

Thoughtful discussion or food fight?

PG 3



**Climate Regulations:**

“Ohio’s farmers stand ready to grow and innovate, but we cannot support the costs associated with current cap and trade legislation.” PG 5

Contest searches for new ice cream flavor

PG 8



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A PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

# BUCKEYE FARM NEWS

OHIO’S LARGEST AGRICULTURAL NEWSPAPER

MAY 13, 2010 | VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 14

## Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board gets to work

☐ Meetings, listening sessions under way

BY DAN TOLAND

“A very historic occasion,” is how Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Robert Boggs described the first official meeting of the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board.

The 13 members of the board, which was established by voters in November, took an oath to serve Ohio and started developing an approach to set standards for livestock care.

### Finding Common Ground

After briefings on how they will comply with Ohio’s rule-making process, ethics and public records laws, as well as the open meetings act, the diverse group looked to build upon initial areas of agreement.

Board members discussed factors they must consider when developing standards and started looking into livestock care standards already put in place by other organizations. According to Executive Director Mike Bailey, this step is a starting point for information gathering and research.

Boggs, also serving as the board chairman, cautioned that the board “will not get too far into standards until we hear the public’s say.”

The board has scheduled several public listening sessions around Ohio, the first of which took place in Geauga County earlier this month. More than 100 people showed up to offer opinions on livestock care standards.

“It was a really diverse group, and it did give people an opportunity to share any concerns they had,” said Leah Dorman, director of food

See LIVESTOCK, pg 2



Ohio lawmakers spoke out on a proposed leafy greens marketing agreement after hearing from Ohio Farm Bureau members in March.

# Call & Response:

## Lawmakers act on farmers' concerns about leafy greens proposal

BY AMY BETH GRAVES

During the last Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF) county presidents trip to Washington D.C., farmers sat down with members of Congress and explained why a federal proposal on leafy greens would not work in Ohio. Not only did the lawmakers listen but they took action.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed a National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement that would create production and handling regulations mainly for leafy greens but may also impact other fresh vegetables. The agreement is voluntary and is in reaction to recent food safety outbreaks. Those who participate would be subject to federal inspections and be allowed to use a food safety seal for their produce.

OFBF leaders told lawmakers that the USDA proposal could lead to a one-size-fits-all approach and doesn’t adequately address regional farm production practice flexibility, cost to growers and Midwestern wildlife and weather challenges.

“In response to Ohio farmers’ concerns, Representative John Bocchieri and Representative Jean Schmidt took the lead in sending an Ohio congressional delegation letter to the secretary of agriculture expressing their concerns about the leafy greens agreement,” said Adam Sharp, OFBF’s senior director of legislative and regulatory policy.

“Ohio farmers take food safety quite seriously. Unfortunately, the regulatory approach proposed by the Department is raising major operational and cost concerns for our farmers,” according to the letter, which was signed by Reps. Steve Austria, John Boehner, Jim Jordan, Marcy Kaptur, Dennis Kucinich, Steve LaTourette, Bob Latta, Pat Tiberi, Mike Turner, Zack Space, Charlie Wilson, Bocchieri and Schmidt.

If the marketing agreement is modeled after one in California, it won’t be a good fit for Ohio, Sharp said. For example, the California agreement has many requirements for managing wildlife in fields, which would be difficult for many growers to comply with in the Midwest.

“We have a growing number of successful small produce auctions that sell generally small allotments for many producers. Under the proposed new rules, Amish growers will struggle and the auctions would

See FARMERS, pg 2

**+1**

Our strength is in our numbers. Share this article with one nonmember to show how Farm Bureau members work directly with lawmakers to affect public policy.



Bocchieri



Schmidt

## Livestock coalition meeting looks at animal care issues

BY SETH TETER

Representatives of the American Humane Association, which is supporting the efforts of the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board, recently addressed a record crowd of more than 200 individuals at the Ohio Livestock Coalition annual meeting.

David Geis, American Humane Association chairman, said he looks forward to working with the livestock community to make the board a success in Ohio.

“We bring our reputation to the table,” he said. “We will speak very, very loudly if this effort turns into a front or an imitation.”

Tim Amlaw, vice president of the American Humane Certified farm animal program, shared with attendees the organization’s commitment to helping the board establish science-based auditing, education and operations practices.

“Science isn’t the only thing we have to look at, but it has to start there,” he said.

Amlaw also said that livestock

care standards must be flexible and be good for the people involved.

“It certainly has to be good for your business,” he said.

However, he said livestock care is ultimately not about marketing a product.

“It’s about doing the right thing.” A leading critic of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) spoke about the tactics employed by the nation’s largest animal rights organization.

See COALITION, pg 2

### Award Winners

During its annual meeting, the Ohio Livestock Coalition congratulated these Ohio farmers for their efforts to protect the environment:

- **Dairy:** Miedema Dairy, Pickaway County
  - **Pork:** Wuebker Farms, Darke County
  - **Poultry:** Stoller Farms, Van Wert County
  - **Beef:** Raines Farms, Adams County
  - **Sheep:** Ray Family Farm, Logan County
  - **Corn/Soy:** Fred Yoder Farms, Madison County
- Additionally, Maken Bacon farm of Wyandot County and Don Diefendorff of Medina county were presented with the Neighbor the Year Award.

Photo by Jodi Miller

## THE MESSAGE BOARD

### Working with Hunters

Kim Davis, an Ohio Farm Bureau state trustee from Carroll County, and Timothy Ratliff, an Adams County farmer, have been named to the Ohio Wildlife Council. The eight-member board approves ODNR Division of Wildlife proposed rules and regulations.

