beneficial insects in the garden and how to minimize pest insects without using chemicals. For more information, call (216) 429-8224, email key-46@osu.edu or go to http://csuahoga.osu.edu.

**Farm Tour: Blue Rock Station, Log Cabin Weaving, and Butternut Farms**
Saturday, July 30 — 12-5 p.m.
1190 Virginia Ridge Rd., Philo, Ohio
1700 Millers Ln., Zanesville, Ohio
16563 Laurel Hill Rd., Glenford, Ohio
Join “Green Livin’ Farm Women” for this three-part tour led by Annie and Jay Warmke of Blue Rock Station, Brenda and Terry South of Log Cabin Weaving, and Patricia West-Volland of Butternut Farms. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

**Farm Tour: Trinity Farm Market and Meadow Rise Farm**
Saturday, July 30 — 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
7427 State Rt. 13, Bellville, Ohio
6991 Renie Rd., Bellville, Ohio
Trinity Farms Market is a family-owned year-round market specializing in organic and all natural foods. The second stop on this tour features Joan Richmond’s Meadow Rise Farm, which produces for the Trinity Farms Market. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

**Farm Tour: Integration Acres**
Sunday, July 31 — 1-2:30 p.m.
9794 Chase Rd., Albany, Ohio
Join owners Chris Chmiel and Michelle Gorman for a tour of Integration Acres, including livestock housing, pastures, and a goat milk parlor. This event is organized by the Athens County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau 30 Mile Meal Project and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (740) 592-1819 or go to http://www.athensohio.com/30mile.

**Farm Tour: Shagbark Seed and Mill Co.**
Sunday, July 31 — 2:45-4:15 p.m.
88 Columbus Rd., Athens, Ohio
Shagbark Seed and Mill Co. works to build a sustainable staple food system by providing processing equipment for dry beans and grain, seed, and flour for consumers. Tour participants can follow Shagbark’s products from farm to fork with a visit to Casa Nueva, a worker-owned eatery and bar. This event is organized by the Athens County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau 30 Mile Meal Project and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (740) 592-1819 or go to http://www.athensohio.com/30mile.

**Building a Compost Bin Workshop**
Saturday, August 6 — 4 p.m.
285 Canyon Dr., Columbus, Ohio
Anne Glass will present a hands-on lesson on building a simple composting system with low-cost materials. For more information, call (740) 593-5971, email kurtcfi@frognet.net, or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.com.

**Farm Tour: OARDC Frye Farm**
Tuesday, August 9 — 6-8 p.m.
1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, Ohio
Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) Frye Farm is host to melon pest management research trials, including management of bacterial wilt and cucumber beetles using row cropping and trap cropping. This event is organized by the OSU Sustainable Agriculture Team and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 292-2803 or email welty.1@osu.edu.

**Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers Regional Meeting**
Sunday, August 7 — 2-4 p.m.
285 Canyon Dr., Columbus, Ohio
Joseph Swain operates a certified organic urban farm located in the heart of Columbus growing a variety of vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, specialty crops, and seedlings. This event is organized by Innovative Farmers of Ohio and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (330) 988-0304 or email shoemfelt.9@osu.edu.

**Farm Tour: Morning Star Fiber**
Thursday, August 11 — 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
8522 Dover Rd., Apple Creek, Ohio
Morning Star Fiber provides value-added processing to raw wool from fiber producers around the country and the world. Following the Morning Star Fiber tour, tour participants can follow J.C. Christensen to the nearby Kidron Auction. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

**The Sustainable Summer Kitchen**
Sunday, August 14 — 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
38 Columbus Rd., Athens, Ohio
Learn how to cook from scratch using fresh, local, in-season produce. Overnight lodging and meals are included. For more information, call (937) 402-6918, email BainaBridge@att.net, or go to http://www.appalachianforestschool.org.

continued on pg. 20
Farm Tour: Chestnut Processing and Packaging Cooperative
Saturday, August 13—2-4 p.m.
4300 German Church Rd. SE, Carrollton, Ohio
The Chestnut Processing and Packaging Cooperative is the largest chestnut packing facility in the United States. Tour participants will view the chestnut orchards and learn about chestnut production and sales. This event is organized by the OSU Sustainable Agriculture Team and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (330) 627-4310.

