

Oil spill regulations:

"Farms aren't the problem here and never have been."

PG 3



Bill would let voters seek estate tax exemption

PG 3



Important updates for Advisory Councils

PG 6

INSIDE

Public Policy	3
Communications	4
Organization	5
Advisory Council	6
Food & Animal Issues	7
Noteworthy	8

A PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

BUCKEYE FARM NEWS

OHIO'S LARGEST AGRICULTURAL NEWSPAPER

JANUARY 21, 2010 | VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 8

Livestock care board begins to take shape

BY DAN TOLAND

In the months since voters approved Issue 2, creating a Livestock Care Standards Board, the state's coalition of livestock groups and others who worked for its passage have been preparing to take a serious look at how livestock and poultry are raised in the state.

"All along, we in agriculture have known that this is an important step, one



that can make Ohio a national leader in livestock care. We need a program that works," said Ohio Farm Bureau Federation

(OFBF) Director of State Policy Beth Vanderkooi.

OFBF, the coalition of livestock groups and other supporters have been taking ideas to Ohio lawmakers to

help facilitate the drafting of the implementation legislation that will officially establish the rules by which the board will operate. As of press time, none had been introduced, but Vanderkooi said it could happen as soon as the end of January.

"The current draft version of the legislation represents the thinking of many parties involved, including the Ohio Department of Agriculture," Vanderkooi said.

See *LIVESTOCK* pg 2

Up for discussion

- Included in the initial legislative proposal are:
- definitions such as what it means to be a veterinarian or humane officer serving on the board
- that members of the board will serve without compensation
- the appointing process and terms
- the duties of the board and of the Ohio Department of Agriculture
- that the board shall not set standards that establish a statewide animal identification system
- that the board be subject to any ethical standards that are already in place for similar bodies in the state
- proposals on how to fund the board.

Farm Bureau pleased with Supreme Court ruling in zoning case

BY SETH TETER

A recent Ohio Supreme Court decision, which had implications for property rights and farmland preservation, protected the ability of local governments to manage growth.

The court found that townships could base zoning resolutions on countywide land use plans rather than bear the costs of developing their own individual plans.

"Overall, this case flew under the radar, because it did not directly involve a large number of people," said Larry Gearhardt, OFBF senior director of local policy. "But it could have had significant impacts for rural residents across Ohio."

The case resulted when officials in Wayne County's Congress Township told a fireworks company it couldn't build a new store on land zoned for agriculture. The company argued that because the township

See *COURT*, pg 2

Climate change legislation could support farmers' efforts to protect the environment



istockphoto.com

But at what cost?



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

Taking A Stance

At American Farm Bureau's recent annual meeting in Seattle, farmers from around the country voted to oppose cap-and-trade legislation that is currently before Congress.

Delegates approved a resolution that asserted that the proposed cap-and-trade bill would result in significantly higher production costs for farmers, and that potential benefits of agricultural offsets are far outweighed by the costs.

Read more about the meeting in the Feb. 4 issue of *Buckeye Farm News*.

Without A Vote

Farm Bureau is concerned that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will write its own greenhouse gas restrictions without a congressional vote. In a 2007 ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court told the EPA to determine whether carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are a threat to public health after determining the greenhouse gases were air pollutants under the Clean Air Act. Last month, the EPA concluded that those emissions are a public health danger, paving the way for it to consider emission limits.

Ohio Farm Bureau policy states that if climate change policy is adopted, it should not increase the cost of fuel, fertilizer or agricultural chemicals and should include flexible market-based solutions such as soil carbon sequestration and carbon credit trading.

To show their concern about climate change legislation, Ohio Farm Bureau and other state Farm Bureaus have collected more than 120,000 signatures nationwide on cards, letters and even farm caps that urge lawmakers to not "cap our future."

"We oppose the federal climate change bill that passed the (U.S.) House. We had a lot of farmers sign

See *CLIMATE*, pg 2



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS



Photo by Erin Davis

Many farmers already engage in environmentally-friendly practices (shown above) such as planting trees and grass buffers, installing manure digesters or conservation tillage. Cap-and-trade legislation could reward farmers for their efforts, but it could also drive up the cost of fuel and fertilizer and shift millions of acres worth of food production to other countries.

BY AMY BETH GRAVES

The debate over climate change is continuing to heat up in Congress and on farms across the country.

"This is a very complicated issue and while the science is still being worked out, lawmakers are closely looking at this and very interested in passing legislation," said Dale Arnold, Ohio Farm Bureau's director of energy policy.

Last summer the U.S. House narrowly passed a cap-and-trade bill that Ohio Farm Bureau and many farm groups oppose. The bill establishes carbon emission limits for several industries. Businesses that operate above emission limits would



be allowed to purchase credits on the

open market from businesses that had leftover credits. The Senate is currently considering a similar bill.

Critics say the cap-and-trade bill will lead to higher fuel and fertilizer costs. Proponents say the higher fuel and fertilizer costs for farmers will be offset by the carbon credits that farmers will be able to sell. For decades, farmers have practiced carbon-storing practices such as no-till and planting trees.

AT A GLANCE

NAME Recognition

Jack Fisher

Ohio Farm Bureau Executive Vice President Jack Fisher has received accolades for his work at the helm of the state's largest farm organization.



A cover story in *Smart Business* magazine highlighted Fisher as the non-profit executive of the year.

The article stated that "in creating a strong connection between Ohio agriculture and the everyday consumer, Fisher has strived to make the organization as relevant today as it was when it was founded 90 years ago."

Fisher was credited for helping farmers of all sizes through Farm Bureau's efforts to build a partnership between farmers and consumers.

"Fisher has used his industry understanding to guide the Ohio Farm Bureau to one of the country's most recognized bureaus," the article stated.