### “ Their Words

*“A cow is not used to a police cruiser chasing it, so it's going to try and get away.”*

**Kent McGuire of Ohio State Extension describing the unsuccessful tactics of public safety officials who attempted to corral two cows that got loose on the Ohio State University campus during a visit to the veterinary clinic.**

### Save the Date: July 10

**What:** OFBF Young Agricultural Professionals (YAP) Summer Retreat  
**Where:** Columbus Zoo and Aquarium  
**Who:** OFBF members between the ages of 18 and 35 as well as their children.

Take a self-guided walking safari of the zoo. Following lunch, participants will attend a program showing them how to become “advocates” for agriculture while the kids take part in a special presentation by storyteller Lyn Ford.

The cost is \$5 per single, \$10 per couple and \$15 per family (YAP parents and children under their immediate membership). Registration includes zoo admission and lunch and is due June 24. Contact your county Farm Bureau office.



### A matter of fact?

The comic strip “You Can with Beakman and Jax,” which is carried in syndication and printed in newspapers across the nation, recently attempted to explain dairy farming to its young audience. Here’s some of the “facts” the comic strip provided in response to a question about cows from an inquisitive reader:

- Almost all dairy cows are raised in factories where they’re fed surplus corn and soy.
- At 15 months old, a female calf is a cow...Cows reach maturity in about 12 months.
- Factory cows get more diseases, so they are medicated constantly. Their food includes drugs like antibiotics and hormones.
- Factory cows live from 3 to 4 years before they die. Cows that eat grasses in meadows live and produce milk for up to 20 years.

In a letter to the cartoonist, American Farm Bureau President Bob Stallman said the comic strip was “filled with errors, inaccuracies and outright lies. You have done a great disservice to America’s hard-working dairy farm families,” he wrote.

#### LIVESTOCK from PG 1

programs for Ohio Farm Bureau’s Center for Food and Animal Issues.

The audience included large farmers, small farmers, conventional and organic farmers as well as consumers. Additional listening sessions were scheduled for this past week, and dates and locations of upcoming sessions can be found at [www.ofbf.org](http://www.ofbf.org), by searching for “public listening sessions.”

The board will also have a website with a component for submitting public comment and the ability for Ohioans to sign up for electronic updates on any rules being considered. A representative from the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management will serve as an impartial third-party facilitator of board discussions to ensure an unbiased approach to carrying out the board’s mission.

#### Plan of Action

During its first meeting, the board developed a general timeline with a goal of recommending standards in the fall and having a prioritized set of species-specific standards approved by

the end of 2010.

A framework for technical advisory subcommittees to be set up by Vice Chair Tony Forshey, Ohio’s state veterinarian, was approved by the board. These will serve as the initial work force to compile scientific data and research on animal care and well-being.

Regularly scheduled board meetings will be held every two weeks during the summer beginning June 1.

No standards set by the board will go into place until approved through the formal JCARR (Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review) rules process.

#### Funding

Boggs said he will seek the approval of \$354,187 in Fiscal Year

#### Meet the board members

Biographies of the members of the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board can be found by searching for “Livestock Care Board Appointments” at [www.ofbf.org](http://www.ofbf.org)

#### COALITION from PG 1

David Martosko, who operates [www.humanewatch.org](http://www.humanewatch.org), a blog that has generated more than 30,000 supporters on Facebook in recent months, said the only thing that separates HSUS from the notorious People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is “they’re just smarter and more patient.”

“PETA’s primary goal is to make HSUS look reasonable by comparison,” he said. “It’s this good cop/bad cop routine.”

Martosko questioned why HSUS President Wayne Pacelle, a longtime vegan activist, should be involved in policy discussions about livestock farming, since “there is no such thing as humane meat to this guy.”

“He’s an outsider, not a stakeholder,” Martosko said. “He doesn’t get a seat at the table. He doesn’t deserve a seat at the table, because he wants to reduce the table to toothpicks.”

Whether farmers like it or not, Martosko said they face an endless battle with HSUS, because “you can’t possibly pacify these guys.”

He also noted that HSUS’s fundraising commercials are cleverly designed to reinforce the

organization’s image as a pet care organization and ultimately amount to free public relations.

“The point of these ads you see on TV isn’t to raise money; it’s to break even,” he said.

While most people wrongly believe that HSUS is an umbrella group for local humane societies, Martosko acknowledged that HSUS has a positive public image.

“It’s not enough just to tell your story; you have to tell theirs,” he said.

Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Robert Boggs said the “whole world of agriculture in the U.S. is looking to Ohio” to see how it is handling animal care issues.

Boggs criticized HSUS as a “parental” and “elitist” organization who “literally thinks they know more than the people of Ohio.” Boggs said Gov. Ted Strickland will actively campaign against the group’s proposed ballot measure to undermine the work of the Livestock Care Standards Board.

“I really believe the board that we have can do the job and is something we all can work with,” he said.

2010 and 2011 to fund the board (from already existing ODA funds). He said he will also request funding for additional staff to enforce standards in the next biennial budget if necessary. In addition, documentation of all sources of funding and where it’s being directed will be provided.

In response to concerns about a provision allowing the board to receive donations, Boggs made it clear he has no intention of accepting donations from entities regulated by the board or from any organization with members regulated by the board. This decision was formally supported by board members.

#### Progress on Priorities

Acknowledging the pressures put on the board by outside animal rights activists and a possible ballot initiative affecting the board in the fall, Boggs said it has a “need to show voters of Ohio some progress in a quick amount of time.” Members discussed which issues they considered the most pressing for the public and possibly prioritizing work on standards to reflect this.

To hear more from the speakers at the Ohio Livestock Coalition annual meeting, visit [www.townhallohio.org](http://www.townhallohio.org).

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#### FARMERS from PG 1

likely go out of business given the complexity of the new rules and associated costs that would drive buyers elsewhere,” Ohio Farm Bureau said in a letter sent late last year to Ohio’s senators. The letter also was signed by the Ohio Produce Growers and Marketing Association, Ohio Ecological Farm and Food Association and Farmers Produce Auction.

