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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

NOBLE COUNTY AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

APRIL | 2018

Dear Readers,

Is it really April? In my opinion, Mother Nature has been enjoying her April Fools joke for a little too long. We all have spring fever, plants and animals alike. We are ready for spring!

On the left, you'll see my magnolia beginning to bloom on a snowy morning during the second week of April. The blossoms are damaged on the petal tips, but hopefully it will still be glorious in a few days.

I hope that by the time you read this, we have had our last snow, the sun is shining, and the mud has dried enough for you to move comfortably from one place to another.

Speaking of mud, turn to page 6 for some mud management tips. Also included in this month's newsletter are tips for spring seeding and a list of area Beef Quality Assurance training dates.

I hope to see you around the county this spring. Call, click, or stop by and chat. I am always happy to learn how I can better serve you.

Sincerely,
Christine Gelley
Noble County OSU Extension
ANR Educator

Noble County Extension Office

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Caldwell, OH 43721

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URLs: www.noble.osu.edu

www.facebook.com/osuenoble/

www.twitter.com/NobleCountyAgEd

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Continuing in 2018!

Kindred Gardens

Gardening for Seniors

Kindred Gardens is a program that offers stimulating gardening activities to seniors through a series of hands-on classes. All activities will be offered at no charge. Programs will be held at the Joyce M. Davis Senior Center in Caldwell from 10-11:30 a.m. Dates are listed below. Space may be limited. Please RSVP for each session a week in advance. Five series segments will be offered throughout 2018, each including an activity associated with gardening.

The planned segments are:

- Thurs. March 15- *Roses and Raspberries*
- Thurs. April 19- *Adventures with Vegetables*
- Thurs. July 19- *Preserve Your Hard Work*
- Thurs. September 13- *Bulbs Galore*
- Thurs. November 15- *Winter Wreaths*

Next Class!

To find out more about Kindred Gardens call Christine Gelley at the Noble County OSU Extension Office 740-732-5681 or email gelley.2@osu.edu.

Lunch is available at the Senior Center with a reservation made by 9 a.m. the day of the event. Lunch is $4.00 for those under 60. For those over 60, a $2.50 donation is suggested. Call the center at 740-732-5129 for reservations.

Personal identifiers such as name and contact information will only be used to provide you with program updates. Information such as age and gender will be anonymously reported to summarize program impacts to The Ohio State University and the Senior Center.

noble.osu.edu

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April 20- Farm Talk Breakfast

Farm Talk Breakfast will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the **Noble County Extension Office** and focus on **Preparing for Farmers' Market Season**. This free event will serve as an opportunity for new and seasoned farmers' market vendors to review cottage foods laws, develop operating budgets, and develop great customer service skills. Guest speaker will be Samantha Schott, Noble County FCS/4-H Educator. Breakfast will include eggs, bacon, toast, and oatmeal parfaits. **Please RSVP by April 18th** by calling Noble County OSU Extension at 740-732-5681.

Upcoming Community Events

- **April 12th-** Monroe County OSU Extension will offer a Pond Clinic at 6 p.m. at Mark Wells Farm in Jerusalem. Call Mark Landefeld at 740-472-0810 for more details.
- **April 14th-** The Noble County Historical Society is offering an Alice in Wonderland Parent-Child Tea at 1 p.m. at the Ball-Caldwell House. Admission is $15 per person. Come dressed as your favorite Alice in Wonderland character.
- **April 19th-** Need training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for Vegetable Production? Attend the training at Noon at the Somerton Firehouse. Cost is $20. Call Mark Landefeld at 740-472-0810 for more details.
- **April 25th-** Deerassic Park's Wild Wednesday will focus on creating and preserving conducive habitat and food plots for wildlife. Noble County ANR Educator-Christine Gelley will give an interactive presentation. This free program starts at 6 p.m.
- **May 1st -3rd-** A. I. School at EARS is completely booked. For those registered, arrive ready for class to begin promptly at 9 a.m. Call Christine if you need directions to the farm 740-732-5681. If you get lost, call the farm 740-732-2682.
- **May 8th-** There will be a Beef Quality Assurance training at Muskingum Livestock at 7 p.m. No cost to attend. See page 5 for additional dates and details.
- **May 15th & May 31st- PARENTS of 4-Hers:** 4-H Quality Assurance Trainings will be offered at 6:30 p.m. at Caldwell High School. Call Nancy at 740-732-5681 with any questions.

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Southeast Ohio Sheep & Goat School

A six session series throughout 2018 featuring presentations by state specialists and regional experts.

