

September 2022
Volume 1, Issue 1

Hello Gallia County,

**OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION**
Gallia County
111 Jackson Pike, Suite 1572
Gallipolis, OH 45631

I hope you are doing well. I would like to introduce myself. I am Jordan Penrose, your new Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator for Gallia County. I am from Stockport, Ohio where I grew up on a beef cattle farm. I graduated from Wilmington College majoring in Animal Science. As I get started with this job, I am asking you to do one thing for me. Please fill out an **Agriculture & Natural Resources Needs Assessment**. Completing this assessment will give me information on what type of extension programs will work best for Gallia County, as well as giving me a little bit of information about your background. Enclosed in this Newsletter is a paper copy of the Needs Assessment. Once completed you can either mail it back to the office or drop it off at the office. I will also provide a QR code, and a go link for you to fill out the Needs Assessment online. During this assessment I ask that you please give us your email so that I can start to transfer this newsletter to an online copy. By emailing it to you, you can receive information on more of a regular basis. I am grateful to be here and looking forward to working with you. If you have any questions, you can reach me at the office, 740-446-7007 or my cell phone, 740-350-0417 or E-mail, penrose.30@osu.edu.

Gallia County Agriculture Newsletter

Sincerely,

Jordan Penrose

Jordan Penrose,
Gallia County
Agriculture and
Natural Resources
Extension Educator

enclosures

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Below is the **QR Code** for the needs assessment on Qualtrics survey. You can also type in this link on any web browser and get to Qualtrics survey, go.osu.edu/anrneedsassessment. The needs assessment is also in paper form with this newsletter. If you prefer to do a paper copy, you can drop it off at the office or mail a copy to the office.



Upcoming Events

- September 17 Gallia's Mini Meat Cutting Boot Camp with Lyda, 9 A.M.-6 P.M., RSVP by calling Tiffany Riehm at Soil and Water (740-446-6173)
- September 20-22 Farm Science Review, London Ohio, see attached flyer with newsletter
- October 6 Woodland Stewardship Opportunity, 4:30-7:30 P.M., RSVP by calling the Extension Office (740-446-7007)
- October 11 Gallia Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Banquet, 6 P.M., Tickets for the Banquet can be purchased by visiting the SWCD Office

Current winter programs planned: Pesticide recertification, Fertilizer recertification, Pesticide training and testing, Beef quality assurance, and other programs will be schedule based on needs and interest.

More On Johnsongrass, Jordan Penrose, OSU Extension, Gallia County

Recently Christine Gelley wrote an article “Johnsongrass: Friend or Foe?”, it was an excellent article, and if you haven’t read it, I highly recommend that you do so. But I bet that many of you like me have noticed johnsongrass a lot more in this area over the past few years and especially this year. I believe that it would be good to build off Christine’s article, and I’ll start by giving some history on johnsongrass. Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*) is a competitive perennial warm-season grass that is native to the Mediterranean region. Johnsongrass seed was exported around the world to be primarily used to control erosion. It got its common name here in the United States from an Alabama plantation owner by the name of William Johnson, who used the seed in the 1840’s to plant on his river-bottom farm as a forage alternative and to help control water erosion. Today, johnsongrass to many is now considered a weed and in many states is considered a noxious weed. In an article by Oklahoma State University “Johnsongrass in Pastures: Weed or Forage?” johnsongrass is known as the weed that we love to hate and hate to love. The reason it is a weed to many is that it reduces the yield and quality for crops that it grows in. But it also has some upsides to it as a forage because it has a high yield and can have good palatability and quality.

When identifying johnsongrass, it can resemble a few different plants at its seedling stage, such as corn and sorghum, but once it is past that stage the plant becomes more distinct. At the seedling stage, the easiest way to identify johnsongrass is that it has more narrow stems and leaves than corn and sorghum and has a distinct and prominent white mid-vein. Some of the ways to identify a mature plant; is that it can range from 2 to 8 feet tall, the stems are more of a pale yellow green color, and can be up to 0.8 inches in diameter. The lower part of the leaf that encloses the stem are flattened, hairy, opened, ribbed, and slightly toothed. When you pull the plant out by the roots you will notice that it also has rhizomes. The rhizomes are a good indicator of johnsongrass because most other plants that resemble it do not have them. The rhizomes are white with red and purple spots and are long.