Under the marketing agreement, Ohio would be at an economic disadvantage because its growers have a much shorter growing season than California and wouldn’t be able to spread the cost of regulation out over an entire year as is done in California, Sharp said.

“Some of the standards adapted in California also won’t work here such as the requirements for water usage and controls for wildlife in the fields,” he said. “We care deeply about food safety but we’re concerned that USDA is trying to deal with food safety concerns through a marketing instrument that, because of the way it is structured, may benefit Western growers and not recognize Midwestern methods of production.”

The leafy greens agreement is separate from comprehensive food safety legislation being considered in the U.S. Senate and a proposal by the Food and Drug Administration on how all fresh fruits and vegeta-

bles should be produced. The Senate bill is similar to one passed in the House last year that gives FDA the authority to monitor food production and take quicker and stronger action during food safety outbreaks. OFBF was neutral on the House bill and has not taken a formal position on the Senate version, Sharp said.

“There have been many improvements to the bill but we remain concerned that if the federal government misidentifies a food item during a food outbreak and causes major harm to that item’s market, that growers need to be compensated,” he said.

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ANALYSIS

# Dinner table conversation

Earlier this year, a *Los Angeles Times* columnist tried to navigate a “long-overdue” national discussion about food and farming.

“The only problem is that so far it hasn’t been much of a conversation. Instead, what we have are two armed camps deeply suspicious of one another shouting past each other,” wrote columnist Russ Parsons, who said farming critics are often characterized as “know nothing urbanites” and farmers as “thoughtless ravagers of the environment.”

That was the message echoed by a food system analyst who recently spoke to representatives of the Ohio farming community during an industry roundtable.

“Both sides are shooting bullets at one another and nothing is really connecting,” said Terry Fleck of the Center for Food Integrity, an organization working to rebuild trust in how America produces food.

But perhaps a prolonged food fight could be avoided.

Recently, representatives from OFBF and the Ohio Ecological Food and Farming Association appeared on a WOSU radio program to discuss some of the issues raised in the sharply critical documentary *Food, Inc.* After a listener asked about how the two farm groups are sometimes portrayed as adversaries, both panelists agreed that their organizations had a shared goal of strengthening farming and rural Ohio.

And there was no evidence of irreconcilable differences when OFBF held its first Grow and Know event, which sought to engage anyone who was interested about producing their own food on a small scale.

“People are open-minded and they just want information,” observed OFBF Promotion Specialist Cara Lawson during the event. “We had a variety of different people with dif-



Photo by Lynn Snyder

A sell out crowd attended Ohio Farm Bureau's first Grow and Know event at Malabar Farm to learn more about producing food. Learn more or register for upcoming Grow and Know events at [www.OurOhio.org](http://www.OurOhio.org).

ferent perspectives on food and farming and they just wanted to understand agriculture a little more.”

A maximum capacity of more than 100 participants came from all parts of Ohio to get information from farmers on topics such as growing berries, raising poultry and gardening.

“The farmers are really the stars and there is a huge market for these resources,” Lawson said. “It’s really a concept of helping farmers and consumers get together, it serves as a member benefit and it leaves people with a good feeling about what Farm Bureau is about.”

Fleck said that it is a good sign that people want to reconnect to their food through growing a portion of it themselves, but conversations about the food system need to be broadened

to include issues such as how to feed a growing population when 1 billion people are already chronically hungry.

Even in the United States, with “the most affordable, the most developed food system in the world, we still have hungry people,” he said. “For most of us, that is a reality we probably don’t touch.”

Fleck described a two-tiered food system where many consumers are able to choose from a wide array of products that meet their personal beliefs, while others would simply be satisfied if they had access to adequate nutrition.

He said farmers have done a great job in advancing with science and technology, “but we’ve left the consumer out of it,” he said.

“They have no idea if they can trust you,

because they don’t know you,” he said.

Although the high-profile criticism farmers are receiving may not be balanced, Fleck said the heightened public interest is good for the food system; it offers farmers an opportunity to look in the mirror and evaluate their practices and opens up the door for them to share their values.

“(Critics) are actually doing us a service, because they’re ushering in a conversation that we really need to be having,” he said.

## Buying Local Directory

One of the many ways in which Ohio Farm Bureau is carrying out its mission to forge a partnership between farmers and consumers is through its Buying Local Directory at [www.OurOhio.org](http://www.OurOhio.org).

With summer around the corner, there is no better time for Farm Bureau members to participate. The Our Ohio website receives more than 300,000 unique Web hits annually and is a great free opportunity for members to promote their retail farm businesses. The directory features an interactive Ohio map and includes farm businesses listed by county with hours, addresses and products.

Businesses found in this directory include roadside stands, farm markets, farmers markets, restaurants, wineries, Christmas tree farms, U-pick farms, garden centers/retail greenhouses, agritourism opportunities, produce auctions Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and alpacas, horses and llamas.

For more information about being included in the directory visit [www.tinyurl.com/BuyingLocalRegistration](http://www.tinyurl.com/BuyingLocalRegistration) or contact your county Farm Bureau office.

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# NEWS *briefs*

## Call goes out for immediate estate tax reform

American Farm Bureau Federation and several other agricultural groups are calling for permanent and meaningful estate tax relief for America's farm and ranch families. AFBF and 27 other organizations sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., stating that inaction on fixing the looming estate tax challenge would be disastrous for agriculture. "American agriculture is traditionally a family-owned enterprise, and estate taxes can take a severe toll on family members who wish to carry on the farm and ranch traditions," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. If Congress does not act beginning in 2011, the law will call for a \$1 million exemption and top rate of 55 percent. The negative impact on farm and ranch families will be significant and will cause many viable agricultural operations to disappear. AFBF supports permanently raising the exemption to no less than \$5 million per person and reducing the top rate to no more than 35 percent and that the exemptions be indexed to inflation, provide for spousal transfer and include the stepped-up basis.

