

Ohio Department of Agriculture • Winter/Spring 2007

QUARTERLY NEWS

Using Bioproducts, Agriculture to Help “Turnaround Ohio”

Increased use and production of biopolymers and other bioproducts, which are items made from agricultural and other natural materials, is one component of Governor Strickland’s plan to use agriculture as a key element to help “Turnaround Ohio”.



Photo courtesy of Battelle and the Ohio Soybean Council.

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Meet the Director

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From work experience to agriculture background, find out more about the newly-appointed Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

Ohio’s Livestock Industry

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Director Boggs answers the question on everyone’s mind - What is the future of Ohio’s livestock and poultry industry?

New Plant Lab Underway

A new, state-of-the-art plant lab facility will soon be underway at the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s campus in Reynoldsburg. The \$10.5 million lab is part of the Capital Improvement Plan and will help the state better protect nursery stock and crops from pests and disease.



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Fair Schedule

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Fair season is on its way. Mark the dates of your favorite fairs.

Apply Today to Preserve Farmland

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Find out how to apply for state farmland preservation funds.



ODA
Quarterly News

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The mission of the Ohio Department of Agriculture is to provide regulatory protection to producers, agribusinesses, and the consuming public; to promote Ohio agricultural products in domestic and international markets; and to educate the citizens of Ohio about our agricultural industry.

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Equal Opportunity in
Employment and Services

Meet the Ag Director

Robert J. Boggs was appointed Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture on January 24. Here, in his own words, he shares his experiences with agriculture, holding public office and the vision for Ohio agriculture.

I was raised on a small dairy farm. In addition to tending the dairy cows, my father also operated a small sawmill. Thus both my brothers and I not only were responsible for helping with the daily farm chores, but we also learned about timber and forestry industries.

My family is still involved in agriculture. My brother, his son and grandchildren presently operate a 500 acre farm on which they milk 150 head of Holstein and Brown Swiss cows and raise another 150 heifers and calves.

I am proud of my agricultural heritage and to have grown up on a family farm, but early in my adult life I decided I wanted to explore another option. At age 17, I left the farm and attended the American University in Washington, D.C. to pursue a career in elective politics.

After graduation from American, I taught school for three years, and then was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives at age 24. Over the last 34 years, I have spent 10 years in the Ohio House, 14 years in the Ohio Senate and 10 years as county commissioner.

During that time I have participated in discussions and decisions on many agricultural issues, including linked deposits, ethanol tax credits, funding for soil and water conservation, and OSU cooperative extension.



ODA Director: *Robert J. Boggs*

I have learned in my life that the future is not a gift, but a prize to be earned by hard work, vision, leadership and cooperation. This is how I have tried to live my life and what has led me to my current post as director.

I was very proud and excited when I got Governor Strickland's call to join his new administration to lead the department. Much of this was due to the fact that I had known Ted Strickland for more than 20 years and had developed a deep respect for him as a person and as a public official. But I also was excited because I knew that he has a deep and comprehensive understanding of Ohio agriculture and Ohio farm families, and that

as Governor, he will use Ohio agriculture to spearhead his Turnaround Ohio program.

Ohio's agriculture industry is strong, but we have been slow to develop a biofuels market in our state. We also need to increase both foreign exports of Ohio agricultural products and find more local markets for Ohio agricultural production. The state needs to increase its agricultural research and development so that new bio-products, such as bio-polymers, can become new markets for Ohio's agricultural community.

There is a lot of work to be done, but I am up to the challenge. In the coming months, I am looking forward to working with our agricultural groups and allied industries to improve our great agriculture industry, to help Turn Around Ohio, and to serve the people of Ohio well.

Using Agriculture to “Turnaround Ohio”

Agriculture will play a large part in Governor Strickland’s “Turnaround Ohio” plan. The Ohio Department of Agriculture will support this plan in several key ways:

1. Using agricultural products to provide fuel for Ohio.

This will be good for our farmers, but it is also critical to gaining energy independence and improving our environment.

Ohio has been behind the curve when it comes to the production and distribution of biofuels, but those times are changing. Ethanol and biodiesel facilities should be within reach of every Ohio family.