Hosted at the Eastern Agricultural Research Station in Caldwell, OH.

Sessions:

1. **Sheep & Goats 101**
   Thursday, February 15, 2018
   5:30-8:30 p.m.
   - Anatomy
   - Nutrition
   - Reproduction
   - Environment
   - Behavior

2. **Keeping Your Calendar**
   Thursday, March 8, 2018
   5:30-8:30 p.m.
   - Calendar Based Management
   - Identifying & Fitting Your Market
   - Lambing & Kidding

3. **Safe Systems**
   Thursday, May 10, 2018
   5:30-8:30 p.m.
   - Predator Prevention
   - Parasites
   - Pathogens
   - Wool & Coat Care

4. **FAMACHA & Forages**
   Friday, July 13, 2018- Subject to Change
   8:00-10:30 a.m.
   - FAMACHA Training

   10:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
   - Ohio Forage and Grassland Council Sheep Tour (More Details to Come)

5. **Reproduction**
   Thursday, September 6, 2018
   5:30-8:30 p.m.
   - Synchronization
   - Artificial Insemination
   - Ram & Buck Semen Testing
   - Pregnancy Checking

6. **Finishing**
   Thursday, November 8, 2018
   5:30-8:30 p.m.
   - Body Condition Scores
   - Finishing for Market
   - Carcass Evaluation & Meat Grading
   - Promoting Lamb & Goat for Dinner

Next Class!

RSVPs Due: Two Weeks Prior to Class

Cost: $100 for all six sessions or
$25 per single session
Meal Included

Contact: Christine Gelley-
Noble County OSU Extension

Phone: 740-732-5681

Email: gelley.2@osu.edu

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BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE

For Livestock Producers

BQA Area Meetings

5/21/18 Producers Livestock, Caldwell 6:00-8:00 p.m.
6/14/18 Mid-East Career Center 6:00-8:00 p.m.
7/26/18 Barnesville Library Annex 6:00-8:00 p.m.
10/2/18 Eastern Ag Research Farm (part of Beef School)

For more information contact your local Extension Office

BQA does more than just help beef producers capture more value from their market cattle: BQA also reflects a positive public image and instills consumer confidence in the beef industry. When producers implement the best management practices of a BQA program, they assure their market steers, heifers, cows, and bulls are the best they can be. Today, the stakes are even higher because of increased public attention on animal welfare. BQA is valuable to all beef and dairy producers.

OSU Extension, Belmont County 740-695-1455
OSU Extension , Guernsey County 470-489-5300
OSU Extension, Monroe County 740-472-0810
OSU Extension, Noble County 740-732-5681

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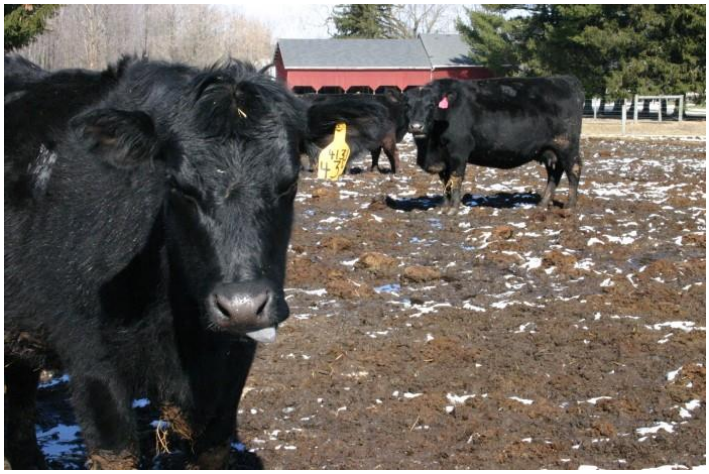
Learn more about Beef Quality Assurance at: http://u.osu.edu/beefteam/bqa/.
Take the online training at www.bqa.org.
Follow the OSU Beef Team for updates: www.beef.osu.edu.

Mud Control is Grazing Management

By Rory Lewandowski

Originally published by Farm & Dairy on April 5, 2018



An unseasonably warm February led to mud management issues for many pasture-based livestock operations. Spring typically leads to our April showers and the "traditional" time of managing around mud. We just arrived in mud season a little earlier.

All this mud is an undesirable condition, from an animal performance, resource management and environmental perspective.