Managing johnsongrass can be difficult because it can reproduce new plants by seed or by rhizomes. The way to control the rhizomes is to keep the plant from producing new ones. Most production of rhizomes happens when the plant exceeds 2 feet in height and begins producing a seed head. The most effective way to reduce rhizome production is to keep the

plants under a foot tall by closely grazing or mowing, which can work when the grass is in pasture field, but more of a challenge in hayfields.

Even though johnsongrass is considered a weed, it has some desirable forage traits to it. Johnsongrass has relatively high quality and can have high yields, making it quite comparable to other forages like Sudangrass. Johnsongrass is very palatable before it hits its reproductive growth stage, then the quality and palatability go down and then livestock like cattle will avoid it. A word of caution is johnsongrass will produce prussic acid and can be lethal to livestock. According to Dr. Mark Sulc's article "Precautions for Feeding Frosted and Drought-Stressed Forages," do not graze after a killing frost until plants are dry, which usually takes 5 to 7 days. And after a non-killing frost, do not allow animals to graze for two weeks because the plants usually contain high concentrations of prussic acid.

If you are considering herbicides to control johnsongrass make sure to read the label and know the type of herbicide you are using and how you are going to use it. A herbicide to kill johnsongrass will likely kill other grasses. Another option that has been used with some success is a rope wick applicator, with a non-selective herbicide when the johnsongrass is taller than the other desirable forages. If you have enough legumes and are willing to eliminate all grasses, a selective grass herbicide can work. If you want to replant a field, I would consider a no-till seeding after a non-selective herbicide, as tilling a field and reseeding could leave viable rhizomes, allowing for rapid reintroduction of johnsongrass. A long-term option to reduce johnsongrass is to fence in the field and graze livestock during the growing season. On my family's farm we have two fields that johnsongrass is in, both are permanent hayfields, the other fields we take a cutting or two of hay off, then rotationally graze and there is no johnsongrass in any of those fields. We usually don't see the johnsongrass show up until we start our second cutting hay, and it is still young enough that it has that positive upside for hay unless it gets too tall. Johnsongrass can be managed, but it will be more of a challenge if its in a permanent hayfield.

A Will or Trust? By: Robert Moore, Attorney, OSU Agricultural & Resource Law Program

A common question when starting the estate planning process is: do I need a will or trust? There are a number of factors that must be considered before this question can be

answered. A trust is a common estate planning tool but not everyone needs one. Often times, the best plan includes only a will.

The following are some of the factors to consider when deciding between a will or trust:

Complexity of Plan

The more complicated the plan, the more likely a trust is needed. Complexity might include addressing on-farm and off-farm heirs issues, buy out of assets at discounts with installment payments, long-term leases, options, right of first refusals and so on. Wills are much more suitable for plans where all the assets go equally to the beneficiaries without much complexity.

The average person can usually implement an effective estate plan without a trust. However, most farmers are not average people. Farmers tend to have more assets, more complex assets, on-farm and off-farm heir issues and business succession issues. Farmers tend to need trusts much more than non-farmers.

Avoiding Probate

Any asset that is controlled by the will goes through probate. Probate can cause estate administration to be slower, more burdensome and more costly. Assets that are controlled by a trust are not subject to probate. Avoiding probate is generally a good strategy for estate planning.

Most probate can be avoided even without a trust. All titled assets can include payable on death or transfer on death designations. For example, bank accounts can include payable on death beneficiaries which allow the funds to go to the beneficiaries upon the death of the owner without going through probate. Assets without titles can only avoid probate by using a trust. These untitled assets include grain, crops, livestock and machinery. For farmers owning large amounts of these untitled assets, a trust may be needed to avoid probate.

Concerns About Heirs

Sometimes, there may be concerns about how an heir might manage their inheritance. Maybe they have poor spending habits, have a drug/alcohol problem or are heavily in debt to creditors. Trusts can hold assets for beneficiaries and allow the assets to be managed by a trustee, all outside of probate. Wills can also hold assets in a trust but will involve the probate court, making managing the trust more cumbersome. For people who may have

concerns about how their heirs might manage their inheritance, a trust is likely a better option than a will.

Second Marriages

A trust is often a good strategy for married couples who have children from previous marriages. A trust allows the deceased spouse to provide for the surviving spouse while ensuring that those assets ultimately end up with the deceased spouse's children. Wills tend to leave everything to the surviving spouse then to children. A will plan could cause both spouse's assets to only go to the surviving spouse's children. Trusts are often the better option for second marriages.

