

FARM BUREAU NEWS

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Farm Bureau Mission Statement

Forging a partnership between farmers and consumers that meets consumers needs, addresses public expectations and ensures agricultural prosperity in a global marketplace.



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Local Greenhouses Gear Up for Spring Season

While the snow is still flying, local greenhouses are busy starting seeds and transplanting seedlings to be ready for your flower and vegetable gardens this summer. “Before the last Christmas poinsettia is sold, we are already sowing a variety of flower and vegetable seeds that will be transplanted into larger pots and flats for the spring season”, indicated Gayle Hansen of Hansen’s Greenhouse in Olmsted Falls.



“Very few people realize that greenhouse growers are usually six months ahead of the next season. We were planting lily bulbs at Thanksgiving to be ready for Easter this year”, Hansen explained.

With the local food movement, this might be the year that you decide to grow your own vegetables along with some annual flowers to brighten your yard. “Most greenhouses offer a wide variety of vegetable plants so you can harvest your own vegetable crop this summer”, Hansen said.

Stop in at a local greenhouse in April to select your Easter plant and check out the varieties of flowering and vegetable plants you will want for your gardens this spring.

An Open Letter to Cuyahoga Farm Bureau Members -

We first want to thank you for being a member of our organization. Whether you have hundreds of acres or one, farm full-time or not at all, the Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, the Ohio Farm Bureau and the American Farm Bureau Federation have been working very diligently to promote and keep agriculture the largest industry in Ohio and one of the largest industries in the United States. No matter if you are a foodie or what type of food you enjoy, and have access to, Farm Bureau has been at the forefront of protecting all of us in the food chain.

In our publications, you have likely read about the membership model proposal that has been taking shape over the past two years. Within this model change is a membership dues increase that was approved by the members in attendance at the County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in September 2014. There has not been a dues increase since 2005 and like any other business, over time the cost of doing business increases. Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau member dues are \$70 (seventy), an increase of \$15 (fifteen), which figures to \$1.25 increase per month over a twelve month period.

Over the last several years, Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau has taken several cost-saving, significant, positive strides in managing member dollars for local programming and general operating expenses. Examples of these positive measures:

- operating within the set program budget
- creating a multi-county Farm Bureau office by welcoming Erie, Huron and Lorain County and sharing of office expenses
- adopting a “by members, for members” concept of how we donate to local charities and clubs
- use of electronic communication tools to offset traditional mailing expenses
- targeting specific groups and specific programming to promote Ohio farmers and Ohio agriculture
- pursuing collaborative programming opportunities with other agriculture and non-agriculture organizations, thus sharing costs and increasing promotion of programs

In these last several years, Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau has provided some valuable programming. Those programs include:

- Landowner and business meetings – we have served and educated several hundred folks by hosting informational meetings to help landowners gain a better understanding of oil and gas leasing options

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Member Benefit Minute

Did you know?

Farm Bureau primarily focuses on two goals: promoting Ohio agriculture and legislative representation for our members.

We work on issues important to you and agriculture and strive to keep consumers connected to producers and local farmer businesses.



Members of the Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau served as delegates to the 96th annual meeting of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. During the meeting, delegates established policies on numerous topics including taxes and water quality and addressed proposed changes to the organization's membership structure. The meeting took place Dec. 10-12 in Columbus. (L-R) Dave Peth of North Royalton, Thomas Kaskey of Olmsted Falls and Gerald Wilson of Cleveland.

Ag Day at the Capital, held in Columbus on February 25, was an opportunity for Farm Bureau members Michelle Heinz, Tom Kaskey and Dave Peth to visit with our Ohio legislators on issues important to Ohio's farmers and Ohio agriculture.



(above) Farm Bureau members with Rep Stephanie Howse and with Senator Sandra Williams (below)



(Above) Farm Bureau members with Rep Kent Smith and with Rep Bill Patmon (below)



Visit local farmers markets and orchards this year and meet the farmer that grows the food that you enjoy

For a listing of local orchards and other markets, log on to www.ourohio.org and click on the Buying Local Directory

Growing Success from the Ground Up - April 18, 2015

Urban farming has gained significant traction in Cuyahoga County. A workshop is planned to assist our urban farmers with a better understanding of the relationship between soil quality, soil fertility, and soil health, and how to promote your farm using social media, on Saturday, April 18, 2015, sponsored by the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District, USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service, OSU Extension-Cuyahoga and the Cuyahoga Farm Bureau. Advance reservations are required. Call 216-524-6580 ext 13 for details or visit cuyahoga.ofbf.org.



Agriculture Literacy Project Targets Urban Schools

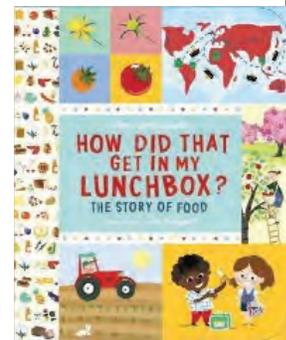
Ohio Farm Bureau and Farm Credit Mid-America are partnering to focus on basic agricultural literacy in urban schools, taking agriculture to third graders in Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Schools.

Using the book "How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?" and a newly develop food AgMag, Farm Credit employees and county Farm Bureau volunteers will be visiting area schools to introduce students to who grows their food, where and how food is grown and how it ends up in the grocery store and then in their lunchbox.