Graziers need to have a mud control plan as part of a comprehensive grazing management system. Within a grazing system, mud does not just happen. Wet soils combined with livestock create mud. How quickly mud is created depends upon the number of livestock in a given area, the weight of those livestock, the saturation level of the soil, the time of year, and the strength of the surface to support those livestock.

A thick, vigorous growing sod with light livestock pressure is most able to resist creating mud, while a thin, dormant sod cover with even light to moderate livestock pressure is least able to resist creating mud.

The pressure livestock exert on a surface depends upon their weight and hoof area in contact with the surface. Surprisingly, large livestock can exert more pressure than a 50-ton dozer because their weight is concentrated in a relatively small area. When they walk, livestock can double the pressure applied to a surface because weight shifts from four feet to two feet. This is important because our soils have a weight-bearing capacity.

According to the University of Kentucky AEN-115 publication, soft clay or sandy loam has a capacity of 14 psi, firm clay 28 psi and dry clay 42 psi. Wet soils lose supporting strength. I could not find figures for sod cover, but it is reasonable to assume that adding a sod cover on top of these soils will increase the bearing capacity of the soil. The denser the sod, the more resistance it will have.

Walking through mud takes a toll on our livestock. Livestock require more energy in muddy conditions because mud reduces the insulating value of the hair coat and because walking in mud is strenuous. Livestock may actually eat less because of the effort required to get to feed and water in mud conditions. As a result, daily gains decline.

In addition to detrimental livestock effects, mud creates vulnerability to soil loss through erosion and water movement that is an environmental cost. When a pasture sod base is beat up and turned into mud,

there is an economic cost associated with losing some grazing potential. We can also think of situations where viewing mud and livestock creates a negative view of agriculture, what could be termed “social” loss.

One practical tool to help graziers manage muddy periods and protect their pasture sod resources is the heavy use pad. A heavy use pad provides a feeding area for livestock that minimizes mud creation and soil erosion. The “Cadillac” of heavy use pads is concrete, but for most grazing operations the use of geotextile cloth and stone is the more practical and economical choice. Geotextile fabric creates a porous barrier between the soil underneath the fabric and the rock on top of the fabric. The porous nature of the fabric allows water/moisture to pass through it while the rock on top of it remains in place to provide a firm surface.

The first step in constructing a geotextile heavy use pad is to pick a site that has some reasonably good drainage. Level the area and remove the topsoil. Lay out the geotextile fabric, taking care to avoid wrinkles. If the pad is larger than a single width of the fabric, make sure that there is approximately 2 feet of overlap in the succeeding passes. Next, apply a layer of rock on top of the fabric, taking care not to rip or wrinkle the fabric. Generally, a four- to six-inch base layer of number 4 crushed limestone rock is laid on top of the fabric, followed by a 2- to 3-inch cover of a finer cover of dense grade aggregate or road mix.

Depending upon your budget, some pads may also incorporate gravel paver grids that help to reduce the volume of surface rock loss during scraping and cleaning of the pad.

Spring Seeding of Forages

Originally published on beef.osu.edu on March 28, 2018

By Mark Sulc, OSU Extension Forage Specialist

Late March and on into April provides one of the two preferred times to seed perennial cool-season forages. The other preferred timing for cool-season grasses and legumes is in late summer, primarily the month of August here in Ohio. The relative success of spring vs. summer seeding of forages is greatly affected by the prevailing weather conditions, and so growers have success and failures with each option.

Probably the two primary difficulties with spring plantings are finding a good window of opportunity when soils are dry enough before it gets too late, and managing weed infestations that are usually more difficult with spring plantings. The following steps will help improve your chances for successful forage establishment in the spring.

1. Make sure soil pH and fertility are in the recommended ranges. Follow the Tri-state Soil Fertility Recommendations (https://forages.osu.edu/forage-management/soil-fertility-forages). Forages are more productive where soil pH is above 6.0, but for alfalfa it should be 6.5 – 6.8. Soil phosphorus should be at least 15 ppm for grasses and 25 ppm for legumes, while minimum soil potassium in ppm should be 75 plus 2.5 x soil CEC. If seedings are to include alfalfa, and soil pH is not at least 6.5, it would be best to apply lime now and delay establishing alfalfa until late summer (plant an annual grass forage in the interim).