## GREEN Jobs Act gets AFBF support

The Grow Renewable Energy from Ethanol Naturally (GREEN) Jobs Act of 2010 would give a five-year extension to the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit and the Small Ethanol Producers Tax Credit. These two provisions are set to expire at the end of 2010. The bill would also extend the Cellulosic Ethanol Production Tax Credit for three years and the secondary tariff on ethanol that offsets the benefit received by imported ethanol. New and expanded incentives that encourage a more diverse feedstock base for cellulosic fuels are needed to reduce price competition for crops that can serve as energy sources and as food and feed. AFBF supports the bill.

## EPA blog post causes concern

A recent blog post by an Environmental Protection Agency intern on the agency's official blog "Greenversations" has drawn criticism. In the post, the intern promotes giving up meat because of environmental and animal welfare concerns. "While this is a position taken by an intern of the agency, EPA should control its blog space. What is written on its blog comes across as its official position toward farmers and ranchers that it regulates and shows a terrible disregard for them and the agricultural industry," said AFBF President Bob Stallman.

# New EPA rule requires farms to have spill prevention plan

A new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rule would require farms to have a spill prevention plan in place later this year.

The Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Rule requires farms and other facilities to have a spill protection plan in place to help prevent oil spills that could damage waterways. The written plan must describe how to prevent and respond to a spill.

The new rule starts Nov. 10 but EPA has proposed extending the compliance date; that proposal is pending at the Office of Management and Budget. The rule applies to farms that store, transfer, use or consume oil or oil products such as diesel fuel, gasoline, lube oil, hydraulic oil, adjuvant oil, crop oil, vegetable oil, animal fat or pesticides that are oil-based or mixed with oil and stored on the farm. The rule applies to farms that:

- store more than 1,320 gallons above ground.
- store more than 42,000 gallons in buried containers.
- and could reasonably be expected to discharge oil to waterways.

Farm Bureau filed comments on the proposed rule, and EPA addressed several of Farm Bureau's concerns, said Adam Sharp, Ohio Farm Bureau's senior director of legislative and regulatory policy. "But with no agriculture exemption in the law, the agency decided to move forward with enforcement of the rules."



Starting in November, some farmers who store oil products must have a written plan for preventing and addressing spills.

EPA has proposed exempting milk containers and associated piping and appurtenances from the SPCC requirements provided they are constructed according to current 3-A sanitary standards and are subject to the current applicable Grade A. Pesticide application equipment and related mix containers also would be exempt under the rule.

A spill protection plan should spell out what measures are taken

to prevent spills from reaching waterways, who will clean up the spill and how. Instructions and plan templates can be found at [www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/spcc/tier1temp.htm](http://www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/spcc/tier1temp.htm).

"Farmers who are near the thresholds need to read, understand and comply with these new requirements," Sharp said.

For more information visit [www.tinyurl.com/spccfarms](http://www.tinyurl.com/spccfarms).

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POLICY & POLITICS

# AFBF responds to health care bill

According to American Farm Bureau Health Policy Specialist Pat Wolff, without a way to keep costs under control, provisions in the new health care bill could put some farmers in a pinch.

"Farmers and ranchers don't like the idea that the government is telling them that they have to have insurance. Insurance is expensive. If farmers and ranchers could afford it now they probably would cover themselves and their families," she said.

To help ease the burden of health care costs, the bill includes an "exchange," which Wolff likened to an eBay for insurance.

"There will be one exchange in each state. The bill defines four levels of insurance coverage: a basic plan, a high-end plan and two in between. And a person who wants to buy insurance on the exchange will go online, look at the four options, be able to tell what insurance companies are selling those plans for in their state and how much each one is charging," she said.

The exchanges are similar to association health care plans, which

Farm Bureau has supported for years.

But Wolff said the bill is long on mandates and short on things that will guarantee that prices will be contained.

"One of the things that's missing from the bill is tort reform. So there's no mention of doing away or scaling back the lawsuits that people bring against doctors and hospitals. Those lawsuits are believed to increase the costs of health care because doctors and hospitals do extra procedures and order extra tests just to prevent from being sued," she said.

Wolff also noted that there are provisions in the bill that could protect farmers who hire part-time or seasonal workers.

"The requirement to provide coverage for employees – and that's for businesses with over 50 people – is only for full-time employees.

That's people who work more than 30 hours a week. There's also relief in the bill for those who hire seasonal workers, workers who are on a farm or in a business less than 120 days."

AFBF had opposed the bill, believing that negatives of new taxes, mandates, growth in government programs and overall cost far outweigh its benefits.

**"One of the things that's missing from the bill is tort reform."**

~Pat Wolff, AFBF



Wolff

## Advisory Councils: Speak Out

Your guide for June meetings

### Acting on your input

Based on recent feedback, including a survey sent to Advisory Council members, Advisory Council guides will now follow a consistent schedule. Each monthly council meeting will have an official council guide so all Advisory Council members will be on the same page. The council guides will always be included in issues of *Buckeye Farm News* that arrive prior to the start of each month. For example, this council guide will be the official guide for June council meetings.

### Discussion for June Advisory Council meetings

**Discussion Topic:** "I'm from the government and I'm here to help." Is the current level of government involvement a net hinderance or a net benefit to agriculture?

Everyone has opinions on government involvement. It's the topic of everyday conversation at the feed mill, grain elevator, local coffee shops and around the dinner table. Everyone has their own ideas and opinions about what government should and should not do when it comes to agriculture and now it's your turn to share how your ideas could shape Farm Bureau policy.