An editorial in *Ohio Farmer* magazine also named Fisher as the "Ohio Ag Man of the Year" for taking a stand against the efforts of animal rights activists. *Ohio Farmer* Editor Tim White recognized Fisher for his contributions to the Issue 2 campaign

as well as initiating the launch of Farm Bureau's Center for Food and Animal Issues. White wrote that the passage of Issue 2 was undoubtedly a group effort, but "it was the work of the Ohio Farm Bureau under the leadership of Jack Fisher...that got the job done."

Larry Gearhardt

The American Farm Bureau Federation's Board of Directors has appointed Larry Gearhardt, OFBF senior director of legal and local affairs, to serve on the AFBF General Counsel Advisory Committee through 2011.



AFBF has a distinguished history of selective

participation in litigation matters that implement and advance Farm Bureau's policies. The General Counsel Advisory Committee evaluates individual case requests from all sectors while assisting with the development of legal strategies for AFBF.

In all, the advisory committee is comprised of nine individuals, eight from state Farm Bureaus (serving two-year terms) and a ninth position held by AFBF's public policy executive director.

their say

"When cows and pigs are all you care about, people can get lost in the shuffle. Today's overfed animal activists are clearly willing to put Americans in the bread line. Just don't expect any chicken soup when you get there."

- A Center for Consumer Freedom article on the impacts that initiatives by the Humane Society of the United States have on jobs and the farm economy.

"Agriculture is a business. Farming without a financial motive is gardening."

- An L.A. Times food columnist calling for a more thorough understanding of the nation's debate about food production.



To make a long story short

Land that was at the center of a controversial 2005 U.S. Supreme Court Case, which opened the door for the government to take private property for commercial development, is sitting vacant. The city of New London, Conn. had used its eminent domain authority to take dozens of homes to make way for a hotel, offices and high-end condominiums to help support a neighboring Pfizer research and development facility. The neighborhood was razed, but had yet to be redeveloped when Pfizer recently announced plans to close its facility and pull 1,400 jobs from the area. A New London city councilman told the *New York Times*, "I'm sure that there are people that are waiting out there to say, 'I told you so.'"

Figured out: 2019

That's the year that delegates at American Farm Bureau's annual meeting told Congress the federal budget should come into balance. Farm Bureau believes that reducing the federal deficit over the next decade is key to the nation's economic security.

COURT from PG 1

had not developed a comprehensive land use plan, its zoning ordinances were invalid under Ohio law.

However, the township said that it met its legal requirements because it was included in Wayne County's comprehensive plan. That plan made numerous references to Congress Township and listed goals such as protecting productive farmland and maintaining the rural character of the county.

But a lower court ruled in favor of the fireworks company, essentially saying that townships must have individual plans in order to enact zoning. Gearhardt said it could cost a township tens of thousands of dollars to develop a comprehensive plan.

"This decision could have upset the apple cart and thrown local zoning rules into confusion. Everything would be up for challenge," he said.

Ohio Farm Bureau and Wayne County Farm Bureau filed briefs with the Supreme Court stating that zoning is an important farmland preservation tool and that cash-strapped rural townships do not have the resources to develop their own comprehensive plans. Farm Bureau was also concerned about the rights of township residents to have a say in the types of businesses that may locate in their area.

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court sided with Congress Township, saying that a "county or regional comprehensive plan can address goals like conservation and controlling sprawl that townships within the region can share but cannot achieve alone."

"After getting involved with this case, it was particularly gratifying to see the Supreme Court reverse a decision made by the lower court," Gearhardt said.

He also highlighted the partnership between Farm Bureau and local governments to speak out on an area of common concern.

"We support local government and most of the time we're on the same page," Gearhardt said. "We try to help them as much as we can."

Funding

One proposed concept for funding the board is to phase in a tonnage fee increase on commercial livestock and poultry feed at the rate of 5 cents per year for three years. This would eventually raise the tonnage fee from 25 cents to 40 cents.

"In order to have a program that works, it has to be reasonably funded, with the understanding that the funding mechanism must be fair and fall under good stewardship," Vanderkooi said. "The current proposal has not raised any major objection to my knowledge, but we look forward to the legislative process to see if other ideas come forward."

To be determined

Among details that will be determined during the process is whether farms will be regulated and inspected on a regular, automatic basis, or if it will be complaint-driven.

Since the board is a new concept, Vanderkooi said it is not known what standards will ultimately be set. "Once introduced, the legislation is subject to change," she said. "That's

postcards at our annual meeting about the cap-and-trade bill, and many are very concerned about climate change legislation," said Adam Sharp, Ohio Farm Bureau's senior director of national and regulatory policy.

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Bob Stallman said climate change legislation "threatens to slash our ability" to feed the world.

"To throttle back our ability to produce food - at a time when the United Nations projects billions of more mouths to feed - is a moral failure," Stallman said at AFBF's annual meeting this month. He said that climate legislation currently in Congress would shift as much as 59 million acres of food production into forestry. That's the equivalent of setting aside

why the board was established with such an open and transparent process. Everyone has the chance to weigh in on the process."

Buckeye Farm News will provide more details once a bill is introduced.

Board membership

The Ohio Livestock Care Standards board will set standards for livestock and poultry care that take into account issues of food safety, local availability and affordability of food and best farm management practices for animal well-being. This will be considered in the context of their impact on animal health, farm bio-security, disease prevention, food safety and food production.

The board will be chaired by the director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture and will be made up of 13 Ohioans, including:

- The director
- Three family farmers
- Two veterinarians (one of whom is the state veterinarian)
- A food safety expert
- A representative of a local humane society

CLIMATE from PG 1

every acre of land used for crop and food production in California, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Tennessee, according to AFBF.

The United States has had a voluntary carbon market, the Chicago Climate Exchange, for about 10 years, and there are exchanges in Canada, Europe and South America, Arnold said. In Europe, carbon has sold for about \$30 per ton while it has been only \$3 to \$10 in the United States because it is voluntary, he said. Economists have said prices on the carbon market need to be \$15 to \$30 per ton before it is economically viable in the United States, Arnold said.