"We are reaching out to Cleveland and Community elementary school administrators to tell them about this project and ask if we can bring this new program into their third grade classrooms in March and April this year", said Anita Cook, Organization Director for the Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau. "Our goal is to reach out to 10-12 schools this spring. Before we get into the classrooms, we need to organize a team of volunteers interested in learning about this program and willing to take it into the schools." Farm Bureau members interested in helping with this project are encouraged to contact the County Farm Bureau office.

If you are a third grade teacher or have a child who is a third grader, encourage your school administrator to take advantage of this free program being offered.

The book, "How Did That Get in My Lunchbox" focusing on the basic question of where does my food come from, in a fun and informative fashion, will be provided to each classroom along with a food agmag for each student.



Book Offer for 2nd - 4th Grade Teachers In celebration of National Agriculture Day, March 20, the Cuyahoga Farm Bureau is offering a free award winning book to 2nd, 3rd & 4th grade teachers for their school library or classroom, just for asking. Select from one of four books while supplies last. More about this offer at <http://ofbf.org/counties/cuyahoga/blog/9467/> or contact the county Farm Bureau office.

New FFA Chapter to be established at Washington Park High School

Under the direction of horticulture instructor and Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor Mr. Zane Fessler, area business and industry leaders were invited to attend the first ever Cleveland FFA Boosters meeting to give support to agriculture education in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. "Washington Park hopes to form mutually beneficial relationships with industry partners that will also benefit the surrounding communities. The expansive greenhouse and open campus offers a perfect setting for horticulture, small engine repair and animal science pathways currently offered at the school", Fessler indicated. "We are in the process of establishing an FFA Booster support group so our students can take advantage of the many opportunities offered through FFA."



Farm Bureau members attended the first of three meetings planned to establish the FFA Boosters to learn first hand about the program, plans for the future and find out how we might lend assistance to help the program thrive.

If you are interested in learning more about how you or your business can get involved, contact Zane.Fessler@clevelandmetroschools.org.

Open Letter to Members

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and providing an annual Worker's Comp Safety to meet safety requirements for member businesses.

- Agriculture promotion and education including participation and/or sponsorship at Farm and Garden Day in Garfield Heights, the Garlic Festival in Shaker Heights, A Time To Grow Conference at Cleveland Botanical Gardens, Farm-City Days in Parma, collaboration with local farmers markets, supporting local farms providing local, fresh product to consumers, funding for over 3,900 area school children to experience a farm field trip in an effort to educate future consumers of the importance of local farms, local food and agriculture and providing agriculture education materials to area schools for classroom use

- Leadership Opportunities, Camps, Conferences and Scholarships - Training opportunities to advance personal and leadership growth is made available to all Farm Bureau members. For youth, we encourage participation in the FFA/Farm Bureau Youth Leadership Camp, and Young Agriculture Professionals are invited to participate in a trip to Washington DC providing future leaders a change to network, learn, grow and bring their experiences to their communities. Over \$15,000 in scholarships has been awarded to students continuing their education in the past four years.

The number of questions about land prices, oil and gas, water quality and nutrient management, food safety and integrity, zoning, certifications and inspections of farms, public utilities across Ohio, government programs available to beginning farmers and consumer awareness never ends and Farm Bureau does everything it can to address these issues and concerns through our staff in Washington DC, Columbus and here in the county. These concerns are addressed through calls to our legislators that may change how we grow and purchase food, through a variety of webinars and in-person seminars, through our publications, web and social media updates and the most fun of all, through county volunteer-led programs and opportunities that have been mentioned.

Personally, the value of this membership goes beyond words. We hope you will see the value and use the tangible and intangible benefits offered to every Farm Bureau member.

We do appreciate your membership and support to Ohio's farmers and Ohio agriculture.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Kaskey, County Farm Bureau President

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The Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau Newsletter is distributed to Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau members to keep them informed of Farm Bureau issues, events, member benefits and agriculture.

With direction from the county board of trustees, the organization supports Ohio farmers and promotes Ohio agriculture.

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Taking the Long View on a Valuable Resource

Abundant water - for households, recreation, farming and industry - is a major reason why Ohio is a great place to live and do business. Our rivers, lakes, streams and aquifers are central to the well-being of families, businesses and communities.



A grassroots initiative, Healthy Water Ohio (HWO), aims to develop a long-range plan that will sustainably meet current and future water needs while enhancing the economy and quality of life for all Ohioans.

Ohio Farm Bureau convened a diverse partnership of stakeholders from conservation, business and industry, universities, water suppliers, agriculture and others to lead the development of a 20 to 30 year Ohio water resource management strategy, addressing water quality challenges and opportunities to benefit all Ohioans.

To learn more about HWO and the organizations committed to the wise use of Ohio's water resources go to <http://ouohio.org/community/farmers-care/1156/healthy-water-ohio> or visit ofbf.org and search for Healthy Water Ohio for a variety of articles and information.

A water quality and nutrient management meeting will be held on March 30 at Orchard Hills Center in Chesterland. Contact the Farm Bureau office for details.

Celebrate the year of clean water on April 19 at Earthfest at the county fairgrounds

County Scholarship Program Available to Farm Bureau Members

The Cuyahoga Farm Bureau Betty Hansen Memorial Scholarship is available to all Cuyahoga Farm Bureau members to help fund the advancement of their education. For details and application forms, visit northcoastfarmbureau.org or call the county Farm Bureau office (440) 877-0706. Application deadline is June 15.