Ohio will also lead the development of the next new wave of energy generation, including cellulosic materials, methane gas, and wind power.

2. Working closely with Ohio’s research facilities.

Ohio is fortunate to have The Ohio State University and other top-notch facilities that are doing outstanding work in research and development. As much success as we’ve had in the past in agricultural research, it pales in comparison to what will be accomplished in the future. ODA will do an even better job in consulting and cooperating with Ohio’s great land grant and research facilities, its students and professors.

3. Searching for new agricultural markets and enhancing existing markets.

By-products from new agricultural ventures such as ethanol plants can go to feedlots, but they can also be used to develop new bioproducts.

There is exciting new research being conducted at Ohio State and

other top research labs in the state in which biopolymers are being made from agricultural products. Our goal is to create a strong bond between the agriculture industry and the polymer industry, which will lead to a new market for farmers, decreased prices for consumers and a cleaner environment.

ODA will also work to increase agricultural products overseas and create more direct access to markets through farmers markets and cooperatives.

4. Assisting all agriculture.

The health of Ohio agriculture will not just be measured by looking at

Ohio processors, but also producers. The state will not just look at corporate and factory farms, but also at the challenges and opportunities for family farms. The department will assist all agriculture across the state.

5. Focusing on food safety.

Aside from those key components to Turnaround Ohio, the department will uphold its most critical function of providing a safe food and milk supply to all Ohioans.

Find out more about the Strickland Administration’s priorities at www.governor.ohio.gov.

Director’s View: The Future of Livestock Industry in Ohio

Although large livestock and poultry operations are somewhat controversial in some parts of our state, they are absolutely critical to our success in agriculture.

These farms, sometimes called CAFOs or concentrated animal feeding operations, are emotional issues. I know that there are many who sincerely feel that these operations are not in the best interest of our state at this time and want a moratorium or outright ban of such activities.

But the facts are that the majority of our livestock producers are stewards of the land and do an outstanding job

of providing a good product to our families.

These facilities are necessary to food production and processing. On the production end, they are necessary in order to produce the volume of product that is needed to attract the processing plants that add value and jobs for our state.

Though relatively small in area, our state is a national leader in food processing. We cannot afford to lose this leadership.

This is where our good role as a regulator comes into

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2007 Ohio Fair Schedule

JUNE

Putnam County Fair (Ottawa) June 19-24
Pickaway County Fair (Circleville) June 24-30

AUGUST

Hamilton County Fair (Carthage) Aug 1-5
Ohio State Fair (Columbus) Aug 1-12
Champaign County Fair (Urbana) Aug 3-10
Athens County Fair (Athens) Aug 3-11
Ross County Fair (Chillicothe) Aug 4-11
Hartford Independent Fair (Licking Co.) Aug 5-11
Richland County Fair (Mansfield) Aug 5-11
Scioto County Fair (Lucasville) Aug 6-11
Cuyahoga County Fair (Berea) Aug 6-12
Ashtabula County Fair (Jefferson) Aug 7-12
Erie County Fair (Sandusky) Aug 7-12
Mercer County Fair (Celina) Aug 7-13
Attica Independent Fair (Seneca Co.) Aug 8-12
Henry County Fair (Napoleon) Aug 10-16
Miami County Fair (Troy) Aug 10-16
Jefferson County Fair (Smithfield) Aug 14-19
Muskingum County Fair (Zanesville) Aug 12-18
Holmes County Fair (Millersburg) Aug 13-18
Huron County Fair (Norwalk) Aug 13-18
Meigs County Fair (Pomeroy) Aug 13-18
Lake County Fair (Painesville) Aug 14-19
Allen County Fair (Lima) Aug 17-25
Darke County Fair (Greenville) Aug 17-25
Defiance County Fair (Hicksville) Aug 18-25
Monroe County Fair (Woodsfield) Aug 20-25
Lorain County Fair (Wellington) Aug 20-26
Portage County Fair (Randolph) Aug 21-26
Sandusky County Fair (Fremont) Aug 21-26
Noble County Fair (Caldwell) Aug 27-Sept 1
Morrow County Fair (Mt. Gilead) Aug 27-Sept 3
Stark County Fair (Canton) Aug 28-Sept 3
Hancock County Fair (Findlay) Aug 29-Sept 3
Mahoning County Fair (Canfield) Aug 29-Sept 3
Montgomery County Fair (Dayton) Aug 29-Sept 3
Richwood Independent Fair (Union Co.) Aug 29-Sept 3
Van Wert County Fair (Van Wert) Aug 29-Sept 5
Geauga County Fair (Burton) Aug 30-Sept 3
Fulton County Fair (Wauseon) Aug 31-Sept 6

