

Agriculture Newsletter: October Edition

As we enter the chilly season, I wanted to take a moment to share important updates and resources. Your hard work and dedication to feeding and fueling Ohio play a crucial role in the growth and prosperity of our community, so a goal of mine is to communicate with you regularly and provide information I hope is helpful.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns — together, we can continue to improve the future of agriculture in Ohio.

Thank you for your continued commitment to providing for and sustaining our communities. Let's work together for a prosperous season ahead!

Sincerely,
State Representative Beth Lear



Randall Barn in Knox County, Ohio

In the transportation budget this year, some legislators were pushing for yet another study to connect I-71 through Delaware County to make their commute to Columbus faster. Senator Brenner & I opposed this and forced consideration of a northern route. ODOT has chosen to consider a more southerly option, through prime Delaware County farmland and watersheds. Please contact my office if you **OPPOSE** this plan as I do.

Stay updated!

Contact my office at:
Rep61@ohiohouse.gov
or by calling:
614-466-1431



For more information see the digital version:
<https://www.ohiohouse.gov/members/beth-lear/newsletters>

Agriculture Support: Budget Edition

In the 2026–27 biennial budget, Ohio made significant investments to strengthen agriculture, with the Ohio Department of Agriculture receiving \$361.7 million over two years. This includes \$121.3 million for H2Ohio, helping farmers adopt conservation practices to improve water quality. Funding for soil and water conservation districts rose from \$7 million to \$12.5 million annually, supporting nutrient management and soil testing.

The budget also expands animal health programs and funds the Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine to address the rural vet shortage (see below). Additionally, it provides \$10 million for the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, benefiting livestock producers and safeguarding farm data.

Overall, these investments underscore Ohio's commitment to both farm productivity and environmental stewardship.



Gallant Farm in Delaware County, Ohio

Current Agriculture Legislation:

Some legislation currently in the House Agriculture Committee are:

HR 14: Urge Congress to Ensure Toxins & Chemicals are Removed from Food

HB 406: Raw Milk Act

SB 60: Requirements for Vet Telehealth Visits

Pest Alert

The Ohio State University Extension in Delaware County is advising farmers about red crown rot, a fungal disease affecting soybean plants. So far it has only been spotted in Delaware County. The red crown rot fungus actively infects soybean roots when soil temperatures are between 77 and 86°F, so the planting date and associated soil temperature also may influence red crown rot severity. Cleaning equipment to remove soil before moving to a new field may also help reduce the spread of the red crown rot fungus to a new field. <https://tinyurl.com/vjysv8sk>



Wheat Alert

Wheat growers are facing growing uncertainty driven by low prices, high input costs, and volatile weather. Global oversupply and weaker export demand have squeezed profit margins, while unpredictable rain and disease pressures — like head blight — make crop management more difficult. Trade tensions and shifting international markets have further clouded price outlooks, and delays in crop insurance or government payments have left many farmers without reliable safety nets. Together, these challenges are forcing producers to make tough financial and planting decisions in an increasingly unstable market. See the article below. <https://tinyurl.com/3aav9eje>

Looking for Veterinarians

Future veterinarians can earn their degree with major financial support through the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP). Offered primarily by the U.S. Army, this program covers full tuition, reimburses fees and equipment costs, and provides a monthly living stipend for students in AVMA-accredited veterinary programs.

In return, participants serve as commissioned officers in the Army Veterinary Corps — typically one year for each year of scholarship support. While other benefits like the GI Bill and Tuition Assistance can help, HPSP is the most comprehensive option for those looking to combine a veterinary career with military service.

Contact information

- Emily Gonzalez, CVM-DVM Financial Aid Advisor, The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine
Phone: 614-247-8778
Email: cvm-dvmfinancialaid@osu.edu
- College of Veterinary Medicine—General Inquiries
Phone: 614-292-1171
Address: 1900 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210
- Ohio State University Military & Veterans Services
Phone: 614-247-VETS (614-247-8387)
Email: milvets@osu.edu