Several stories in this edition of *Buckeye Farm News* deal with the regulation of agriculture.

The story *Call and Response* on page 1 discusses potential negative impacts that produce regulations could have on Ohio growers. However, the article *Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board gets to work* on page 1 shows how the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board is taking a flexible and comprehensive approach to regulation to ensure that

farmers and consumers are not harmed as standards are set for the care of livestock.

Here are questions to assist you in your overall discussion:

Consider the many ways that the government has always been involved in agriculture: the farm bill, conservation programs, environmental regulation, taxes, inspections, disease control, etc.

- Are there areas of agriculture where the government goes too far?
- When is government interaction with agriculture necessary?

**Your policy action statement:** Based on your discussion on the questions above, what policy (suggestions/revisions/additions) does your council recommend?

### Council challenge

The topic above will be featured during the Young Agricultural Professionals' Discussion Meet competition that will take place at Ohio Farm Bureau's leadership conference. Young Agricultural Professionals are Farm Bureau members ages 18 to 35 who are interested in improving the business of agriculture, learning new ideas and developing leadership skills. Invite a young agricultural professional to your council meeting to be part of the discussion. It's a great opportunity to get them involved, to voice their ideas and to promote the advisory council program.

# Farm groups outline concerns with climate regulations

Ohio farm organizations recently sent a letter to Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown asking him to carefully consider the unintended environmental and economic impacts of climate change legislation.

"Congress must be careful not to act simply for the sake of acting. Currently, pending climate change legislation in the Senate will have a major detrimental impact on Ohio's farmers through increased energy costs, increased input prices and new burdensome regulations," the letter stated.

The letter was sent by Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio Soybean Association, Ohio Poultry Association, Ohio Cattlemen's Association, Ohio Pork Producers Council, Ohio Dairy Producers Association and the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association.

The letter highlighted the effectiveness of voluntary, incentive-driven approaches to addressing environmental challenges, noting Ohio's leadership in the development of sustainable, agricultural-based bioproducts.

"Comprehensive climate and energy legislation must simultaneously invigorate the economy and protect the environment. Ohio's farmers stand ready to grow and innovate, but we cannot support the costs associated with current cap and trade legislation and the impact it will have to our farms and our rural communities," it stated.

The farm organizations also encouraged support of Senate Joint Resolution 26 to disapprove of Environmental Protection Agency regulation of greenhouse gases.

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## Equip Yourself

The Toolbox is an e-newsletter that provides resources to counter the well-financed, out-of-state animal rights activists who are working to seize control of the decision-making process for livestock care standards in Ohio. These activists are working hard to write specific restrictions on livestock farming into Ohio's constitution without the input and debate of the Ohioans who will be affected. The Toolbox provides farmers with regular updates on the activists' efforts and offers information and action steps that readers can utilize to protect Ohio's farming community. To subscribe, send an e-mail to [toolbox@ofbf.org](mailto:toolbox@ofbf.org).



## AgriPOWER Institute seeks applicants

Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is seeking applicants for its third AgriPOWER Institute. AgriPOWER, an intensive, yearlong leadership training program, was created in 2008 to equip farmers and agricultural professionals with the leadership skills needed to be influencers in public policy issues that impact their businesses.

Starting July 23, the 2010-2011 class will engage in seven two- to three-day training sessions. OFBF staff and outside experts will provide extensive instruction on the policy issues that face local communities, Ohio, the nation and the world. Specific sessions will focus on important leadership skills such as public speaking and identifying and using individual strengths.

The program also will offer external educational experiences, including a trip to Washington, D.C. Institute participants will engage with government officials, activists, media insiders and farm leaders on pressing local, state and national issues. Among the topics are government structure and spending, regulations, the environment, animal welfare, international trade and public relations.

For more information, visit [www.tinyurl.com/agripower](http://www.tinyurl.com/agripower).

## OUTREACH

## Youth conferences focus on leadership

Ohio teens are invited to join together for a unique set of summer leadership conferences sponsored by OFBF.

Each conference will provide opportunities for youths to bond and build quality leadership, teamwork and communications skills. The programs change yearly to provide youths with a new set of leadership skills and experiences each time they attend.

Quest, for ages 12 to 14, will be held July 18-20 at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus. Participants will learn basic leadership skills based on confidence, self image, attitude, friendship, family and character. Registration is \$150 per person. The deadline to register is July 1.

Higher Ground, for ages 14 to 18, will also be held at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus. From June 13-18, teens discover creativity, leadership and teambuilding skills through hands-on workshops and

activities. This year's workshops focus on goal setting, accountability, time management, dealing with conflict and becoming a positive influence. Teens will also participate in a mock legislature and confidence-building electives that build teamwork and creativity. Past electives have included public speaking, interviewing and resume writing, digital photography, a defensive driving course and self-defense. Registration is \$250 per person. The deadline to register is June 1.

Fees for both programs include over 20 workshops, electives, meals, lodging and a T-shirt.

To register, contact your county Farm Bureau office or download a registration from the Quest and Higher Ground event listings at [www.ofbf.org](http://www.ofbf.org) and send it to your county Farm Bureau office. Youths must be from OFBF member families to attend and many counties offer scholarships to attend.



Photo courtesy of Pike County Farm Bureau

(L-R) Rob Junk, Pike County prosecutor; Rich Henderson, county sheriff; Christopher Brust, county Farm Bureau president, and Tiffany Pattison, Farm Bureau regional supervisor.

## Farm Bureau presents reward

A Pike County man recently received a \$2,500 reward from Farm Bureau for information he provided to the Pike County Sheriff's office that led to the arrest and conviction of an individual who committed a crime on the property of a Pike County Farm Bureau member. The property protection program is a member benefit of Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. Learn more at [www.tinyurl.com/2500Reward](http://www.tinyurl.com/2500Reward).