OCTOBER

Loudonville Independent Fair (Ashland Co.) Oct 2-6
Fairfield County Fair (Lancaster) Oct 7-13

JULY

Marion County Fair (Marion) July 1-7
Clinton County Fair (Wilmington) July 7-14
Lawrence County Fair (Proctorville) July 7-14
Madison County Fair (London) July 7-14
Harrison County Fair (Cadiz) July 9-14
Paulding County Fair (Paulding) July 10-14
Logan County Fair (Bellevue) July 10-15
Trumbull County Fair (Cortland) July 10-15
Jackson County Fair (Wellston) July 13-21
Crawford County Fair (Bucyrus) July 14-21
Franklin County Fair (Hilliard) July 14-21
Adams County Fair (West Union) July 15-21
Perry County Fair (New Lexington) July 16-21
Warren County Fair (Lebanon) July 16-21
Carroll County Fair (Carrollton) July 16-22
Ottawa County Fair (Oak Harbor) July 16-22
Clark County Fair (Springfield) July 20-27
Butler County Fair (Hamilton) July 22-28
Clermont County Fair (Owensville) July 22-28
Knox County Fair (Mt. Vernon) July 22-28
Vinton County Fair (McArthur) July 22-28
Fayette County Fair (Washington C.H.) July 23-28
Seneca County Fair (Tiffin) July 23-30
Shelby County Fair (Sidney) July 23-29
Union County Fair (Marysville) July 23-29
Lucas County Fair (Maumee) July 24-29
Summit County Fair (Tallmadge) July 24-29
Preble County Fair (Eaton) July 28-Aug 4
Greene County Fair (Xenia) July 29-Aug 4
Pike County Fair (Piketon) July 29-Aug 4
Medina County Fair (Medina) July 29-Aug 5
Auglaize County Fair (Wapakoneta) July 30-Aug 4
Gallia County Fair (Gallipolis) July 30-Aug 4
Columbiana County Fair (Lisbon) July 30-Aug 5
Wood County Fair (Bowling Green) July 31-Aug 6

SEPTEMBER

Washington County Fair (Marietta) Sept 1-4
Highland County Fair (Hillsboro) Sept 2-8
Morgan County Fair (McConnelsville) Sept 4-8
Hardin County Fair (Kenton) Sept 4-9
Albany Independent Fair (Athens Co.) Sept 5-9
Belmont County Fair (St. Clairsville) Sept 5-9
Wayne County Fair (Wooster) Sept 8-13
Williams County Fair (Montpelier) Sept 8-15
Hocking County Fair (Logan) Sept 10-15
Guernsey County Fair (Old Washington) Sept 10-16
Wyandot County Fair (Upper Sandusky) Sept 11-16
Bellville Independent Fair (Richland Co.) Sept 12-15
Delaware County Fair (Delaware) Sept 15-22
Ashland County Fair (Ashland) Sept 16-22
Tuscarawas County Fair (Dover) Sept 17-23
Brown County Fair (Georgetown) Sept 24-29
Barlow Independent Fair (Washington Co.) Sept 28-30
Coshocton County Fair (Coshocton) Sept 28-Oct 4

New Plant Lab Underway

One More Link to Ohio's Strong Lab Safety Chain

A new state plant pathology, entomology, and seed lab is underway at the department's Reynoldsburg campus.