Some questions about imposing a carbon credit system include what procedures will officials use to trace

- Two members representing statewide farm organizations
- The dean of an Ohio agriculture college
- Two members representing Ohio consumers

Anyone interested in serving on the board must fill out an application. Eleven members will be appointed by the governor, with one family farmer being appointed by each the speaker of the House and president of the Senate.

Applications are available at www.tinyurl.com/LivestockApplication.

Once completed, the application may be submitted via U.S. mail to:

Governor's Office

Attn: Jared Port, Boards and Commissions
77 S. High St.
30th Floor, Riffe Center
Columbus, OH 43215

Ohio Farm Bureau's Center for Food and Animal Issues is available to provide further insight and information to potential board candidates. For more

information, contact Center for Food and Animal Issues Vice President Mike Bumgarner at mbumgarner@ofbf.org or call 614-246-8235.

Applications for board members will be accepted until the appointment of members is announced.

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PUBLIC POLICY

NEWS *briefs*

USDA/IRS working to reduce farm program fraud

The Agriculture Department and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) are partnering up to reduce fraud in farm programs. According to Tara Smith, AFBF farm policy specialist, this partnership could make farmers' lives easier by addressing concerns about privacy. "One of our concerns has always been that farmers are required to bring business documentation or tax documentation to a local FSA office, and while we admire the work that our local FSA offices do, that is very sensitive information and a lot of times the security that needs to be in place for that kind of information just really isn't there. Under the old system, anyone could be audited to see if they qualify for farm payments, but the new process will focus those audits on those more likely to be ineligible. Farmers have to fill out a form that goes directly to the IRS and even if they get red-flagged it goes to the state FSA committee and not through a local FSA office at all. Those are huge improvements over the current system," Smith said.

AFBF survey shows staple food prices decreasing

The price of food at the supermarket has decreased for the fifth consecutive quarter and is significantly lower than one year ago, according to the latest American Farm Bureau Federation Marketbasket Survey. The informal survey shows the total cost of 16 food items that can be used to prepare a meal was \$42.90, down \$3.13 from the third quarter of 2009 and \$7.31 lower or about 15 percent less compared to one year ago. Stephanie Gambrell, economist for AFBF, said sluggish consumer demand particularly in meats and dairy products played a role in the lower retail grocery prices.



Survey helping to identify broadband shortfalls

Ohio Farm Bureau worked with the Connect Ohio project this summer to gain a better understanding of who has broadband Internet access in the state. OFBF collaborated on a survey that will aid Connect Ohio in its effort to map broadband gaps. Several survey respondents were selected to win a free computer or high-speed Internet access. They also shared testimonials about how access to high-speed Internet has impacted their lives. Learn more about the effort at www.ConnectOhio.org.

2010 could be a better year for livestock farmers

In addition to improving prices, livestock producers should see improvements in profit margins in 2010, according to John Anderson, an Extension livestock economist with Mississippi State University. "This year is shaping up to be one of the best years for livestock and poultry producers in several years but this will depend on healthy demand supported by a recovering economy," Anderson said.

Your Guide to a More Successful Season

YOUR OHIO REPRESENTATIVE
CONTACT: STEVE FARIS
800-714-GPS1
SMF@LASERINST.COM

PRECISION GPS by Trimble

Proposals look to offer relief from Ohio's estate tax

Legislation being considered by Ohio lawmakers would reduce Ohio's estate tax rate and allow local governments to do away with the tax for residents in their jurisdictions.

Introduced by Rep. Dave Burke, R-Marysville, House Bill 326 would reduce the current tax rate by 20 percent and increase the existing tax credit from \$13,900 to \$15,575. Moving forward, the credit would increase with inflation.

The legislation also eliminates the state's share of the tax, providing the money entirely to the local government in which the estate assets are located. Local governments would have the authority to exempt residents from the tax. Voters could also seek an exemption for their municipality or township through the initiative process.

Another proposal that may be headed for the state ballot would rid Ohio of its estate tax starting in 2013.

Beth Vanderkooi, OFBF director of state policy, said Farm Bureau will be examining both plans carefully. OFBF policy supports efforts to reduce or eliminate the impact of estate taxes on farmers, whose families can be forced to sell parts of the farm to pay the tax and associated administrative costs.

At the national level, Farm Bureau backs permanent re-



In order to pay taxes on inherited land, families can be forced to sell off parts of their farms.

peal of federal estate taxes. Until that is achieved, it supports a meaningful exemption level.

The federal estate tax was repealed for 2010 but is scheduled to be reinstated in 2011 with a \$1 million exemption. The tax rate for values that exceed \$1 million will be 55 percent. With rising land values, Farm Bureau believes many family farms could easily exceed the \$1 million exemption.

In late 2009, the House passed legislation that would raise the exemption level to \$3.5 million, but the Senate took no action on the bill.

EPA clarifies oil spill prevention rules for farms

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finalized changes to oil spill prevention rules that will apply to some farms and ranches with on-farm fuel storage. The deadline for farms to comply with the new rules is November 2010.

EPA's Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule requires any facility with a total above-ground fuel storage capacity of more than 1,320 gallons or a completely buried capacity of over 42,000 gallons to have an SPCC plan in place and show that it is following the plan if there is a chance that a spill could end up in navigable waters.

The rules have been in place for years, but there has been confusion as to how – or even if – they applied to farms. The new rule in large part finalizes a rule promulgated near the end of the Bush administration.

That proposal was the product of extensive public comment. American Farm Bureau Federation submitted comments and, in the end, got some things but not everything it wanted.

AFBF wanted only farms with 20,000 gallons or more of above-ground storage to be required to have a professional engineer-certified plan. While the final rule did not incorporate that recommendation, it did clarify the definition of a covered facility that allowed the owner to count tanks separately so they do not add up to the threshold amount, as long as the tanks aren't right next to each other and used for the same purpose.