## OFBF pulling for members in new partnership

Ohio Farm Bureau and the National Tractor Pullers Association (NTPA) are teaming up to provide discounts and promotions for Ohio Farm Bureau members in 2010. A significant aspect of this partnership will be the discounts for members on *The Puller* magazine, select event tickets and other NTPA merchandise at [www.ntpapull.com](http://www.ntpapull.com)

This partnership marks the first step toward working together to introduce Ohio Farm Bureau members to NTPA pulling fans through more than 20 Ohio events. Thousands of fans turn out annually for county fair pulling events, and NTPA is considered the pinnacle of the sport.

Ohio Farm Bureau members can use the discounts on a variety of merchandise, including:

- 30 percent off *The Puller* magazine subscription
- 25 percent off *PULL!* event program archives
- 20 percent off NTPA Championship Pulling DVD sets
- May Only: Select NTPA T-shirts are available for \$8.

Visit the NTPA website and click on Shop, then Ohio Farm Bureau Member Specials on the left side. Enter the discount code "OFBfpull" and your Farm Bureau membership number found on your membership card at checkout to receive the discounted price.

Both organizations have a mutual history that makes the partnership a natural fit. "The sport of pulling is firmly planted in the heart of Ohio, which was a founding state to the NTPA some 41 years ago," said Gregg Randall, NTPA general manager. "We look forward to seeing all Ohio Farm Bureau members come out to see the technology at work and horsepower generated by these pulling competition machines."

To learn more about OFBF and National Tractor Pullers Association special offers, visit [www.tinyurl.com/OFBFNTPA](http://www.tinyurl.com/OFBFNTPA)

## Where 'agvocates' go to get social

As documented in the March 25 *Buckeye Farm News* article "Farmers sway companies to end HSUS sponsorship," members of the agriculture community are using social media as a rapid and influential way to connect and share information with both those within and outside of traditional agricultural circles.

Want to connect with others with a purpose on behalf of agriculture? Check out these social media hotspots and hangouts where you'll always find advocates ready to speak out for agriculture.

**#AgChat:** Weekly Twitter conversation for folks involved in agriculture on Tuesdays from 8-10 p.m. — [www.twitter.com/agchat](http://www.twitter.com/agchat). Continue conversation on the #AgChat Facebook group (found by searching for #Agchat in Facebook). FAQs available at <http://tinyurl.com/agchatFAQs>. More info at [www.agchat.org](http://www.agchat.org)

**Advocates for Agriculture:** The blog of Troy Hadrick, the South Dakota rancher famous for his YellowFail YouTube video that started an on-line movement to inform YellowTail Wine about its misinformed donation to the Humane Society of the United States. <http://www.advocatesforag.blogspot.com/>

**County Farm Bureau Facebook Pages:** Many county Farm Bureaus have started their own Facebook Pages to connect with members locally. Visit [www.facebook.com/OhioFarmBureau](http://www.facebook.com/OhioFarmBureau) and click on the "Boxes" tab to look for your county page in the "Favorite Pages" section.

**Farm2u:** "A place to connect with



farmers & ranchers, and ask questions about why we do what we do to grow and raise food for you." [www.facebook.com/farm2u](http://www.facebook.com/farm2u) and [www.twitter.com/farm2u](http://www.twitter.com/farm2u)

**FollowFarmer Database:** Find nearly 800 Agricultural Twitter users at <http://bit.ly/FFarmer>. Be added to the list by sending a tweet starting with "@followfarmer" and telling where you're from and what you do while asking to be added.

**HumaneWatch:** A blog dedicated solely to posting daily facts, insights links and information regarding the activities of the Humane

Society of the United States. <http://humanewatch.org/>

**Michele Payne Knoper's Ag and Social Media Page:** The founder of AgChat has compiled an extensive and complete list of resources on everything social media for those involved in agriculture on her blog at <http://causmatters.wordpress.com/ag-social-media/>

**Search:** While logged into your Twitter account, search for tweets containing "#agchat," "#farm," "#ag" and "#advocate" to find the most active and best ag Twitter users to follow.

By staying connected to these pages, blogs, accounts and groups, you'll be clued into what is currently happening in agriculture, and things you can do to make a difference through social media.

Learn more about Ohio Farm Bureau social media at <http://tinyurl.com/OFBsocialmedia>

### Be an Ohio agvocate

**I am Farm Bureau** — Do your part to step up and speak out for Ohio agriculture by filling out your entry in the I am Farm Bureau contest. Each entry shows the diversity of Ohio Farm Bureau members. Get started and find complete details at [www.tinyurl.com/IamFarmBureau](http://www.tinyurl.com/IamFarmBureau) or by clicking on the "Promotions" tab at [www.facebook.com/OhioFarmBureau](http://www.facebook.com/OhioFarmBureau). Hurry! Entries are only accepted through May 31.

**AgriPOWER** — OFBF is also accepting applications for its third class of advocates in training through the AgriPOWER Institute. Learn more about the program and get an application at [www.tinyurl.com/agripower](http://www.tinyurl.com/agripower).

**Hands-on social media training** — Looking to get started in social media? Hands-on, half-day Ohio Farm Bureau social media training may be available in your area. Contact your county Farm Bureau for details.



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# FARM BUREAU NEWS

## MAY WE INTRODUCE...

"Farm Bureau is still our voice, for large and small operations. They're still all grassroots."

~ John Birney, Harrison County

John Birney has been a Harrison County Farm Bureau member since the 1960s and has a cow-calf cattle operation. His family bought the farm in 1948 and his two sons help him run the farm today.