Farm Tour: Hirzel Sustainable Research and Education Research Site
Wednesday, August 17—12-3 p.m.
Agriculture Incubator Foundation
13737 Middleton Pk. Rte. 583, Bowling Green, Ohio
Tour participants will learn about certified organic soybean production. The tour will highlight organic methods for insect pest control. Lunch included. This event is organized by the OSU Sustainable Agriculture Team and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (330) 627-4310 or email sundermeier.5@osu.edu.

Farm Tour: Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese
Saturday, August 20—11 a.m.
18637 Rd. 168, Defiance, Ohio
Family-owned and operated, Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese produces and direct markets grass-fed beef, pork, chicken, lamb, turkey, brown eggs, and raw milk cheeses. Participants will learn about how milk is turned into handmade, artisan, raw milk cheeses. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

Cover Crops Workshop
Saturday, August 20—5:30 p.m.
Sassafras Farm
10940 Lightfritz Ridge Rd., New Marshfield, Ohio
Join Ed Perkins at Sassafras Farm for a tour and information on planting cover crops to protect and nourish your soil. For more information, call (740) 593-5979, email kurtcfi@frognet.net, or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.com.

Farm Tour: Red Basket Farm
Sunday, August 21—11 a.m.-1 p.m.
6311 Mayburn Barclay Rd., Kinsman, Ohio
Red Basket Farm grows several acres of sweet corn and as many as 70 different varieties of vegetables year-round on about 20 acres using season extension. This event is organized by Innovative Farmers of Ohio and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (800) 372-6092 or go to www.ihof.org.

Farm Tour: Miller Livestock Co.
Sunday, August 21—2-4 p.m.
9590 Kinman-Pymatuning Rd., Kinsman, Ohio
Join Aaron Miller for a “pasture walk” to learn about his sustainable methods for raising grass-fed beef and lamb, pastured pork, and pastured-raised chicken and turkeys without chemicals, antibiotics, or hormones. This event is organized by Innovative Farmers of Ohio and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (800) 372-6092 or go to www.ihof.org.

Farm Tour: Rasawehr Farms Tour
Saturday, August 27—2-4 p.m.
8820 Kuck Rd., Celina, Ohio
Join the Rasawehr Family on this fourth generation, 2,100 acre grain and seed operation tour. This event is organized by the OSU Sustainable Agriculture Team and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (330) 627-4310.

OEFFA Grain Growers Chapter Meeting and Potluck
Saturday, August 27—9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Curly Tail Organic Farm
11464 Yankee St., Fredericktown, Ohio
Join the OEFFA Grain Growers Chapter for a potluck and meeting to discuss grain market trends, certified cleaning and processing, and preparing grain marketing plans. For more information, call (740) 507-1064 or email michelledgregg@gmail.com.

Farm Tour: Curly Tail Organic Farm
Saturday, August 27—1 p.m.
11464 Yankee St., Fredericktown, Ohio
Learn about Ed Snively’s organic production methods for raising pork, corn, soybeans, hay, and grain crops; and how he grinds and bags certified organic feed. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

Farm Tour: OARDC
Thursday, September 1—1:30-5 p.m.
1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, Ohio
The tour will feature specialty small grains research reports, cover crops in organic vegetables, polyculture fruit and vegetables, organic marketing and organic dairy uterine disease research results, and organic livestock research from a new sheep and goat grazing project. This event is organized by the OSU Sustainable Agriculture Team and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (330) 627-4310, email bielek.4@osu.edu, or go to http://cuyahoga.osu.edu.

Food Drying Workshop
Thursday, September 8—7 p.m.
ACNet
94 Columbus Rd., Athens, Ohio
Liz Shaw will provide instruction for drying fruits, meats, and vegetables at home. For more information, call (740) 593-5971, email kurtcfi@frognet.net, or go to www.communityfoodinitiatives.com.