Originally EPA proposed that all facilities, including farms, be required to hire professional engineers to certify their prevention plans. By the time the agency came out with

the December 2008 changes, however, it proposed a tiered approach in response to industry feedback, with farms that hold no more than 5,000 gallons and have no recent history of discharges to navigable waters to be able to use a simplified template provided by EPA.

In fact, AFBF thought that all farms should be able to self-certify.

"Farms aren't the problem here and never have been," explained Paul Schlegel, AFBF environment and energy policy director.

"Farms have had fuel storage tanks for decades without the kinds of oil spills that this regulation is supposed to prevent, so it isn't necessary to subject them to the same level of regulation as other industries with more of a record of problems."

AFBF also asked for farmers and ranchers to have as much as five years to comply with the new rules. Instead, they get just under one year. OFBF will be reviewing the implications of EPA's ruling for members.

(Originally printed in AFBF's FB News)

"It isn't necessary to subject (farms) to the same level of regulation as other industries."

~Paul Schlegel, AFBF

Bob Sears, Farmersville, Ohio



Low-cost, fixed-rate loans could help you weather a storm in agriculture.

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Photo by Seth Teter

Last year, OFBF held its first Grow and Know event, which helped the organization connect with a broad range of individuals interested in agricultural topics.

Grow and Know this year with Ohio Farm Bureau

Whether they own a patio downtown or 50 acres in rural Ohio, animal lovers, foodies, gardeners and more are invited to get in touch with their inner-farmer and make the most of their property through OFBF's 2010 Grow and Know series.

Five daylong educational workshops held on farms and agricultural sites throughout Ohio will help attendees get started in the sometimes daunting and intimidating tasks of growing and preserving food, caring for a garden and animals and more. Sessions also will cover many green methods of property management.

"We've found there is a great deal of interest in the topics we've selected for the series, and that it has been difficult to find the kind of information we'll be sharing," said OFBF Promotions Specialist Cara Lawson. "The Grow and Know series provides us opportunities to tell the stories of Ohio agriculture, and encourages consumers and others to get involved."

For more information, to register (after Feb. 1) and to sign up for notifications and session updates, visit www.OurOhio.org, click on "resources" then "Grow and Know." Attendees may also register by calling Rebecca Everman at 614-246-8241.

2010 Grow and Know events

Choose which event to attend or attend all five.

All events are \$30 for Farm Bureau members and \$50 for non-members unless otherwise noted and includes lunch and materials.

Farming on Five to Fifty

APRIL 17
MALABAR FARM | LUCAS

For those with a few extra acres who aren't really sure what to do with it. Topics: berries, bees, vegetable gardening, backyard egg production and more.

Solutions for Pesteering Problems

MAY 22
BOB EVANS FARM | RIO GRANDE
Learn how to fight pests and weeds in the garden, while getting a garden and landscape under control. Topics: soil diagnosis, dealing with invasive species, trees, shrubs and more.

For Teachers

Teachers attending a Grow and Know event will receive a certificate of contact hours for participation. The Grow and Know series qualifies for credit for Ohio professional development standards. E-mail jroush@ofbf.org or call 614-246-8243 with questions or for more information.



Growing your own Food & Going Green

JUNE 5
FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY | COLUMBUS

Learn to grow and preserve food from your own backyard and many ways to enjoy local food. Topics: home canning, container gardening, herbs, rain gardening and more.

What to do in Winter

OCTOBER 23
LAKE METROPARKS FARM PARK | KIRTLAND
Stay busy in winter. Topics: cheese-making, identify and obtain different meat cuts, animal care, tending to outer buildings and fences and more.

Know Place like Home for the Holidays

NOV. 7
WOODHAVEN FARM | JOHNSTOWN
\$50 FOR FARM BUREAU MEMBERS | \$75 FOR NONMEMBERS

Travel to Woodhaven Farm in Johnstown, where Chef Tami will walk attendees through holiday meal preparation in a hands-on cooking experience. An Ohio Christmas Tree farmer will share tips for picking the best tree and an Ohio wine maker will share his experiences in Ohio's wine industry.



TWEET THIS

Online 'agvocacy,' 140 characters at a time

On Aug. 2, Wayne County grain and cattle farmer Mike Haley asked his followers on Twitter to spread his concerns about the financial crisis America's dairy farmers were facing. To his surprise, it became the fourth most discussed topic on the online network that day, with more than 3,000 individuals broadcasting his message to their followers and friends.



Haley

Since then, Haley, under the moniker "FarmerHaley," has become widely recognized as a leading agricultural advocate on Twitter, which allows users to share 140-character messages including Web links and images. Haley even coined the term "agvocacy" to define the passionate work of others like him. Recently, he was named a "Top 10 Agricultural Twitter User" by Fastlane Publications.

Here, Haley answers some questions commonly asked by farmers about online social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook.

Q: Isn't social media just games for kids?

A: Social media is about building relationships and sharing information

with others more than playing games. About 65 percent of Twitter users are between the ages of 25 and 54.

Q: Aren't phones and e-mail enough?

A: They are good to communicate with those you already know. Social media allows us to reach those who have never set foot on a farm.

Q: Why would I want people I don't know following me on social media?

A: Think about who those people may be. Neighbors, consumers, voters, lawmakers, governors, movie stars and presidents! With just one sentence you can give them all a glimpse of what you believe and why.

Q: How do you ever find time for it?

A: It's not about time; it's about helping consumers understand your devotion to making sure their food is safe and affordable. If we don't take a few minutes per week to answer their questions, somebody else will – quite possibly those that want you out of business.

Q: What's in it for me and my farm?

A: You can learn from others' experiences and of important news, weather and crop information before it's well known. It allows farmers to be ahead of the curve and better forecast their decision making.

We're also facing more regulations spawned from misinformation about how our farms operate. It's time to be proactive and give people the chance to learn what really happens on our farms.

Q: Can social media help me be more influential on important issues?

A: Yes. In about two minutes, I can notify all my friends and family on Facebook, and all my followers on Twitter with an issue I am passionate about – that's over 3,000 people! If they then spread the message to their followers, it can become viral.

