

Conservation Highlights



62nd Annual Meeting & Banquet

The 62nd Annual Meeting & Banquet is scheduled for Monday, November 20, 2017 at the Greenville VFW located at 219 North Ohio Street in Greenville. This year, David Marrison will be presenting *Critical Farm Management Issues for 2018*.

Could 2018 be the year of change? Low commodity prices, tax reform, farm bill discussions, farm stress, water quality, and farm succession are all topics which will be on most farm managers plate in 2018. This presentation, filled with humor, will challenge farm managers to keep one eye on state and national issues while clearly focusing on improving the bottlenecks in their operation.



About the speaker: David Marrison is an Associate Professor and Extension Educator for OSU Extension located in Ashtabula County in northeast, Ohio. He also serves as the County Extension Director for Ashtabula County. He received his Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and Agricultural Economics in 1990 from The Ohio State University and a Master's Degree in Education from Purdue University in 1992. Marrison has been an Extension Educator for OSU Extension since 1997. He is currently the co-leader of OSU Extension's Ohio Ag Manager Team which authors a monthly farm and agribusiness management newsletter. He is nationally known for his teaching in farm succession planning and has authored numerous publications in succession and estate planning. Marrison works with a diversity of agriculture in Ashtabula County including beef, dairy, agronomic crops, grape production, and miscanthus production.

“Serving Conservation Needs in Darke County Since 1955”

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Darke SWCD Staff Members

- Brian Cope — Technician**
- Jared Coppess — District Administrator**
- Elizabeth Farver — Nutrient Mgmt Technician**
- Tim Rank — Technician**
- Doug Steinbrunner—Wildlife Specialist/Technician**

Darke NRCS Staff Members

- Jim Bennett — District Conservationist**
- John Bleill — Civil Engineering Technician**
- Webb Flowers—Soil Conservationist**

DARKE SWCD OFFICE HOURS

Monday — Friday

8:00 AM — 4:30 PM

Supervisor Election– November 20th from 6:00-7:00PM

Each year at the Annual Meeting & Banquet, the Darke SWCD holds an election for its board of supervisors. The board consists of five publicly elected individuals. This year there will be two candidates elected to serve on the Darke SWCD board of supervisors. The newly elected supervisor will begin the three-year term on January 1, 2018.

The nominating committee has selected its three candidates to fill two open seats on the board of supervisors.

Voter Eligibility & Requirements

There are six ways people can vote in the Darke SWCD supervisor election. All voters must either register through the absentee voting process or at the time and place of the election. All voters must be 18 years of age or older at the time of the election. In some situations, a notarized affidavit may be required verifying the voter's status prior to registering to vote. Here are the different ways votes can be cast: Resident, Non-Resident Landowner, Non-Resident Land Occupier, Corporation or Firm, Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), or Trusts. There are some situations where an individual might cast more than one vote in an SWCD election. For more information on Voter Eligibility and Requirements, please visit our website at

www.darkeswcd.com.

Absentee Ballot Process

If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting on Monday, November 21, 2016 there is an absentee ballot process. Absentee ballots can be requested in writing (no earlier than 21 days prior and no later than 5 days prior); or in person at the Darke SWCD office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (no earlier than 21 days prior and no later than 2:00 p.m. the day of the election). For more information on the Absentee Ballot Process, please visit www.darkeswcd.com.

The Candidates

The three candidates are for two supervisor positions are **Mark Hatfield** (Van Buren Twp.), **Kevin Jones** (Adams Twp.) and **Bill Roll** (Wabash Twp.). More information about each candidate is available at www.darkeswcd.com.

The election will be held on Monday, November 20, 2017 at the Greenville VFW located at 219 North Ohio Street, Greenville, Ohio 45331 between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. All ballots will be tallied and the election results will be announced at the end of the Annual Meeting & Banquet. The Darke SWCD would like to thank you for participating in the supervisor election process.

If you have any questions, either visit our website, www.darkeswcd.com, or call our office at 937-548-1715, extension 3.

2017 Supervisor Candidates



Mark Hatfield



Kevin Jones



Bill Roll

Soils Contest Held in Jackson Township

On September 25, 2017 the Darke Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) held their annual land judging contest for Darke County FFA Chapters as they prepare for the District Contest. This year's contest was held at Kaeding Family Farm off Beamsville-UC Road east of Union City. This year 16 teams from six county schools – Ansonia, Arcanum, Franklin Monroe, Greenville, Mississinawa Valley, and Versailles – participated in the event.

The land judging contest consists of a rural and an urban test. Significant changes have been implemented since the 2015 contest. A few of the changes implemented on the rural test included a focus on soil health, nutrient management, best management practices and a more in-depth look at soil properties.