The state-of-the-art facilities, totaling 27,155 square feet, will feature a plant pathology lab, which will provide the department necessary resources to quickly identify and take action against dangerous plant pathogens and plant diseases, such as sudden oak death and soybean rust. Quick reaction time will better protect Ohio's agricultural resources and prevent crippling diseases from making their way into the state's crops, environment, or nursery products.

It will also house an entomology lab and a seed lab that will test agricultural, vegetable, flower, and lawn seed

for accurate label claims.

"This lab will go a long way toward protecting the state's multi-billion dollar agriculture industry and the state's farmers and agribusinesses that rely on these tests and services for their livelihood," Director Boggs said.

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services oversaw the design of the building and will oversee the construction of the project, which is scheduled to begin in August.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture's Reynoldsburg campus also houses the state's top food safety and animal health labs, in addition to the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio EPA labs that were completed last year. These co-located facilities create an all-encompassing lab safety system.



State-of-the-art plant lab: Artists' rendering of the new plant lab that will soon be on the department's campus in Reynoldsburg.

Continued from page 3.

play. I have thoroughly reviewed the rules to our Livestock Environmental Permitting Program. I am convinced it is one of the best in the nation.

No other program in any other state has background checks on farmers. Our farmers are held to stringent standards that are heads and shoulders above federal guidelines. Our inspectors have performed 10 times the number of inspections required by U.S. EPA, and, under the new program, we have never had a manure lagoon failure.

I am confident that our program works, but there is always room for improvement. If there are people who feel that changes need to be made, then those concerns need to be addressed within the law.

Responsible livestock production is good for all of Ohio, and the majority of our producers are good environmental stewards. I will not tolerate operations that violate our science-based laws or try to avoid reasonable regulation.

As we move forward with this program, I ask for your support.

Agricultural News Briefs

Export Funding Assistance Available

Ohio agribusinesses and suppliers can take advantage of export funding available to promote their brand name food and agricultural products in foreign markets.

The 2007 Branded Program is a cost-share service that helps Ohio suppliers stretch their international marketing dollars and grow their exporting business.

Once approved, participants receive a 50 percent cost reimbursement on eligible marketing and promotional endeavors such as attending international and approved domestic tradeshows, advertising, public relations, in-store promos, product demonstrations, product literature, freight cost for samples, and package and label modification.

The program is administered jointly by ODA and the Food Export Association of the Midwest USA. Midwest participants from 12 states received nearly \$5 million last year in reimbursements and \$750,000 was allocated directly to 15 Ohio companies.

Information on program and prequalification information is available at www.brandedprogram.org or call ODA at 614-752-9816; or the Food Export Association at 312-334-9200.

Staff Changes Minimal, New Administrators Appointed

Director Boggs recently appointed several top administrators to the department: Greg Hargett, Deputy Director of Policy and Marketing; Adam Ward, Legislative Director; and Mark Forni, Executive Director of the Office of Farmland Preservation. Mike Bailey, formerly of the Office of Farmland Preservation, has been promoted to the Division of Markets.

"When I first came to the department in January, I was

most impressed by the talent and dedication of the employees," said Director Boggs. "They have a professionalism and passion for their work that I have not always found in the private or public sector. Because of that staff changes have been minimal."

Director Boggs still has a few people yet to hire to fill positions that were voluntarily vacated late last year.

"We're working on that now, but it is a slow process," he said.

Department Senior Staff Sworn In



Assembling the team: On March 23, Director Boggs swore in ODA's Senior Staff members. Seated: **Gary Hill** (Enforcement), **Kevin Elder** (LEPP), **Mike Widner** (Grape Industries), **Greg Hargett** (Deputy Director), and **Dr. Hockman** (Meat Inspection). Standing: **Dave Schleich** (Plant Industry), **Dr. Forshey** (Animal Industry), **Bill Hopper** (Legal), **Jim Truex** (Weights & Measures), **Director Boggs**, **Lewis Jones** (Dairy), **Adam Ward** (Legislative Director), **Tony Mitchell** (Office of Agro Bio-Security), **Jim Ramey** (USDA Ag Stats), and **Tom Johnston** (Business Management). Not pictured: **Dr. Byrum** (CAL and ADDL), **Mark Forni** (Farmland Preservation), **Chuck Kirchner** (Food Safety) and **Jim Patterson** (Assistant Attorney General)

Celebrating Ohio Agriculture

Agriculture impacts every Ohioan each and every day, whether through the food they eat, the fuel in their car, or the clothes on their back. Ohio's 76,500 family farms support more than 1,000 food processing businesses and manufacturers, and help to create one out of every seven Ohio jobs, contributing \$79 billion to the state's annual economy. For these reasons and more, Ohio celebrated National Agriculture Week, March 18-24.