Q: Where can farmers get started?

A: Check out these social media farmer hotspots:

- **Farm2U:** A place on Facebook and Twitter where farmers can answer consumers' questions: www.facebook.com/farm2u and www.twitter.com/farm2u
- **FollowFarmer:** More than 500 farmers and agricultural users to follow on Twitter: www.bit.ly/FFarmer
- **#AgChat:** A weekly two-hour conversation on agricultural topics on Twitter: www.bit.ly/6tNCus

Connect with Ohio Farm Bureau at www.tinyurl.com/OFBsocialmedia

See FarmerHaley's Twitter page at www.twitter.com/FarmerHaley

ORGANIZATION

MAY WE INTRODUCE...

"Farm Bureau is the organization to go to in order to get something done."

~ Bob Ebie, Portage County

Bob Ebie has been a Portage County Farm Bureau for many decades, joining when he was a teenager. He grew up on a grain, hog and dairy farm and was a full-time farmer, raising corn, beans, oats, wheat and hay. Today, his farm, near where he grew up, belongs to his son, Daniel.

"I sold the farm to my son in 2002, and we traded houses," he said.

Since 1998, Ebie has been retired from Nationwide Insurance where he was an agent for 37 years. He started at Nationwide at the suggestion of a county Farm Bureau board member.



Ebie

"He said it was a good idea to get into part-time work at Nationwide in the winter and it turned into full time," he said.

Nowadays, Ebie spends his time helping his son on the farm, being with his grandchildren and doing volunteer work. He and his wife Midge also have three daughters. He graduated from Suffield High School and has been president of Portage County Farm Bureau three times and is currently on the county board. He is active with the Lion's Club and has served a couple of terms on the board of directors. For about 20 years he was a Brimfield Township trustee. He is a member of Harmony Baptist Church in Tallmadge.

"The Columbus Farm Bureau office does a lot of work on legislative issues that help farmers and often everybody," he said.

"I've always had great admiration for farmers, and there's not a harder working profession in my opinion."

~ Gayle Lewis, publications production and advertising coordinator

Gayle Lewis began working at Ohio Farm Bureau in 1994 and last year was Franklin County's Farm Bureau Woman of the year. She is responsible for developing and servicing all advertising accounts for *Buckeye Farm News* and *Our Ohio* publications. She also coordinates the production and printing aspects for both publications.



Lewis

Previously she worked for Nationwide Life Insurance for 12 years and then quit when her husband, David, began teaching and coaching in college. They spent 16 years on the college athletic circuit before returning to central Ohio where she began her OFBF career.

She has been active with Franklin County Farm Bureau's membership campaign for the past 14 years. She has been membership co-chairman and the top county membership signer for several years. Lewis was raised outside of Groveport in southeastern Franklin County on a dairy and grain farm. She and her husband reside outside New Albany and have two grown children and four grandchildren.

Everitt named marketing communications specialist

Ohio Farm Bureau Federation has named Seth Everitt marketing communications specialist.

As marketing communications specialist, Everitt will be responsible for the implementation of membership marketing and other communication projects to build and maintain the membership of Ohio Farm Bureau and also raise the profile of the Farm Bureau and *Our Ohio* brands.

Everitt most recently served as membership marketing manager of the American Motorcyclist Association, where he helped raise the organization's membership to the highest level in its history. He has a bachelor's degree in public relations from Kent State University and currently resides in Sunbury with his wife Megan, son Dylan and daughter Natalie.

Vance retiring after 36 years with OFBF, Nationwide

For as long as Bob Vance can remember, Ohio Farm Bureau has been a part of his life. He grew up on a dairy farm and his parents often attended Ashtabula County Farm Bureau advisory council meetings.



Vance

It was only natural that he would work for OFBF and Nationwide Insurance for more than three decades. Next month Vance retires from his position as OFBF's senior vice president of organization.

"I'm real proud of my whole working career with Farm Bureau and Nationwide because it goes back to my heritage," he said.

In 1975 Vance started working for OFBF as an organization director in Brown, Clermont, Montgomery and Warren counties. Three years later he joined the state

office as director of membership and later director of insurance and member services. He left OFBF in 1985 to work at Nationwide where he held various management sales positions for about 20 years. He retired from Nationwide in 2004 and then promptly rejoined Ohio Farm Bureau where he has helped oversee the organizational needs, which included finances, information technology, human resources, OFBF and AFBF annual meetings, member services, OFB Foundation and most recently field operations.

"I couldn't have designed a better work-career strategy. It's been very pleasing to work with two fine companies," said Vance, who has a bachelor's degree in business from Capital University. "When I look back on my work as an OD, I realize it is the foundation of my work career and success. I really learned how to get things done through volunteers and how to recruit people to get the work done. The most recent

task force, Ohio Farm Bureau's Envisioned Future – The New Era, was especially rewarding – helping to set the strategy for Farm Bureau into the future."

Vance, who has been married 37 years to Rosi (Kessler) Vance, said that in his retirement he will spend more time with his family and three grandchildren and become more active with his church and community activities in Canal Winchester. He also plans to work on his golf game.

"I will miss the members, associates and friends who have been part of my Farm Bureau and Nationwide Career," he said. "They are special, have high work ethics and performance standards and are fun to be with. I will miss the business relationships developed with companies providing quality services and programs to Farm Bureau. And I'll miss my Organization team of associates who are dedicated, committed to the goals at Farm Bureau and fun to work with."

NATIONWIDE NEWS

Personalized auto insurance, regular review can help in today's economy

As more Americans are forced to make tough choices to balance the monthly checkbook, it's becoming more important than ever to have auto insurance coverage that is personalized to your needs. Nationwide, with its On Your Side Review and new On Your Side Rewards, can help you get the best value possible.

