Farmers faithfully conduct conservation conversation

Farmers in the area have always been interested in conservation practices for their farms long before toxic algae blooms in Lake Erie made headline news. They have faithfully attended the Conservation Tillage Conference for over 25 years. This annual event will occur again in less than a month.

The Conservation Tillage Conference is the largest agriculture meeting in northwestern Ohio. Historically speaking, over 400 individuals will attend each day of this two-day conference. The conference will be March 3 and 4 on the campus of Ohio Northern University in Ada.

The meeting and program has been developed by the Ohio State University Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources educators in local counties with assistance from local Soil & Water Conservation Districts and United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources and Conservation Services.

Farmers, consultants, industry representatives, government officials and the curious will meet each day to listen to university specialists, industry representatives, and producers discuss new products and ideas for agriculture.

On the first day, Lee Briese, recipient of the International Certified Crop Advisor of the Year Award and an agronomic consultant for Centrol Inc. of Twin Valley in Edgeley, North Dakota, will be the keynote speaker. The title of his presentation is "Details Matter: Equipment, Soils, and Cover Crops."

The rest of the conference will include over 60 speakers and a trade show that will have product displays and representatives from over 40 vendors. Four concurrent program sessions will occur each hour of the day from approximately 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The focus on the program is conservation, and it includes no-till, cover crops, and soil health. However, the latest management practices for each major crop and new developments in precision agriculture are included in the program. Most of the sessions are in the McIntosh Center and the chapel.

The popular "Corn University" and "Soybean School" have been replaced with the "Crop School" as a result of retirements of Extension corn specialists from the eastern Corn Belt. However, 10 researchers from seven land-grant universities will be presenting during the "Crop School" program.

Crop program topics on Tuesday, March 3, will focus on management practices to improve soil conditioning after last year's adverse weather and the use of precision agriculture for application of nutrients and making agronomic decisions with sensors.

Topics for Wednesday's crop programs include repairing damaged soils, new Tri-State Fertilizer recommendations, nitrogen management research, the latest production research for soybeans and raising profitable wheat. Both Tuesday and Wednesday's crop programs will be on the second floor of the McIntosh Center.

Three concurrent sessions will be occurring in other rooms on Tuesday. On the first floor of the McIntosh Center, Room B will have topics associated with manure such as nutrient management, regulations and government programs. Room C will have topics on hemp production and forage cover crops.

On Wednesday, Room B will have topics on water quality that include phosphorus management, 2019 agriculture impact on Lake Erie, and a discussion on H2Ohio programs. Room C will focus on the success of no-till agriculture from the past 50 years.

The chapel, near the McIntosh Center, will have concurrent programs on both days in the main meeting room. Tuesday topics will include cover crops, no-till, and soil health. Chapel programs on Wednesday will discuss cover crop management practices.

The Conservation Tillage Conference fee is $95 for both days ($70 for one day) if paid online before Feb. 21; registration afterward and day of is $95 for one day or $115 for both days. Registration includes lunch and breaks, refreshments during the day.

Registration information and a detailed program schedule may be found at the following web address: http://ctc.osu.edu. Certified Crop Advisers (CCA) will be able to receive seven hours of continuing education credits each day in all categories.

The Conservation Tillage Conference is a great program to learn about the latest management and conservation practices in crop production and to network within the agricultural community. Please contact the OSU Extension Office — Hancock County at 419-422-3851 or lentz.38@osu.edu for additional information.

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