Transition of Farming Operation

As stated above, crops, livestock and machinery can only avoid probate by using a trust. Sometimes, these assets get stuck in probate for some time and cause problems for continuing the farming operation. Farmers with large amounts of grain, crops, livestock and machinery should consider a trust for their estate plan.

Legal Fees.

Wills generally have the advantage on legal fees. Trusts, being more complicated documents, typically cost more to set up than wills. The cost difference can be several thousands of dollars. If minimizing legal fees for the estate plan is a priority, a will may be the better option. It is important to note that spending more money on a trust may save the beneficiaries even more by making the estate administration easier and more efficient. Spending a few thousand dollars more on a trust may save many thousands of dollars on estate administration. The above factors are just a few of the many factors to consider when deciding between a will or trust. For many people a will is completely adequate for an estate plan but for many farmers a trust is the better option. An estate planning attorney will be able to assist with determining which strategy is better. For a more thorough discussion on wills, trusts and other aspects of estate planning, see the Planning for the Future of Your Farm bulletin series at go.osu.edu/farmplanning.

Asian Longhorned Tick found in Morgan County, Chris Penrose, OSU Extension, Morgan County

I became disheartened a few weeks ago after I sent a bunch of ticks to a lab on campus to get identified and they confirmed what I feared: that we have the Asian Longhorned tick here in

Morgan County. If I am correct, that makes five types of tick we likely have present in the county and many parts of Ohio. Ticks can give us Lyme Disease, Anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and a disease that makes us allergic to red meat.

The Asian Longhorned tick (ALT) was found last year in a couple of Ohio counties and the populations of ALT became so high on some cows that they died. That scares me. The good news is there is a team of professionals from OSU, Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Health and United States Department of Agriculture that is on top of this and have been very responsive.

What do we know? They are asexual, meaning they do not need a mate to reproduce. Each tick can lay up to 2000 eggs. They move slowly so the spread is very slow unless they “hitch a ride” on humans, animals or equipment. In fact, farms next to an infested field or another field on the same farm over the past year have not seen much spread.

This is a new invasive and treatment options are still evolving but here are a few things to be aware of. First, it appears that most insecticides are effective. However, most do not have a residual and animals can get reinfested in as few as ten days if they stay in the same infested field. Spraying the field is also an option if there is a bad infestation. Keeping the field clipped will make a less favorable environment for the ticks. These ticks should go dormant in the fall until spring. These ticks can get on most types of livestock, wildlife and pets, so keep a close eye on your animals. Keep your pets on a preventative insect medicine.

For humans, the best way to protect people from this tick is to wear clothing treated with a 0.5% permethrin, a common brand is *Sawyer* and the application can last several washings. When out in suspected tick infested areas, always tuck pants into boots, and tuck shirt into pants to reduce the amount of exposed skin. Do a thorough tick check daily and shower as soon as possible after returning from an infested area.

As more is learned, we should get better options on how to deal with this tick, especially on livestock. For example, does *Ivermectin* have longer residual than other products? Will fly tags help? Maybe back rubbers by mineral tubs will help. I do know that we need to keep a sharp eye out for this tick.

If you see multiple ticks on an animal, this should be a cause for concern and you should call your veterinarian or give your local Ag Extension person a call. We have a [factsheet](#) that does a great job explaining these ticks, just search *Asian Longhorned tick Ohio State University*

Extension and it will be right there. Hopefully this does not become too big of an issue, but we need to be prepared, just in case.

Controlling Cocklebur Can Be A Challenge, Ohio Cattleman

Over the past 20 years, we have seen more and more cocklebur becoming established on our farms and many farmers in the area have noted that as well. On Chris' farm, I think it started when I fed whole shelled corn to my cattle out in the pastures to extend hay supplies in the winter. You would think this summer annual would be easy to control but it is more of a challenge. We and several of our colleagues recently finished a five year trial on timed mowing of pastures in the summer and one year after concluding the study, we went out to the site in September, it had not been mowed yet, and it was completely engulfed with cocklebur. No matter when or how often we mowed, after doing the same thing for five years, there was no difference.

One would think that if we went out and mowed a summer annual when the stem is elongating with immature seeds and cut below the seeds, we would kill the plant, and that still may be the case. However, how about the 10% that were too short to mow or still immature? During the trial, we noticed many cocklebur plants maturing only four inches tall with lots of seeds after mowing – very discouraging. Even then, we wondered why it kept spreading so much.