Birney

Birney and his wife, Audrey, have been married since 1963 and have a daughter and eight grandchildren. He has been vice president of the county Farm Bureau, on its board and involved with membership and policy development for several years. He enjoys going to OFBF's annual meeting where he sees old friends and meets new people. He also is a member of the Ohio Cattlemen's Association and FFA alumni and has been a 4-H volunteer for years, serving as ringman at 4-H auctions. He is a graduate of Jewett High School.

Birney said Ohio Farm Bureau was a big help to farmers when the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District proposed assessment fees to help with maintenance of the conservancy district.

"Farm Bureau saved farmers a lot of money. If it weren't for Farm Bureau, we wouldn't have gotten that deal," he said.

## on YOUR behalf

Through your support, here are some of the day-to-day activities Farm Bureau staff engage in to promote agriculture and strengthen rural Ohio.

~ Rebecca Everman, communications executive assistant

Rebecca Everman provides clerical support to OFBF's vice president of communications and senior director of marketing communications and associated staff. She maintains department documents, files and schedules and makes arrangements for meetings and coordinates programs with various departments. She also assists with special projects sponsored by the communications department and *Our Ohio* communications.



Everman

In the past two years she has coordinated deliveries of tons of cabbage and carrots gleaned from farms as part as OFBF's Farmers Feed Our Needs activities. She recently prepared registration packets for OFBF's Grow and Know event.

"Agriculture has been one of the biggest influences in my life, and every day I feel like I'm giving a little back to that community," she said.

### NATIONWIDE NEWS

## Don't discount your discounts

Members benefit in multiple ways from belonging to Ohio Farm Bureau. In addition to strong representation and a credible voice on farm policy issues, OFBF gives you a way to join together with others throughout the ag industry.

Tangible benefits provide dollars-and-sense reasons to belong, especially the discounts through Nationwide on insurance to protect many of the things that matter most to your family – like your farm, vehicles, home, boat, RV, condo, and even pets. Savings on these and other coverages often can return your dues investment in Farm Bureau many times over.

You can continue to take advantage of valuable discounts from Nationwide and other benefit providers by making sure you've renewed your OFBF membership for the year. Your county Farm Bureau office or a local Nationwide agent can assist with your renewal.

Asking a local Nationwide agent for an "On Your Side" review also will help you learn how much you could save from the following Nationwide discounts.

### Policy coverage

Farm Insurance	10 percent
Auto Insurance	10 percent
Home Insurance	10 percent
Condo & Tenant	10 percent
Boat & Power Sports*	5 percent
Recreational Vehicle	10 percent
Veterinary Pet Insurance	5 percent

\*Power Sports include motorcycles, ATVs, snowmobiles, personal watercraft

Additional discounts from Nationwide could help you pile up even more savings, such as those for insuring:

- Both your car and home
- Both your car and life
- More than one car
- Your car when you belong to a qualifying "affinity" organization
- Accident-free drivers (with 5 years experience and 5 years without a chargeable accident)
- Good students – teens earning a

B average or above

- Long-term policyholders – 15 percent for 5 years with Nationwide, 5 percent for 3 years
- Cars with anti-theft devices or passive restraints (airbags)
- Defensive drivers who have completed a qualified course

For more information, and to request an On Your Side review, contact a nearby Nationwide agent, or visit [nationwide.com/ofbf](http://nationwide.com/ofbf).

### OFBF recognizes Nationwide agents

Top Nationwide Agents in new Farm Insurance Sales for 2009

Agency	County	Phone
1. John R Wilber Jr Agency	Ross	(740) 774-1225
2. Gregory A Trent	Wayne/Huron	(330) 683-0855
3. Graves Cosby Ins Agency	Champaign	(937) 653-1360
4. Douglas O Brown	Gallia	(740) 446-1960
5. Laurie D Kelly	Muskingum	(740) 454-1258
6. Samuel E Lowery, Jr	Coshocton	(740) 622-2131
7. Thomas R Milligan Ins Agency	Marion	(740) 386-2991

Top OFBF Membership Producers for 2009 (100+ membership sales)

Agency	County	Phone
Robert L Jr Smith-182	Franklin	(614) 556-4602
Mark Radosevic-149	Tuscarawas	(330) 452-0808
Gene Frye-142	Greene	(937) 429-1374
David Masters-132	Franklin	(614) 471-7676
Jerry Merhar-129	Lake	(440) 946-2040
Ronald J Smith-120	Cuyahoga	(440) 234-0305
Kevin Moorman-115	Hamilton	(513) 661-2997
Joseph Lazor-113	Medina	(330) 722-4444
Chuck Jacoby-111	Franklin	(614) 249-2141
Bob Gay Jr-108	Lorain	(440) 245-1588
Karl Woods-107	Butler	(513) 779-4545
Dave Varner-102	Stark	(330) 877-3622
Dan Wertz-100	Greene	(937) 879-7077

## TAKE BACK YOUR PLACE AT THE TABLE

Robotic milking is changing more than the way producers operate their dairy. It's changing the way producers live their lives.

### Your farm

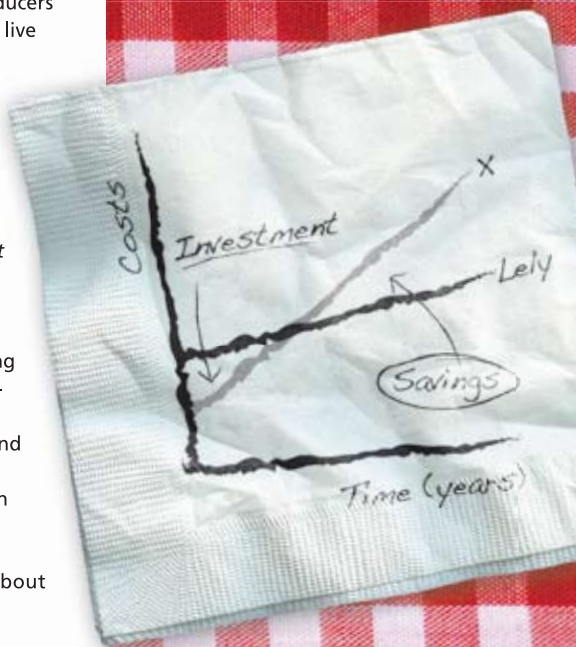
Robotic milking is a remarkable innovation that's improving the way farms operate by reducing labor, improving herd health, and increasing milk production. A quick calculation shows that robotic milking — specifically with a Lely Astronaut A3 Next — is a sound financial investment.