Farm Tour: Marshy Meadows Farm
Saturday, September 10—3-5 p.m.
7490 Noble Rd., Winsor, Ohio
Marshy Meadows Farm is home to a 130 head grass-fed calf to finish operation. Owner Mardy Townsend will discuss management techniques and marketing opportunities in northeast Ohio. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

Farm Tour: Four Sisters Farm
Saturday, September 17—3 p.m.
6742 Lower Valley Pk., New Carlisle, Ohio
Home to a successful CSA, this preserved family farm operates without the use of synthetic agricultural chemicals. This event is organized by the Tecumseh Land Trust and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: Mile Creek Farm and CSA
Saturday, September 17—4-7 p.m.
10786 Mile Rd., New Lebanon, Ohio
Mile Creek Farm is a certified organic vegetable and flower farm serving the greater Dayton area through a 60 member CSA and Saturday farmers’ market sales. Come see the innovative production techniques used by owners Ben and Emily Jackie, including a homemade walk-in cooler and machinery for raised bed vegetable production. Bring a dish to share for the potluck. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: Ann’s Raspberry Farm
Sunday, September 18—1-4 p.m.
10940 Lightfritz Ridge Rd., New Marshfield, Ohio
A pick-your-own farm, Ann’s Raspberry Farm specializes in chemical-free red raspberries, Brussels sprouts, onions, and peppers grown on 5 acres of open fields and high tunnels. This event is organized by Innovative Farmers of Ohio and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (800) 372-6092 or go to www.ihof.org.
Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: New Liberty Farms
Sunday, September 18—1 p.m.
6840 Mosier Rd., Yellow Springs, Ohio
New Liberty Farms produces pasture-raised poultry and sells fresh and frozen whole meat and fresh eggs. This event is organized by the Tecumseh Land Trust and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: Carriage House Farm
Sunday, October 9—2 p.m.
10251 Miamiview Rd., N. Bend, Ohio
Carriage House Farm is a 300 acre Ohio Century Farm that was established in 1855. Tour participants will see a diverse and beautiful farm rooted in six generations of family stewardship. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

Farm Tour: Local Roots Market and South Market Bistro
Saturday, October 1—9 a.m.-3 p.m.
151 S. Market St., Wooster Ohio
Join Jessica Eikleberry for a tour of Local Roots Market, a year-round local food market. All products at the market are produced in Ohio and sold on consignment with 90 percent of the sales going to the producer. Then visit South Market Bistro, which sources Local Roots Market products for their menu. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

Farm Tour: Pleasantview Farm
Saturday, September 25—1 p.m.
930 Laurel Rd., Gallipolis, Ohio
Join OEFFA’s Athens Chapter for a tour of Laurel Valley Creamery, a sustainable grass based dairy that produces a variety of raw and pasteurized milk cheeses. See their rotational grazing operation, and tour the milking parlor, milk house, cheese house, and aging room. For more information, call (740) 517-1032 or email starlineorganics@live.com.

Advanced Sustainable Tomato Production Workshop
Friday, October 14—10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Shisler Conference Center
1625 Wilson Ave., Wooster, Ohio
Join OEFFA to learn about all aspects of tomato production from seed to harvest. This interactive workshop is designed for experienced growers looking for the most up to date and innovative strategies to improve their management techniques. It will address both field and high tunnel production and include information on disease management, grafting, and variety selection. Seating is limited. Cost: $85 OEFFA members, $100 nonmembers. Lunch included. For more information, call Laura at (614) 421-2022 or email laura@oeffa.org.

Raising the Salad Bar: Advanced Techniques and Season Extension for the Established Specialty Crop Grower
Saturday, November 5-Tuesday, November 8
Procter Camp and Conference Center
11235 State Rte. 38 SE, London, Ohio
Geared toward advanced growers, this multi-day, two-session workshop featuring Eliot Coleman and Josh Volk will equip specialty crop producers with the tools needed to improve efficiency, utilize season extension, engage in sophisticated business planning, and improve growing practices. Sponsored by OEFFA and Countryside Conservancy. Session 1 Cost: $45-$225. Session 2 Cost: $145-$325. For more information, see Pg. 22, call (614) 421-2022, or email michelle@oeffa.org.

Fracking: What Farmers Need to Know
OEFFA and the Ohio Environmental Council are planning to offer a webinar (computer needed) and phone conference call (no computer needed) in August. The sessions will provide information that farmers need to know about deep well hydrological fracturing, or fracking. More details available soon at www.oeffa.org, or contact Renee at (614) 421-2022 or renee@oeffa.org.

Hooked on Hydroponics Workshop
Saturday, October 1—10-11:30 a.m.
Sweet Greens Garden Center
5540 Brecksville Rd., Independence, Ohio
Join OSU Extension to learn the basics of building a hydroponic system and see a local business experimenting with different set ups. For more information, call (216) 429-8224, email key.46@osu.edu or go to http://cuyahoga.osu.edu.