According to “Weeds of the Northeast”, 1997, and trying not to get too deep in the “weeds”, this plant blooms July through September, it has male and female flowers on the plant, and each bur (the seed cover we have to pull off of our dogs) contains two fruit, each with one seed. The discouraging part here is that the lower seed can germinate soon after the bur (or seed pod) splits open. The other seed can remain dormant for one to several years, meaning it may take years to eliminate.

Timely, repeated mowings may keep cocklebur in check or slow the spread, but if it becomes established, pastures will likely need a herbicide. According to the 2022 OSU Extension Weed Control Guide, most broadleaf herbicides for pastures are very effective, as well as Glyphosate for spot treatments. Before selecting one, consider the residual impact of the herbicide and how long one must keep animals out of the pasture after spraying. We are fortunate that there are options for short term and long-term residual of the herbicides, and there are herbicides that may have short to no grazing restrictions depending the class and type of

livestock you have. As always, read and understand the herbicide label and restrictions before using, some have very strict grazing and haying requirements.

If you have pastures where cocklebur is becoming a serious problem, it will only get worse, so consider taking action. If you have some fields where you find a few rogue plants, consider pulling them out, before they can get established. One plant today could become many next year.

[**A Checklist for Fall Pasture Renovation, OSU Sheep Team, Amber Friedrichsen, Hay and Forage Grower 2021 and 2022 editorial intern \(Previously published in Hay & Forage Grower: August 30, 2021\)**](#)

Similar to an old house that needs repair, an underperforming forage stand may need a renovation. Instead of cement foundations, blueprints, and construction plans, though, a new seeding requires healthy soil, pest management, and an effective planting method.

Amanda Grev, a pasture and forage specialist with University of Maryland Extension, says mid-August to mid-September is the optimum time to renovate forage stands in her state. Although this window varies by region, producers across the country can implement similar strategies to ensure an effective transformation.

Test soil

Inadequate pH levels and nutrient deficiencies can hinder seedling establishment and stand persistence. Grev notes low soil pH is detrimental to root growth and development, and phosphorous is especially important for young plants to thrive. Therefore, it is essential to sample soil prior to pasture renovation and apply lime and fertilizer according to test results and recommendations.

Control weeds

Eliminate weeds before planting to prevent competition with new, desired forages. “While herbicides can be a useful tool for weed management, they are not the only option for weed control,” Grev asserts. “An integrated approach that combines various cultural, mechanical, and chemical control practices will be the most successful.”

Choose adapted species

Different forages are adapted to different soil characteristics, such as texture, drainage, water holding capacity, soil fertility, and topography. For example, Grev notes alfalfa and

orchardgrass need a higher soil pH and have greater nutrient demands than other species. Select forages that are suited to a specific location and their intended use.

Inoculate seed

Legume seed must be inoculated to promote a relationship between plants and rhizobia bacteria and facilitate nitrogen fixation. If seed is not pre-inoculated, Grev instructs producers to purchase an appropriate strain of bacteria for their particular species and inoculate seed with an adhesive material.

“Inoculants are living organisms and will only work if the bacteria are alive when applied, so be sure to use proper storage and handling and check expiration dates,” she adds.

Prepare the seedbed

Tillage can be a useful tool for seedbed preparation when it is done correctly. Underworking soil might leave too much surface residue and create rough planting conditions, whereas overworking a field can break soil structure and dry it out. Grev suggests striving for a soft, yet firm, seedbed where a boot print is roughly 1/4-inch deep.

For no-till seeding, it is crucial to suppress existing forages and reduce surface residue. Clip or graze pastures closely before establishment or apply a nonselective herbicide.

“If using livestock to accomplish this via grazing, be mindful of the potential effects this may have on animal performance, including the consumption of lower quality forage and the potential for increased parasite loads as animals graze below the usual minimum height recommendation,” Grev cautions.

Calibrate equipment

Consider soil texture and moisture to determine seeding depth. While this is usually about 1/4 to 1/2 inch for most cool-season forages, Grev recommends planting seeds shallower in heavier, wetter soils and planting seeds deeper in lighter, drier soils.

Equipment must also be adjusted to ensure the desired seeding rate, and this depends on plant species, forage use, and planting conditions. “Pasture seeding rates are typically higher than hay seeding rates to provide a denser sod for grazing,” Grev says. “If conditions are optimal, seed at the lower end of the recommended range. If conditions are poor, seed at the higher end.”

Once pasture renovation is complete, refrain from grazing new forages until their root systems are fully developed. Continue to scout for weeds and other potential issues during the establishment year to promote plant growth and future productivity.