

Lucas County Auditor Scheduled Town Hall Meetings

By: Kolet Buenavides

TOLEDO--The Lucas County Auditor, Anita Lopez, Esq., will be holding informational sessions for farmers throughout Lucas County in the month of September to discuss the recent changes with the law, provide information regarding Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) and Agricultural District programs, and introduce the newly launched county website.

Lopez will be traveling throughout Lucas County for public informational sessions.

“Recent changes to the CAUV program within the Budget Bill regarding conservation practices can result in significant tax savings,” Lopez said. “We can provide the information earlier and encourage them to participate and apply for the conservation practice or plan.”

Farmers and owners of farmland are strongly encouraged to attend the sessions.

“I want to make the process easy for our farming community to reach us,” Lopez said. “Instead of having to go down to One Government Center, we like to be in the areas where they work and live. So, we want it to be as simple as possible by providing afternoon and evening sessions and bring the Auditor’s Office to them.”

The House Bill 49, biennial budget bill, was recently enacted, which impacts the Ohio Revised Code Sections 5713.31, 5713.33, 5713.34, and 5715.01.

“The state budget was changed,” Lopez stated. “So, there will be a significant reduction in values based on soil type.”

Details regarding the biennial budget bill can be found on the County Auditors’ Association of Ohio’s (CAAO) website and the Department of Taxation bulletin.

“So, all those things we’ve been talking to the farmers about and telling them to contact the state legislators two years ago, and, finally, the state legislators listened to the importance in having our food grown locally, the importance of maintaining our agricultural community in Ohio,” Lopez said. “So, the legislators finally listened and now we’ll see even more tax savings in 2019.”

Different counties in Ohio are on various schedules, and value are updated every three years through revaluation and triennial update. Lucas County had its triennial update in 2015, and is scheduled for the revaluation in 2018.

“Lucas County residents will see the impact when they receive their taxes in 2019 because of the 2018 revaluation,” Lopez said.

Farmers will see several changes in the upcoming years with this legislation especially those who participate in a conversation plan or practice.

The conservation program and practice through the CAUV program will have an impact as soon as October of this year when the new legislation takes effect.

Lopez committed that those with conservation plan or practice will be able to see the legislative impact for tax year 2017, payable 2018. Citizens that fall under this category are strongly encouraged to attend the public sessions or call the Auditor's Office to discuss implementation details.

"If it helps save farmers money, helps protect our water, and encourage and motivates farmers to participate, it is a great thing," Lopez said. "Ultimately, only time will tell if these are really successful changes. Anytime a new program starts off, it sounds great, but as most folks know, there's bumps on the road."

The Auditor will also have the capability to process the applications on demand during these sessions. The meetings will be held in all the following townships/areas: Sylvania; Swanton; Jerusalem; Richfield; Monclova; Springfield; Spencer; Harding; Oregon; Providence; and Waterville. Citizens may choose whichever area and time that is most convenient for them to attend. Although RSVP is not required, you may do so by sending an e-mail to cauv@co.lucas.oh.us or calling the Auditor's Office at (419) 213-4406. Below is the list of scheduled town hall meetings:

Mon., Sept. 18 at 9:30 AM: Sylvania Town Hall: 4927 N. Holland-Sylvania Rd.

Tue., Sept. 19 at 9:30 AM: Swanton Town Hall: 13410 Airport Hwy.

Wed., Sept. 20 at 2:00 PM: Jerusalem Town Hall: 9501 Jerusalem Rd.

Wed., Sept. 20 at 6:00 PM: Waterville Town Hall: 621 Farnsworth Rd.

Thurs., Sept. 21 at 2:00 PM: Richfield Fire Station: 11450 W. Sylvania Ave.

Mon., Sept. 25 at 9:30 AM: Providence Fire Station: 8149 Main St.

Tues., Sept. 26 at 1 PM: 4335 Albon Rd.

Thurs., Sept. 28 at 9:30 AM: Springfield Town Hall: 7617 Angola Rd.

Thurs., Sept. 28 at 2:30 PM: Spencer Town Hall: 630 N. Meilke Rd.

Fri., Sept. 29 at 9:30 AM: Harding Town Hall: 430 N. Berkey-Southern Rd.

Thurs., Oct. 12 at 6:30 PM: Oregon Admin. Bldg.: 5330 Seaman Rd.