

Guernsey County Agriculture News

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Dear Friends,

I hope you and your family are doing well. We all look forward to life as it was before and pray things will improve soon. Meanwhile, I have a few updates to share with you.

This past two weeks we have had mass hatchings of millipedes. These tiny worm like creatures are a great annoyance to homeowners. This isn't a new phenomenon. I see it almost every year but these pests are more prolific in a wet spring and summer. It seems some homes experience the mass emergence and others do not, and still some experience the hatching for the first time. The emergence will end, and home perimeter sprays do help.

In addition, I have had several calls on tomatoes, pepper, squash, and zucchini rotting from the bottom or blossom end. This is called blossom-end rot. Plants may also prematurely lose blossoms. This is not a disease but a disorder which affects vegetable plants in periods of extreme temperature and fluctuating soil moisture. It is easily recognized by the flat, leathery,

discolored area on the blossom end of the fruit. When we experience extreme temperatures, fruit development is not complete, and calcium uptake is limited and rot can occur. To avoid this problem water at approximately 1 inch per week at the base of plants in the morning. At the end of this growing season soil test the garden. Adjust soil pH levels through proper liming this fall. Soil test kits are available at the Extension office.

The **Guernsey County Fair will be taking place and a schedule** is available by [clicking here](#). Please make note, some changes have been made in an effort to help keep everyone safe.

The Farm Science Review this year will not be held at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center and will instead be held virtually. I will keep you informed as updates become available.

The Guernsey County OSU Extension office is reopening in phases. While most of the staff remains teleworking, limited staff will be available, by appointment, on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. While the building is still closed to the public, available staff will meet with you outside at a safe distance. Please call ahead to the Extension Office at 740-489-5300.

Please give us a call if we can help in any way,
Clif Little

Spotted Knapweed

Spotted knapweed is a noxious weed in most areas of the United States. It impacts grazing land. This noxious weed is expanding its range rapidly and it is now prolific in our area. This time of year it is very obvious along interstates 77 and 70. Heavy infestations of this weed can now be found in the area. The plant seed is easily distributed with the movements of equipment and hay. Observations along the roadways confirm pockets of these weeds extending into Noble, Guernsey, Belmont, Monroe, Morgan and Muskingum counties.

Spotted knapweed is the most aggressive perennial weed to impact hay and pasture fields in Ohio. This plant can produce as much as 1000 seeds per plant. The Western United States has struggled with the weed for many years and it is quickly becoming our primary weed of concern for Eastern Ohio. The plant is attractive and resembles the bloom of red clover. The problem with this weed is that it can completely take over hay fields and pasture land. Livestock avoid eating the plant while it crowds out desirable grasses and legumes.



Spotted Knapweed as seen in Guernsey County fields recently.

Plant seeds are inadvertently spread through the actions of hay hauling and mowing. It is also likely vehicles venturing into infested areas have contributed to plant distribution.

There is a program to help control this weed and is available for specific counties. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Landowners of Noble, Guernsey, Muskingum, and Morgan County are eligible to apply for cost recovery funds to treat spotted knapweed in pasture and hayfields. Find out more by calling the Guernsey/Noble USDA/NRCS office at 740-432-5621.

New Fact Sheet Series Now Available

A new fact sheet series is available to help specialty crop growers prepare for and respond to possible dicamba and 2,4-D drift. The series provides tips for being proactive, detailed steps for documenting and responding to damage, and a brief background on why dicamba and 2,4-D have been especially problematic. A Frequently Asked Questions fact sheet highlights various concerns pertinent to specialty crop production. The series sought input from a variety of crop and herbicide specialists across the United States, as well as state regulatory agencies and growers.



[Preparing for Drift Damage](#) provides specific ways you can avoid, prevent, and prepare for drift damage.

[Responding to Drift Damage](#) recommends actions for documenting damage, along with tips for seeking reparation or behavior change.

The new fact sheet series was co-written by specialists at The Ohio State University and Purdue University, with support from the [North Central IPM Center](#) Working Group on Herbicide-Drift Risk Management. The working group organized in the fall of 2019 and plans additional work in the coming year, including more resources and an anonymous survey of specialty crop growers to better assess the extent and frequency of drift damage throughout the north central region. The North Central IPM Center serves Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin and is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture through agreement 2018-70006-28884.



All fact sheets are available online at: go.osu.edu/ipm-drift. Specific topics available are listed below.

[Overview of Dicamba and 2,4-D Drift Issues](#) explores how Dicamba and 2,4-D drift has become a threat to specialty crop producers.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) offers a list of quick Questions and Answers specific to specialty crop growers.

The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

This program provides financial assistance for losses experienced as a result of lost demand, short-term oversupply and shipping pattern disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Eligible specialty crops include apples, avocados, blueberries, cantaloupe, grapefruit, kiwifruit, lemons, oranges, papaya, peaches, pears, raspberries, strawberries, tangerines, tomatoes, watermelons, artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic,

iceberg lettuce, romaine lettuce, dry onions, green onions, peppers, rhubarb, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, taro, almonds, pecans, walnuts, beans, and mushrooms. Additional crops may be added later, specifically aquaculture and nursery crops including cut flowers. The Agricultural Marketing Service will assist the Farm Service Agency with respect to matters dealing with producers of specialty crops.

Eligible livestock include cattle, sheep (yearlings and lambs only), and hogs. Dairy milk is eligible but has a separate payment calculation. Call the Guernsey/Noble USDA Farm Service Agency for more information and signup, 740-432-5621.



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