"While agriculture is the leading industry in Ohio, it's yet to see its full potential," said Director Boggs. "Green energy use and production, like biofuels, biopolymers and

bioproducts are just now being tapped. As this sector progresses, it will support our agriculture industry, economy and environment and reduce our dependence on oil."

To help support Ohio's agriculture industry, the department supports responsible players in the industry and protects consumers of agricultural products by enforcing state laws in areas including grain handling, plant health, pesticide use, food safety, dairy, meat inspection, animal health, weights and measures, amusement ride safety, and livestock environmental permitting.

Emerald Ash Borer Education

Consumers and industry can learn more about the emerald ash borer pest and the state's quarantine online at www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/plnt-eab-compliance.stm.

The new site features information about compliance agreement stipulations for businesses interested in marketing and transporting ash trees or firewood out of quarantined areas. These agreements specify handling practices that reduce the spread of the pest. It also provides consumers a listing of Ohio's



Photo courtesy of Michigan State University

compliant companies.

In addition, the department has launched a new e-mail listserv to provide citizens with the latest information regarding Ohio's program to control the pest. To sign up for the electronic listserv, contact the department at 1-888-OHIO-EAB.

Since it was first discovered in Ohio in 2003, EAB has been identified in 26 counties. Infested ash trees typically die within five years.

For more information, go to www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab, or call 1-888-OHIO-EAB.

Sign Up Now For Export Seminar

Ohio companies interested in pursuing or expanding their export sales can sign up now for a seminar June 12 at Valley Vineyards in Morrow, Ohio near Cincinnati.

Food export experts will discuss exporting tools, the steps to reach international markets and financial assistance available.

Companies that attend will learn more about the basics of exporting their products to international markets. The cost is \$50 to attend and includes lunch.

For questions about qualifications, marketing plans, eligible reimbursements and the application process, call Tim Sword, Ohio Department of Agriculture, at 614-752-9816; or Food Export Association of the Midwest USA at 312-334-9200.



Apply Now for Clean Ohio Ag Easement Purchase Program

Ohio farmers who want to preserve their farmland through the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP) can now apply online, through their local sponsors. Applications for the 2007 sixth funding round must be submitted electronically from the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Web site, www.ohioagriculture.gov/farmland/aep2007, no later than June 1, 2007 at 5 p.m.

Now in its sixth year, the program supports the permanent preservation of Ohio's most valuable farmland. An agricultural easement is an agreement between the landowner, the state, and the local community to keep a piece of property in agricultural production in perpetuity.

To date, \$18.75 million in state and \$7.05 million in federal funds have been used to purchase agricultural easements on 74 farms with options to purchase easements on 24 additional farms totaling 20,385.79 acres.

For more information, contact the Office of Farmland Preservation at 614-728-6210.



Program	Number of Farms	Acres
AEPP (2002-2005)	74	14,857.11
Ohio Agricultural Easement Donation Program	23	3,084.30
Tobacco Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (2002)	14	2,922.72
Pending Offers (AEPP 2006)	24	5,527.46
Total	135	26,390.59

Agricultural Security Area	County	Number of ASAs	Total Acreage
	5	10	8,089.38

To Apply Online

1. Landowners interested in preserving their farmland should contact a local sponsor of their choice (i.e., board of county commissioners, board of township trustees, municipal officials, land trust, or local Soil and Water Conservation District), which must submit an application to the Ohio Department of Agriculture on the landowner's behalf.

2. All interested parties should visit www.ohioagriculture.gov/farmland/aep2007 for the application, instructions, and other important information.

3. The local sponsor can access the online application by creating a user account and following the instructions.