The 5th Annual Stinner Summit
Friday, October 7
Wildwood Preserve Metropark
Toledo, Ohio
Save the date! For more information, go to http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/amp/pageview.aspx?id=1592

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Save the date! For more information, go to http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/amp/pageview.aspx?id=1592

Farm Tour: Flying Mouse Farms
Sunday, September 18—10 a.m.
100 Yellow Springs-Fairfield Rd., Yellow Springs, Ohio
This certified organic farm features season extension practices to produce food year-round. This event is organized by the Tecumseh Land Trust and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: Local Roots Market and South Market Bistro
Saturday, October 1—9 a.m.-3 p.m.
140 S. Walnut St., Wooster Ohio
Join Jessica Eikleberry for a tour of Local Roots Market, a year-round local food market. All products at the market are produced in Ohio and sold on consignment with 90 percent of the sales going to the producer. Then visit South Market Bistro, which sources Local Roots Market products for their menu. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

OEFFA Athens Chapter Farm Tour: Laurel Valley Creamery
Sunday, September 25—1 p.m.
930 Laurel Rd., Gallipolis, Ohio
Join OEFFA’s Athens Chapter for a tour of Laurel Valley Creamery, a sustainable grass based dairy that produces a variety of raw and pasteurized milk cheeses. See their rotational grazing operation, and tour the milking parlor, milk house, cheese house, and aging room. For more information, call (740) 517-1032 or email starlineorganics@live.com.

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Toledo, Ohio
Save the date! For more information, go to http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/amp/pageview.aspx?id=1592

Farm Tour: Pleasantview Farm
Saturday, September 24—2 p.m.
20361 Florence Chapel Pk., Circleville, Ohio
Learn about Perry Clutt’s livestock and land management practices for grass-fed dairy cows. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

OEFFA Athens Chapter Farm Tour: Laurel Valley Creamery
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930 Laurel Rd., Gallipolis, Ohio
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Farm Tour: Carriage House Farm
Sunday, October 9—2 p.m.
10251 Miamiview Rd., N. Bend, Ohio
Carriage House Farm is a 300 acre Ohio Century Farm that was established in 1855. Tour participants will see a diverse and beautiful farm rooted in six generations of family stewardship. This event is organized by OEFFA and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (614) 421-2022, email michelle@oeffa.org, or go to www.oeffa.org.

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Farm Tour: Flying Mouse Farms
Sunday, September 18—10 a.m.
100 Yellow Springs-Fairfield Rd., Yellow Springs, Ohio
This certified organic farm features season extension practices to produce food year-round. This event is organized by the Tecumseh Land Trust and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.

Farm Tour: New Liberty Farms
Sunday, September 18—1 p.m.
6840 Mosier Rd., Yellow Springs, Ohio
New Liberty Farms produces pasture-raised poultry and sells fresh and frozen whole meat and fresh eggs. This event is organized by the Tecumseh Land Trust and is part of the 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series. For more information, call (937) 767-9490 or go to www.tecumsehlandtrust.org.
2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour Series

The 2011 Ohio Sustainable Farm Tour and Workshop series, sponsored by OEFFA, the Athens County Convention and Visitors Bureau 30 Mile Meal Project, Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy, Innovative Farmers of Ohio, the Ohio State University Sustainable Agriculture Team, and the Tecumseh Land Trust, features 40 farms and food businesses, three university research centers, and three educational workshops, making this the largest farm tour series in OEFFA’s history. Twenty tours are being sponsored by OEFFA and will be held between June and November.

OEFFA has offered this series for the past 29 years, providing unique opportunities for Ohioans to see, taste, feel, and learn what sustainable food and fiber production is all about from the real experts—the farmers themselves.

Consumers interested in local foods, farmers and market gardeners wanting to learn more and network with other farmers, aspiring and beginning farmers, and anyone interested in learning more about the production and marketing techniques of sustainable farmers in Ohio, are encouraged to attend.

See the Events Calendar for more information. For a detailed list of all farm tours, including dates, times, farm descriptions, directions, and maps, go to www.oeffa.org/farmtour/.

Raising the Salad Bar: Advanced Techniques and Season Extension for the Established Specialty Crop Grower

Sponsored by OEFFA and the Cuyahoga Valley Countryside Conservancy, this multi-day, two session workshop will equip experienced specialty crop producers with the tools needed to improve efficiency, utilize season extension, engage in sophisticated planning, and improve growing practices.