Today's economy has more and more people looking for creative ways to balance their budgets. One idea is to look at your insurance coverage to ensure you're getting the discounts you deserve and not paying for coverage you don't need. However, care should be taken to maintain adequate coverage, since, without insurance, few people can afford to recover should the unthinkable happen – especially in today's economy.

To help you learn how to save money, you can contact a Nationwide agent for a free consultation and insurance assessment. The On Your Side Review process enables agents to help customers determine all available discounts to ensure they're getting the best value possible.

Regardless of where you get your insurance, Nationwide offers a few tips:

- Before talking to an agent, have a good idea of what you own and what may have changed in your life recently.
- Understand that changes like home renovations or new home alarm systems may reduce your insurance costs.
- Make sure you have the appropriate coverage for each vehicle and every driver in your household.
- Consider the age of your car in determining what types of coverage to purchase.
- Since pricing differences between companies can change often, don't be afraid to call around and get new quotes.
- Remember you may have to rely on your company to help rebuild your life if the unthinkable does happen, so don't trade trustworthiness for price.
- Don't forget to tell them you're an Ohio Farm Bureau member – you may be eligible for a 10 percent discount on your auto insurance.

It's available to anyone, regardless of whether you're a Nationwide customer or not.

In addition to the On Your Side Review, some people may be able to take advantage of the recently unveiled On Your Side Rewards. On Your Side Rewards moves from a one-size-fits-all approach to auto insurance to a base product that can be personalized with various cover-

age and feature add-ons. On Your Side Rewards includes features such as accident and minor violation forgiveness, deductible savings/credits and roadside assistance. You can choose any of these options as the program is flexible to meet your needs and your wallet. To learn more, contact a Nationwide agent or visit www.nationwide.com/ofbf.

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on **YOUR** behalf

Here are some additional activities in which your support of Farm Bureau helped strengthen agriculture and rural Ohio.

2009/2010 Farm Bureau Goals

Market Farm Bureau to achieve membership growth

Increase grassroots involvement by creating a volunteer-friendly Farm Bureau

Expand relations with Nationwide and other affinity organizations

Promote farming and the agbioresource industry

Influence the adoption of OFBF and AFBF policy

Speak out and stand up for animal agriculture and the food industry

Protect personal property rights

Engage members in the 2009 and 2010 elections

Involving future leaders in agriculture to provide an understanding of the organization ➔ OFBF staff recently hosted early field experiences for OSU Ag Ed majors in a week of working on Issue 2, policy development and leadership workshops.

Educating the educators ➔ OFBF staff in conjunction with Ohio State University, hosted a workshop for teachers from Columbus and surrounding areas to show the connection between agriculture and science.

Promoting Issue 2 ➔ OFBF staff attended the National Animal Interest Alliance conference and made a presentation on Issue 2. Staff members also visited all 11 members of Ohio's congressional delegation who supported Issue 2 to thank them for their support.

Beyond borders ➔ OFBF staff members recently attended the US Meat Export Federation (USMEF) Strategic Planning Conference to hear the current strategies for foreign promotion of U.S. meat products and to gain a better understanding of the obstacles in the growth of export markets.



Advisory Councils: Speak Out

The 'Fun Sheet' and other updates

Last fall, the questions and responses for Farm Bureau Advisory Councils became a feature of *Buckeye Farm News* in order to make the program more visible among all members and give councils more flexibility. Advisory Councils are small groups of Farm Bureau members who meet to discuss important issues and provide input that helps guide OFBF's Policy Development process.

Since the new format debuted, OFBF has gotten positive feedback as well as some questions and concerns related to the transition. The primary concern was the discontinuation of the "Fun Sheet," a traditional Advisory Council activity that provided moments of levity during contemplative council discussions. After hearing from members, OFBF is pleased to announce that the "Fun Sheet" will be reinstated and council members will be receiving a letter and packet with more information in early February.

Another development is that OFBF's Darrell Rubel will now be overseeing the program. Rubel has been with the organization for 13 years and as director of leadership development he has the experience and a unique skill set that makes him well suited for his new role.

Honeybaked Ham Winner

This month's winner of a free ham is Hardin County #33

This Issue's Advisory Council Questions

Climate Change legislation (see article on page 1)

- 1) Does your council support agriculture's continued involvement in the greenhouse gas reduction debate?
- 2) Would your council be in favor of:
 - A) A greenhouse gas reduction program administered by U.S. EPA under the Clean Air Act?
 - B) A greenhouse gas reduction program administered by USDA under the proposed cap-and-trade legislation?
 - C) Neither, because the current science does not support the proposed greenhouse gas reductions.
- 3) As always, councils are welcome to discuss and submit responses to any other articles in *Buckeye Farm News* that are relevant to their members.

Council Responses

Responses are still coming in from our last round of advisory council questions. They'll be printed in the Feb 4. edition of *Buckeye Farm News*.

Contact

For questions or more information, e-mail speakout@ofbf.org or contact Regina Mayhugh at 614-246-8285.

Scheduling

Discussions questions are included 15 times throughout the year in *Buckeye Farm News*, so councils will have topics for monthly meetings, regardless of when they are held. Advisory Councils are free to discuss the questions in any recent edition of *Buckeye Farm News*, but here is a suggested list of publications that can be used at upcoming meetings.

Month of Council Meeting: Suggested issue of *Buckeye Farm News*:

January	Dec. 17
February	Jan. 21
March	Feb. 4 or Feb. 16
April	March 11 or March 25
May	April 15
June	May 13
July	June 10
August	July 15
September	Aug. 12
October	Sept. 9 or Sept. 23
November	Oct. 14
December	Nov. 11

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CENTER FOR FOOD & ANIMAL ISSUES

New program aims to help Ohio's equine industry

OFBF is helping to get the word out about a new Ohio State University Extension program that will provide helpful and up-to-date information to horse owners and enthusiasts.

REINS (Regional Equine Information Network System) is modeled after a successful program that has been in place in North Carolina since 1995, said Kim Cole, Ohio's Extension equine specialist.