2. Plant high quality seed of known varietal source adapted to our region. Planting “common” seed (variety not stated) usually proves to be a very poor investment, yielding less even in the first or second year and having shorter stand life.
3. Plant as soon as it is possible to prepare a good seedbed in April. Try to finish seeding by late April in southern Ohio and by the first of May in northern Ohio. Timely April planting gives forage seedlings the best opportunity to get a jump on weeds and to be established before summer stress sets in. Weed pressure will be greater with later plantings, and they will not have as strong a root system developed by early summer when conditions often turn dry and hot.
4. Plant into a good seedbed. The ideal seedbed for conventional seedings is smooth, firm, and weed-free. Don’t overwork the soil. Too much tillage depletes moisture and increases the risk of surface crusting. Firm the seedbed before seeding to ensure good seed-soil contact and reduce the rate of drying in the seed zone. Cultipackers and cultimulchers are excellent implements for firming the soil. If residue cover is more than 35% use a no-till drill. No-till seeding is an excellent choice where soil erosion is a hazard. No-till forage seedings are most successful on silt loam soils with good drainage and are more difficult on clay soils or poorly drained soils.
5. Plant seed shallow (¼ to ½ inch deep) in good contact with the soil. Stop and check the actual depth of the seed in the field when you first start planting. This is especially important with no-till drills. In my experience, seeding some seed on the surface indicates most of the seed is about at the right depth.
6. When seeding into a tilled seedbed, drills with press wheels are the best choice. When seeding without press wheels or when broadcasting seed, cultipack before and after dropping the seed, preferably in the same direction the seeder was driven.
7. In fields with little erosion hazard, direct seedings without a companion crop in the spring allows harvesting two or three crops of high-quality forage in the seeding year, particularly when seeding alfalfa and red clover.
8. For conventional seedings on erosion prone fields, a small grain companion crop can reduce the erosion hazard and will also help compete with weeds. Companion crops usually increase total forage tonnage in the seeding year, but forage quality will be lower than direct seeded legumes. Take the following precautions to avoid excessive competition of the companion crop with forage seedlings: (i) use early-maturing, short, and stiff-strawed small grain varieties, (ii) plant companion small grains at 1.5-2.0 bu/A, (iii) remove companion crop as early pasture or silage, and (iv) do not apply additional nitrogen to the companion crop.
9. During the first 6 to 8 weeks after seeding, scout new seedings weekly for any developing weed or insect problems. Weed competition during the first six weeks is most damaging to stand establishment. Potato leafhopper damage on legumes in particular can be a concern beginning in late May to early June.
10. The first harvest of the new seeding should generally be delayed until early flowering of legumes, unless weeds were not controlled adequately and are threatening to smother the stand. For pure grass seedings, generally harvest after 70 days from planting, unless weeds are encroaching in which case the stand should be clipped earlier to avoid weed seed production.

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Southeastern Ohio Hay Day 2018

THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2018 • 4:00-8:30 P.M.

Southeastern Ohio Hay Day returns in 2018. This field day will offer demonstrations of hay harvesting equipment, tradeshow exhibits, educational presentations, dinner, and door prizes. Admission is free and open to the public. For accommodation purposes, advance registration is appreciated by June 11. Mark your calendar and watch for future announcements at www.forages.osu.edu/events.

Eastern Agricultural Research Station

16870 Twp. Rd. 126 (Bond Ridge Road)

Caldwell, OH 43724 (Follow STRT 215 from Belle Valley)

www.oardc.osu.edu/facility/eastern-agricultural-research-station

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To reserve a free meal, please fill out the form below and return to Christine Gelley at the Noble County OSU Extension Office: 46049 Marietta Rd. Suite 2, Caldwell, OH 43724 or call 740-732-5681 or email gelley.2@osu.edu. Advanced registration is appreciated by June 11.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number Attending: _____ Dietary Restrictions: _____

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SATURDAY, JULY 14, 2018, 8 A.M. – 4 P.M.

2018 OHIO SHEEP DAY

TOPICS

- Eastern Agricultural Research Station Update and Review
- Implementing a Sheep Handling System to Make Your Sheep Operation More Efficient
- Lambing Facility System That Works for a Large Sheep Operation
- Set-up of a Successful Lamb Feeding Operation
- Eastern Agricultural Research Station On-farm Sheep Research That Will Benefit the Sheep Producer
- Increasing Efficiency With Improved Fencing and Watering Systems
- Pasture Walk With the Experts

Location: Eastern Agricultural Research Station, 16870 Bond Ridge Rd., Caldwell, OH 43724

Cost: $15 – for Ohio Sheep Improvement Association Members. $25 for non-OSIA members. Cost includes lunch. OSIA memberships can be purchased during registration.

Contact information: Roger A. High, 614-246-8299, rhigh@ofbf.org or your county ANR Extension Educator

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