Session 1:
Saturday, November 5-Sunday, November 6
This session will feature Josh Volk, vegetable production expert, lecturer, and regular contributor to Growing for Market. Josh’s Slow Hand Farm is home to his CSA, where he implements strategies for consistent yields of specialty crops. The session will address season long planning, seed starting and transplanting, weed management, pest and disease control, harvest and post-harvest handling, marketing outlets, and food safety. Celeste Welty of OSU Entomology will also be addressing pest and disease control.

Cost: Two day intensive workshop, including lodging at Procter Camp and Retreat in Londond, Ohio, all meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, wine and cheese reception), and bonfire social—$175 (cottage room, shared bathroom), $225 (hotel room, private bathroom). Two day intensive workshop, not including lodging, with lunch only both days—$45.

Session 2:
Monday, November 7-Tuesday, November 8
Session 2 will feature author, commercial market gardener, teacher, and lecturer Eliot Coleman. Eliot’s production techniques have influenced organic and ecological gardeners for over four decades. His books include The New Organic Grower, Four Seasons Harvest, and The Winter Harvest Handbook. This session will address advanced techniques for season extension options including high tunnels, low tunnels, cold frames, and greenhouses; utilizing season extension structures during the main season; crop selection; planting schedules and successions; harvest and post-harvest handling; soil management, and pest and disease control. Other presenters include Philip and Mindy Bartholomae and Sally Miller.

Cost: Two day intensive workshop, including lodging at Procter Camp and Retreat in London, Ohio, all meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, wine and cheese reception), and bonfire social—$275 (cottage room, shared bathroom), $325 (hotel room, private bathroom). Two day intensive workshop, not including lodging, with lunch only both days—$145.

Farmers can attend one or both sessions. Each session is limited to 25 farmers. For more information, contact OEFFA at (614) 421-2022 or michelle@oeffa.org or Countryside Conservancy at (330) 657-2542 or farmersmarket@cvcountryside.org.

OEFFA Conference Local Foods Challenge

The meals at OEFFAs 2011 conference featured products from approximately three dozen Ohio farms and businesses. To make it even more local, the OEFFA conference food committee is putting out a “Local Foods Challenge” to our membership and friends. The committee needs volunteers to help 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. Contact food committee member Leah Rond at (740) 965-4524 or lprond@gmail.com.

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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Follow OEFFA on Twitter www.twitter.com/oeffa
Join OEFFA Direct OEFFA’s email listserve and get updates sent right to your inbox.
To sign up, go to: www.oeffa.org
Welcome New OEFFA Members as of 6/15/2011

Business

Jeni Britton Bauer, Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream
Andrew Ladd & Kathleen Tucci, Whole Foods Market
Dan & Jennifer Lane, Garden Soil Supply
Lisa Schwind, Eden Foods, Inc.
Ben & Jerry’s

Family Farm

Elmer Beechy, Silent Acres Grass Farm
Kevin & Jill Bobb-Dunlevy, Bobb-Dunlevy Family Farm
Paul & Ivan Bontstrager, Ivan Bontstrager Farm
Becky & James Booseker, Berkshine Alpaca Farm
Steve & Colleen Byrd, Byrd Organic Farms
J.C. Christiansen, Morning Star Fiber
John Colman, Ivy Neck Farm
Aaron & Teri Comser, Clear Creek Organic Farm
Carolyn Estes & Carol Stouer, Trinity Farms Market
Avin & Sadie Mae Fisher, Rock Wind View Farm
David Fisher
Isaac Fisher
Steven Fisher, Suyke Farm
Steven & Rachel Gingerich, Cloverdale Dairy
Nebo Valley Farm
Moses & Steven Yoder, Cloverdale Dairy
John Yoder, Nebo Valley Farm
Moses & Steven Yoder, Clover Meadow Farm
Reuben Yoder

Individual

Gretchen Brummel
Erica Corvi
Barbara Fisher
Jennifer Rags
Tony Montgomery
David Sincoff
J. Swingle
Kate Tobin
Diana Webster

Student

Karsyn Delawyer
Benjamin Logan
Rebecca Newbold
Mackenzie Shipley

Family

Jennifer Herrschert & Steve Ross
Richard Shara
Andrea & Stephen Zamansky

For Sale: Two grass-fed steers from an organic farm are being sold by the half and quarter. Cattle not certified. Contact Ardell in Champaign Co. at (937) 484-3785 or sunsetiapdatacom.net.