Each test challenges the students to not only identify soil types, but also consider other soil characteristics when making recommendations for use of that area. The contest consisted of four stations, three soil pits and a written test. The students had 15 minutes to finish the test at each station. Upon completion of the contest, students were asked to hand in their answer keys before Darke SWCD staff would go over the answers and reasoning at each station.

This year Versailles Team #1 finished with the highest team score on the rural test, followed by Versailles Team #2 and Versailles Team #3. The highest individual score was Kylie Lyons from Versailles FFA. For the urban test, the top team was Ansonia #2, followed by Arcanum #1 and Ansonia #1. The highest individual score was Katie Werts from Ansonia FFA. All participants and advisors from the top three teams will be invited and recognized at the 62nd Annual Meeting and Banquet on Monday, November 20, 2017.

“Darke SWCD would like to thank our landowners for graciously hosting this year’s competition, Tim Rank for his evaluation of the soil pits, Jeff McMiller and Darke County Ditch Maintenance for digging all the soil pits and all the schools for participating in the event. The participation and enthusiasm from the students and teachers is what makes this competition great,” said Jared Coppess, District Administrator for Darke SWCD.



Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Workshop Series

NOVEMBER 2017 — JANUARY 2018



REGISTRATION ONLY

\$25.00

Includes: Four meals, Binder of Reference Materials, and 2 Soil Samples (up to 50 acres)



As the farm economy becomes tighter and the environmental pressure greater on farmers, understanding your soil fertility and nutrient needs becomes ever so important. The Darke Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will again be hosting the Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Workshop Series beginning in November. This is a four-part workshop that begins with the basics and ends with a farm plan for up to 50 acres on your farm. For a mere \$20.00, you can register, but space is limited. Register early to guarantee your spot in this workshop geared toward helping farmers better understand soil needs and efficient nutrient use. The Darke SWCD along with its partners at Shelby SWCD, OSU Extension, Otte Ag LLC, Second National Bank, and Wright State-Lake Campus are excited to announce another round of this workshop series.

SPACE IS LIMITED. Call 937.548.1752 or email jared.coppess@darkeswcd.com to reserve your spot today!



Wright State University
Lake Campus
Agriculture & Food Science



IMPORTANT WORKSHOP DATES

NOVEMBER 13, 2017

6:00-9:00 PM

Location: North Star Community Center, 124 E Star Rd, North Star
Topics: Basic Agronomy, Soil Sampling, Nutrient Sources - Commercial Fertilizers

DECEMBER 4, 2017

6:00-9:00 PM

Location: North Star Community Center, 124 E Star Rd, North Star
Topics: Soil Audit, Nitrogen Testing, Tri-State Fertility & Using Imagery to Guide Nutrient Decisions

JANUARY 8, 2018

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Location: Brookside Labs, New Bremen
Topics: Lab Tour

JANUARY 22, 2018

6:00-9:00 PM

Location: North Star Community Center, 124 E Star Rd, North Star
Topics: Nutrient Sources - Manures, Manure's Fertilizer Value, Record Keeping, Tri-State Calculations, Regulation of Manure Application & Stockpiling

AG FERTILIZER APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION: Attend all 4 meetings for your fertilizer certification
ATTENTION CCAs & CLMs: Credits Available for Participation in the Workshop Series

Whole Farm Planning Model– David L. Marrison, OSU Extension

Planning is one of the most important aspects of managing any business. This is especially true for farms and agribusinesses due to their complexity and the inherent uncertainties (i.e., weather, commodity prices) associated with agriculture. It is essential that farm managers take time to adequately plan for all facets of their business. Farm families are encouraged to adopt a whole farm planning approach as they develop strategies for the future success of their business. This approach allows families to examine the internal structure of their business and then develop business, retirement, transition, estate and investment plans.

The Farm Family

At the center of most farms and agricultural businesses is the family unit. Each family, individually and collectively, has its own history, values, and goals. It is valuable for the business to begin the planning process by reflecting on family and farm history. Valuable lessons can be learned by all the generations involved by examining past successes and disappointments. The underlying values and goals of the family unit should also be determined. While these values and goals oftentimes remain unspoken, they have a large impact on how family members treat each other and employees and make business decisions. A critical look should also be given to understanding the effect that family members could have on the farm operation, especially those (spouses, in-laws, cousins, ex-spouses) who are not directly involved in the day-to-day operations.

Individual Assessment

There is no one test that can identify individuals suited for a career in agriculture. Each member of the farm business should conduct a self-assessment of his or her communication, financial, production, marketing and management skills. There are a multitude of skills that each individual can bring to an operation. This is beneficial given the complexity of most farming operations. While some family members may be better with bookkeeping or managing employees, others may be better at managing livestock or fixing equipment.