"The (North Carolina) program is still going strong there. It's an excellent way for horse owners to work together to provide information to each other," said Cole.

Under REINS, volunteers receive training on several horse management and science topics, teaching techniques and program development from Extension personnel, faculty members from the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine and agribusinesses. After they are certified, the volunteers work with county Extension personnel to provide horse owners helpful information such as nutrition, breeding and foaling, healthcare and

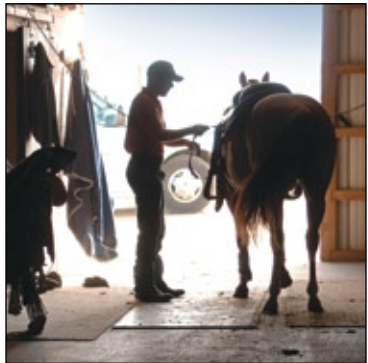


Photo by Megan Nadolski

pasture management. They also may develop educational horse materials and help coordinate programs such as farm tours and disaster preparedness, Cole said.

"This is an information network for the equine industry," she said. "Unlike the livestock industry which is very involved with Extension, most horse owners don't contact Extension with their questions."

The first training session will take place Feb. 20-21 during the REINS annual conference at the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine in

Columbus. Registration is \$35 for REINS volunteers and \$70 for all others. As part of their training, volunteers will receive publications and resource materials.

Those interested in becoming a REINS volunteer need to submit an application and three recommendations to Cole. They should have some knowledge or interest in horse management, be willing to stay current with the most recent information and technology relevant to the horse industry and be able to devote volunteer time monthly. The first year requires 16 hours of training and eight hours each year after that.

Cole said her goal is to have one to two volunteers for each county. She already has recommendations in about 75 percent of the counties.

"We have a strong youth program for horses but no structured adult program in place," Cole said. "This should be a great networking tool for Ohio's equine industry."

For more information, visit www.ofbf.org and search for "REINS."

For your InFARMation

The Ohio Livestock Coalition is sponsoring "For Your InFARMation" a new, free online resource for third-grade students to learn where food comes from and the important role agriculture plays in Ohio's economy. A downloadable teacher's guide of lessons matched to Ohio Department of Education standards, ready-to-use student worksheets and an eight-page student guide are

included. The materials support the Ohio social studies, language arts, math and science academic content standards for third grade.

There is also a contest for students. Teachers can submit essays written by students for a free, all-expenses-paid field trip to an Ohio livestock farm for the entire third-grade class. Visit www.foryourinfarmation.com.

Nominate your neighbor for annual award

County Farm Bureau members, community leaders and members of the Ohio Livestock Coalition (OLC) have an opportunity to recognize the efforts neighbors have made in rural Ohio to positively develop and enhance relationships and communications.

The Neighbor of the Year award, created by OFBF and OLC, recognizes rural residents – non-farmers and farmers – who have worked hard to build bridges between neighbors in Ohio's countryside. OLC encourages livestock farmers and nonfarming rural residents to follow its "Good Neighbor" practices in a positive manner that benefits rural communities and neighborhoods.

The winners will be recognized at the Ohio Livestock Coalition Annual Meeting and Industry Symposium on April 8. For details and to obtain a nomination form, call Amy Hurst at 614-246-8262. Nominations are due March 1.

Workers' comp safety meeting dates

County meetings not listed are yet to be announced.

Adams	Mar. 29	Rhonemus Hall, Brown County Fairgrounds
Allen	Mar. 1	Lincolnview High School
Ashland	Feb. 15	Triway High School Auditorium
Ashtabula	Mar. 29	TBA
Athens	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Auglaize	Mar. 25	American Legion Hall, New Bremen
Belmont	Apr. 22	Farm Bureau Office, Barnesville
Brown	Mar. 29	Rhonemus Hall, Brown County Fairgrounds
Butler	Mar. 18	Janet Clemmons Center
Carroll	Mar. 20	First United Methodist Church, New Philadelphia
Champaign	Mar. 4	Der Dutchman, Plain City
Clark	Mar. 4	Der Dutchman, Plain City
Clermont	Mar. 29	Rhonemus Hall, Brown County Fairgrounds
Clinton	TBA	TBA
Columbiana	Mar. 29	Summit County Fairgrounds
Coshocton	TBA	Coshocton County Fairgrounds
Crawford	Mar. 20	Bucyrus Community Hospital
Cuyahoga	Mar. 11	Lorain County JVS
Darke	Mar. 10	Brethren Home Brick Room, Greenville
Defiance	Mar. 31	Fulton County Extension Office
Delaware	Mar. 25	Grady Memorial Hospital
Erie	Mar. 11	Lorain County JVS
Fairfield	Apr. 17	Hocking County Fairgrounds
Fayette	TBA	TBA
Franklin	Mar. 25	Grady Memorial Hospital
Fulton	Mar. 31	Fulton County Extension Office
Gallia	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Geauga	Mar. 29	TBA
Greene	TBA	TBA
Guernsey	TBA	TBA
Hamilton	Mar. 18	Janet Clemmons Center
Hancock	Jan. 27	Hancock-Wood Electric, North Baltimore
Hardin	Mar. 15	Mt. Victory, Plaza Inn
Harrison	Mar. 20	First United Methodist Church, New Philadelphia
Henry	Mar. 31	Fulton County Extension Office
Highland	TBA	TBA
Hocking	Apr. 17	Hocking County Fairgrounds
Holmes	TBA	Keim Lumber, Charm
Huron	Mar. 11	Lorain County JVS
Jack-Vinton	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Jefferson	Mar. 20	First United Methodist Church, New Philadelphia
Knox	TBA	Agri Trac, Utica
Lake	Mar. 29	TBA
Lawrence	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Licking	TBA	TBA
Logan	Mar. 15	Mt. Victory, Plaza Inn
Lorain	Mar. 11	Lorain County JVS
Lucas	Mar. 22	Riverview Banquet Center, Pemberville
Madison	Mar. 4	Der Dutchman, Plain City
Mahoning	Apr. 14	Mill Creek Metro Parks Farm
Marion	Mar. 20	Bucyrus Community Hospital
Medina	Feb. 15	Triway High School Auditorium
Meigs	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Mercer	Mar. 25	American Legion Hall, New Bremen
Miami	Mar. 23	JVS Applied Tech Center, Piqua
Monroe	Apr. 22	Farm Bureau Office, Barnesville
Montgomery	Aug. 7	TBA
Morgan	June 6	Riecker Building, McConnelsville
Morrow	Mar. 20	Bucyrus Community Hospital
Muskingum	TBA	TBA
Noble	TBA	TBA
Ottawa	Mar. 22	Riverview Banquet Center, Pemberville
Paulding	Mar. 1	Lincolnview High School
Perry	TBA	TBA
Pickaway	Mar. 18	Ross County Service Center
Pike	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Portage	Mar. 29	Summit County Fairgrounds
Preble	Mar. 11	Harvest Land Office, Eaton
Putnam	Mar. 1	Lincolnview High School
Richland	Mar. 20	Bucyrus Community Hospital
Ross	Mar. 18	Ross County Service Center
Sandusky	Mar. 22	Riverview Banquet Center, Pemberville
Scioto	Mar. 29	OSU Extension Office, Jackson
Seneca	Jan. 27	Hancock-Wood Electric, North Baltimore
Shelby	Mar. 25	American Legion Hall, New Bremen
Stark	Mar. 29	Summit County Fairgrounds
Summit	Mar. 29	Summit County Fairgrounds
Trumbull	Mar. 29	TBA
Tuscarawas	Mar. 20	First United Methodist Church, New Philadelphia
Union	Mar. 25	Grady Memorial Hospital
Van Wert	Mar. 1	Lincolnview High School
Warren	Aug. 7	TBA
Washington	Feb. 22	Waterford High School
Wayne	Feb. 15	Triway High School Auditorium
Williams	Mar. 31	Fulton County Extension Office
Wood	Mar. 22	Riverview Banquet Center, Pemberville
Wyandot	Mar. 15	Mt. Victory, Plaza Inn