### Your life

Perhaps the most important benefit of robotic milking is the lifestyle change it brings to dairy producers — providing producers more time for themselves and their families. Today, thousands of Lely customers find themselves sitting back down at the dinner table, enjoying the opportunity to take a deep breath with the knowledge their cows are in good hands.

Take back your place at the table. To learn more about robotic milking with the Lely Astronaut A3 Next, contact Lely today.

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## OFBF members now save on zoo tickets

Ohio Farm Bureau members can receive savings on admission tickets to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium and Zoombezi Bay water park. Those interested in discounted tickets can use the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation ticket shop link online to purchase and print tickets at home.

To find the ticket link visit [www.ofbf.org](http://www.ofbf.org). Click on Benefits and Membership, Member Benefits and then visit the Travel and Recreation section.

Learn more about the Columbus Zoo and Zoombezi Bay at [www.colszoo.org](http://www.colszoo.org).



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## NOTEWORTHY

## Trivia contest shares farm info

The Wayne County Farm Bureau is sponsoring a Family Farm Trivia Contest in which listeners to WQKT radio – on the dial at 104.5 FM in Wooster – have the opportunity to win grocery gift cards by answering a daily agricultural trivia question. The Family Farm Trivia Contest is jointly sponsored by Wayne County Farm Bureau, Buehler's Fresh Food Markets and nine local family farms: Orrson Farms, Sheffler Farms, Slicker Farms, Woodlyn Acres, Catalpadale Farms, Stockdale Family Farm, Horst Brothers Poultry Farms, Moreland Fruit Farm and Maurer Farms. The contest started March 15 during National Agriculture Week and will run for an entire year.

Each morning, Monday through Friday, a WQKT radio host asks the trivia question of the day and the first correct caller wins a \$10 gift card to Buehler's Fresh Food Markets. Each daily winner is then placed in a drawing for a quarterly food prize, a Memorial Day Back Yard Cookout Package, a Labor Day Football Tailgate Party Package, an All the Works Thanksgiving Dinner Package and a Spring 2011 Easter Dinner Package.

The concept for the contest was developed by Jon Orr, a Wayne County Farm Bureau member. "I came up with the idea for a contest while hauling grain to a facility in Coshocton County," Orr said. "I was upset with the actions of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and thought we need to educate the general public as to where their food and fiber comes from. When I realized how far reaching the radio station signal goes, it was obvious to me that we have a great venue for educating the public. And because we have a local food market with a fairly large footprint in the area it just made sense."

"This is a collaborative effort among all of the county Farm Bureau action teams," said John Fitzpatrick, OFBF organization director for Ashland, Medina and Wayne counties. "The Organization Action Team put the community network together with Buehler's, the radio station and the sponsoring farms. The Communication Action Team drafted the series of questions, took photos of the farm families to be used on product posters in the Buehler's stores as well as in other advertising throughout the year, and are working with the Food and Animal Issues Team to create ads that will run on the radio station. The Public Policy Action Team is currently working with WQKT concerning ads that could be run later in the year to educate listeners concerning political issues."

The Family Farm Trivia Contest is the first step of many programs to share the agriculture message with the general public in Northeast Ohio, as Orr and others want to continue to share their story.

FREE ICE CREAM FOR A YEAR

## OFBF, Velvet partner to find new ice cream flavor

A few scoops of ice cream have always been a great way to cool off on a hot summer day. This summer, Ohioans have the opportunity to help develop a flavor of ice cream that they'll be able to enjoy year-round in the Ohio Farm Bureau and Velvet Ice Cream flavor contest.

Participants, age 9 and older, are invited to suggest a new ice cream flavor that uses at least one locally-grown Ohio product and provide an essay of up to 75 words describing their inspiration for the new flavor. The essay should include the idea for a new flavor, the importance of using local products and why the entrant should have a seat on the Velvet Ice Cream Tasting Panel.

"There are a lot of great agricultural goods produced in Ohio that we all enjoy every day," said Janet Cassidy, Ohio Farm Bureau senior director of marketing com-

munications. "Velvet Ice Cream is a family-owned Ohio business that patronizes local producers, making it a perfect partner for Ohio Farm Bureau and this contest."

Entries will be accepted from May 1 to Aug. 31, after which a Velvet Ice Cream and Ohio Farm Bureau panel will select the winning flavor, to be featured on store shelves in early 2011.

The grand-prize winner will receive a year's supply of Velvet Ice Cream, a tour of the Velvet Ice Cream factory in Utica, Ohio, a one-year Farm Bureau membership and may also be featured on the new ice cream container along with an Ohio Farm Bureau logo. Two runners-up will also receive a year's supply of Velvet Ice Cream.

To create an entry in the Ohio Farm Bureau and Velvet Ice Cream flavor contest, visit [www.tinyurl.com/IceCreamContest](http://www.tinyurl.com/IceCreamContest). Entries may also be mailed to: Velvet Ohio Farm Bureau Ice Cream Flavor Contest, Velvet Ice Cream Company, P.O. Box 588, Utica, Ohio 43080.



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