For Sale: Gravelly mower with seat for riding. All metal and runs well. $75. Contact Annie in Muskingum Co. at (740) 674-4300.

For Sale: Dell computer. Needs reformatted but in excellent shape. Contact Annie in Muskingum Co. at (740) 674-4300.

For Sale: Small red trailer for hauling behind a lawn tractor. $75. Contact Annie in Muskingum Co. at (740) 674-4300.

For Sale: Hauling trailer for behind a truck or SUV. Homemade and built on a car tire axle. Needs a paint job. $200. Contact Annie in Muskingum Co. at (740) 674-4300.

For Sale: Certified organic cover crop seed, A.C. Greenfix Chickling vetch. Grows in the summer. 60 lb bags. $0.78/lb. Call Steve in Hamilton Co. at (513) 706-4792.

Farm Partner Wanted: Young farm partners wanted to manage transitioning 17.5 acre organic fruit and vegetable farm. Benefits include housing, profit share, eventual equity partnership in the farm operation, and lots of independence. Commercial scale production experience and general construction/renovation skills desirable. Contact Kip in Stark Co. at (330) 494-1775 or kipg1957@earthlink.net.

Farm Hand Wanted: Older woman in Junction City with 170 hilly acres, half wooded, half pasture seeks younger partner to expand operation. Currently raise Angus, would like to expand into pastured poultry. Contact Ellen in Perry Co. at (740) 674-4300.

Farmers Wanted: Shagbark Seed and Mill Co. is seeking farmers to buy grain and beans from to process for customers. Contact Michelle in Athens Co. at (740) 590-8240 or shagbarkmill@gmail.com.

Farmer Wanted: Tenant wanted to grow flowers or other plants that would thrive in wetland environment. 100 acre property with 45 acres of wetlands. Contact Bob in Trumbull Co. at (215) 873-4112.

www.farmingmagazine.net

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People, Land and Community

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You can also subscribe through our web site.

OEFFA News Summer 2011 23
OEFFA Assumes Administration of Ohio’s Organic Cost-Share Program:
Missed out on your Cost-Share reimbursement last year (or the year before)? It’s not too late!

One of the Farm Bill programs of greatest importance to organic farmers is the Organic Cost-Share Reimbursement Program. The program was created by the 2002 Farm Bill and renewed by the 2008 Farm Bill. Currently, organic producers and handlers may request a reimbursement of 75 percent (up to $750) of their certification fees. In almost all states, these federal funds are disbursed by the state department of agriculture.

Given cuts to the state budget, the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) was uncertain of its ability to continue to process reimbursement applications in a timely manner. OEFFA expressed to the department the importance of continuing to make these funds available to Ohio’s certified farms and processing facilities, a goal shared by the ODA. In a spirit of cooperative problem-solving, the ODA and OEFFA have entered into an agreement and as of June 2011, OEFFA is now responsible for administering this program for Ohio.

There are some important changes you will want to know about:

**If you currently hold a valid certificate, you may apply for your reimbursement before you receive your new certificate.** Along with your reimbursement application, you need to include copies of your paid invoice for this year and your current certificate. (Clients who are certifying for the first time will need to wait until they can also include a copy of their certificate as part of their Cost-Share application.)

You may use the application sent to you from OEFFA to request your reimbursement. If you are requesting reimbursement for multiple years, please include a separate application for each year. The application may also be downloaded from the OEFFA website: [www.oeffa.org/certification](http://www.oeffa.org/certification).

To be clear, this means that it is possible for an Ohio-based producer or handler to receive two or even three Cost-Share reimbursements this year, for expenses related to their annual certifications in 2011, 2010, and 2009 (if your certificate is dated October 1, 2009 or later).

We are pleased to be able to help Ohio’s organic farmers and processors participate in this program. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (614) 262-2022 or [organic@oeffa.org](mailto:organic@oeffa.org).

We will be accepting reimbursement applications retroactively for certification costs incurred in the last two years! If you did not receive Cost-Share money for certification expenses associated with a certificate dated October 1, 2009 or later, you are eligible to receive that reimbursement now.