NOTEWORTHY

Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation awards grants to local groups

The Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation has awarded a series of Agricultural Action and Awareness Grants for the 2010 program year.

The competitively awarded grants support programs and projects focusing on agricultural education, ecological and/or economic development. The grant awards include:

- Greenhouse Expansion Project, Athens Meigs Education Service Center, Athens: \$2,500
- Soil and Water Quality Project, Brown County SWCD, Georgetown: \$1,250
- Growing Stewards of the Earth, Cuyahoga County SWCD, Valley View: \$1,750
- Agri-Energy, Fairfield County SWCD, Lancaster: \$2,250
- Outdoor Land Lab – Next Steps, Fredericktown Schools, Fredericktown: \$3,000
- Agricultural Health & Safety Education in Ohio, Grady Memorial Hospital, Delaware: \$2,250
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, HANDS Foundation, Brunswick: \$1,250
- Community Garden Fence, Hocking County Farm Bureau, Circleville: \$1,000
- Annual Fall Fun Fest, Huron County SWCD, Norwalk: \$750
- Energy Sources Tours, Ohio Energy Project, Worthington: \$3,000
- AgriPower Program, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, Columbus: \$3,000
- Promote Ohio Livestock and Genetics Internationally, OLGEC, Inc., Greenville: \$1,250
- Inspiring Hunger Fighters, OSU Scarlet & Grey Ag Day, Columbus: \$3,000
- Growing Green Project, PERCO, Inc., New Lexington: \$2,500
- The Time is Now in Agricultural Education, Ridgemont High School, Ridgeway: \$2,250.

Agricultural Action and Awareness Grants focus on funding needs for smaller, community based groups that often find the larger-scale, public and private grant solicitation process daunting. More information about the Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation and its grant program can be obtained at www.OFBFoundation.org.

Free materials available for teachers

Ohio Farm Bureau is offering a complete set of teaching materials to K-12 full-time teachers who are Farm Bureau members. Included is a DVD of *Our Ohio* television segments, a CD with *Our Ohio* magazine articles and a companion set of teaching questions matched to Ohio Academic Content Standards. Concepts covered include new technologies and the environment, renewable fuels, increasing markets for one of Ohio's top commodities, biotechnology and green energy.

Each packet contains materials suitable for fourth through 12th grades.

To request this complimentary gift, call 1-888-476-9948 by Feb. 1. Simply provide your name, membership number (located on your membership card), e-mail address and school name. Teachers who are not currently members can join by calling the same toll-free number or by visiting OFBF.org and clicking on "Benefits and Membership."



OFBF lends support to Annie's Project

Ohio Farm Bureau is partnering with Ohio State University Extension to help expand Annie's Project, a risk management program for women in agriculture that will be held throughout Ohio in 2010.

Annie's Project is a six-part course designed to strengthen women's roles in modern farm enterprises. The program is for women who live and work in a complex, dynamic farm business environment, and it focuses on five broad aspects of risk typical in the agricultural setting: human, financial, marketing, production and legal.

Last year, organizers offered just one Annie's Project workshop in Ohio. Through new collaborations with OFBF, Ag Credit, Farm Credit Services of Mid-America and the USDA Farm Service Agency, OSU Extension

is planning 12 workshops in areas around the state, with at least one in each of the organization's newly formed Extension Education and Research Areas.

Ohio workshops are scheduled for January through March, and registration is \$65, which includes materials and meals or refreshments.

A map of locations and other information can be found on the Erie County OSU Extension Web site, <http://erie.osu.edu/> — click on "Agriculture and Natural Resources" and then "Women in Agriculture."

To register or for more information, contact Annie's Project coordinators Julia Woodruff at woodruff.94@osu.edu or 419-627-7631 and Doris Herringshaw at herringshaw.1@osu.edu or 419-354-9050.



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