Each family member should take time to analyze his or her own skills to determine how he or she can best fit into the farm operation. Some of the questions that can be asked during individual assessments are:

- Why do I farm?
 - What do I value?
 - What goals do I have for our farm?
 - How do my personal goals and dreams agree with or conflict with the business goals?
 - What strengths and weaknesses do I have in regard to managing the enterprises raised or produced by the farm (crops, livestock, manure, agricultural service)?
 - How are my decision-making skills?
 - What are my budgeting and financial skills?
 - What are my marketing skills?
 - What is my personality type, and how does it blend with family members or employees?
 - What are the financial needs of my family?
- How does my family feel about the business?

Business Analysis

An analysis of the current state of the farm should be conducted to determine the available land, labor, capital and management resources. This process looks at the who, what, where, and why of the

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Whole Farm Planning Cont'd

business. Who works on the farm? What does the farm grow or raise? Where does it produce its commodities? Why does the farm exist? This analysis should determine the physical, fiscal and personnel status of the business. This analysis should also examine the operation's efficiency and identify any available resources that are not currently being utilized. The farm's profitability, business structure, operating procedures and employee management should also be determined. It is also helpful for the management team to identify the external influences that could impact the business in the future. These influences could include any governmental, political, economical, environmental, social or technological elements.

After taking a snapshot of where the farm business is currently, the family business team should develop key goals for the future. It is important that each individual share his or her individual goals and skill-set assessments with the other members of the business during this process. Members can then work together to determine the responsibilities of each and to develop goals. Successful farm businesses are ones whose goals and objectives are a reflection of all the members involved in the operation.

Mission Statement

Once the family, individual and business analyses have been completed, the management team should develop a mission statement for the farm. A mission statement is a short statement describing the fundamental reason for the business to exist — its critical purpose. This statement aligns what the business says it does, what it actually does, and what others believe it is about. This statement is a reflection of the underlying values, goals, and purposes of the family business.

Developing the Five Essential Plans

Once a family has completed its internal analysis, family members can continue the planning process by developing business, retirement, transition, estate, and investment plans. It should be noted that each of these planning areas does not stand alone. Like spokes in a wheel, all will need to work in harmony to ensure the long-term viability of the business. Each area can positively or negatively affect the performance of the others. One example of this would be if investment planning has gone well, more assets will be available to help fund business operations or retirement needs. As plans are developed for each of the five areas, it is essential that the management team examine the effects that each has or could potentially have on the other plans.

- **Business Plan**
- **Retirement Plan**
- **Transition Plan**
- **Estate Plan**
- **Investment Plan**

Summary

Planning for the future is one of the most important functions of management. By implementing a whole farm approach to planning, farm businesses can be ready to face the future with confidence. A multitude of resources are available through Ohio State University Extension offices to help farm operations plan for the future. Contact your local Extension office for more specifics in any of these planning areas.

Find the full article at <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/anr-52>, including descriptions of the Five Essential Plans.

Pictures from Elected Official Tours in Darke County

In August, several tours were held highlighting agriculture and conservation practices in Darke County. The purpose of the tours was to emphasize the importance of agriculture and conservation for our elected officials and show them some of the changes in recent years. Below are some pictures of the events. Thank you to our tour hosts: The Powell Family, Buschur Dairy, Harrod & Harrod Farms, Goubeaux Family Farms, and the Winery at Versailles.



New Species to be Offered During 2018 Tree Sales

The Darke SWCD annual tree sales will be held in March 2018. Some new tree and shrub species will be offered including: black walnut, shagbark hickory, arrowwood, highbush cranberry, American plum, Kentucky coffeetree, and white oak. Look for the order form in our next issue!

Darke SWCD

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Greenville, OH 45331

Phone: 937.548.1715, Ext. 3

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in Darke County since 1955**



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Conservation Highlights

OCTOBER 2017

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<i>First Friday: Chocolate Walk</i>	<i>Friday, November 3rd: 6-9pm</i>
<i>Soil Fertility Nutrient Management Workshop</i>	<i>Monday, November 13th: 6pm</i>
<i>Office Closed: Veteran's Day</i>	<i>Friday, November 10th</i>
<i>Hometown Holiday Horse Parade</i>	<i>Saturday, November 18th: 7pm</i>
<i>62nd Annual Meeting & Banquet</i>	<i>Monday, November 20th: 6:30pm</i>
<i>Office Closed: Thanksgiving Holiday</i>	<i>Thursday, November 23rd</i>
<i>Frist Friday: A Christmas Night</i>	<i>Friday, December 1st: 6-9pm</i>
<i>Soil Fertility Nutrient Management Workshop</i>	<i>Monday, December 4th: 6pm</i>

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www.darkeswcd.com
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