OSU Extension Field Specialists

OSU Extension field specialists are located throughout the state. Each field specialist has a particular subject matter focus. He or she provides overall leadership for developing and implementing a comprehensive and balanced teaching and applied research program to address statewide issues. These specialists work to bridge relationships between campus researchers and field staff located throughout the state. They expand existing partnerships, develop new connections, and foster collaboration. Unlike state specialists, field specialists do not have campus-based faculty responsibilities such as resident instruction and student advising; and they are 100 percent Extension-funded. Their specific programmatic efforts are typically supported in some way with external funding.

OSU Extension Vision
Ohioans have the knowledge and resources they need to actively engage in creating conditions in which they thrive.

OSU Extension Mission
We create opportunities for people to explore how science-based knowledge can improve social, economic and environmental conditions.
# Agriculture and Resource Law

**Peggy Kirk Hall**  
aglaw@osu.edu  
937-644-8117  
farmoffice.osu.edu  
Blog: farmoffice.osu.edu/blog  
1800 State Route 4  
Marysville, OH 43040

**Education:**  
BS and MS, resource policy, The Ohio State University; JD, University of Wyoming College of Law

**Professional Background:**  
Attorney, Wright and Logan, LLP, Dublin, Ohio; attorney, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Lansing, Michigan; intern, U.S. District Court, District of Wyoming, Cheyenne, Wyoming

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Legal issues in agricultural production, land use and environmental law, energy and resource law, legal education

**Plan of Action:**  
Collaborate with external partners and Ohio State experts to address legal issues in agriculture and natural resources from a cross-disciplinary, research-based approach.

**Team Work:**  
Farm Office Team, Direct Marketing Team, Ohio Ag Manager, Women in Agriculture, Small Farm Team

**Academic Connections:**  
Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics; National Agricultural Law Center, University of Arkansas

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# Agronomic Systems

**Elizabeth Hawkins**  
hawkins.301@osu.edu  
937-382-0901  
(cell) 937-286-4849  
Twitter: @Farm3rsDaught3r  
111 S Nelson Ave, Suite 2  
Wilmington, OH 45177

**Education:**  
AA, agronomy, and BS, agricultural systems management, Purdue University; MS, crop science, University of Illinois; PhD, agricultural systems management, Purdue University

**Professional Background:**  
Research assistant, soybean breeding, Monsanto Corporation

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Precision and data-driven agriculture, agronomic crop production, on-farm research

**Plan of Action:**  
Conduct research to identify methods to increase farm profits including improved crop yields, better management of resources, and employment of effective precision agriculture technologies. Increase awareness of the impacts of data quality and data management on agronomic decision making.

**Team Work:**  
eFields On-Farm Research Team, Digital Ag Team, Agronomic Crops Team

**Academic Connections:**  
Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering
**Agronomic Systems**

**Greg LaBarge**  
labarge.1@osu.edu  
740-956-5047  
(cell) 419-460-0600  
217 Elm St  
London, OH 43140

**Education:**  
BS and MS, agronomy, University of Missouri – Columbia; Certified Crop Advisor (CCA); Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg)

**Professional Background:**  
Educator, agriculture and natural resources, and county Extension director, OSU Extension

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Improving nutrient management in crop production systems to maximize nutrient use, reduce production risk, and minimize impacts on water quality. Measure interactions of agronomic production and soil management practices on crop productivity and the environment.

**Plan of Action:**  
Conduct applied research on nutrient management, soil management, and cropping system interactions to identify cost effective best management practices for implementation that positively impact the crop enterprise and water quality. Provide educational outreach on applied research outcomes.

**Team Work:**  
Agronomic Crops Team,  
Ohio State Sustainability Institute

**Academic Connections:**  
Horticulture and Crop Science; School of Environment and Natural Resources; Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Plant Pathology; Entomology; Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics

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**Harold Watters**  
watters.35@osu.edu  
937-599-4227  
(cell) 937-604-2415  
Twitter: @35watters  
u.osu.edu/watters.35  
1100 S Detroit St  
Bellefontaine, OH 43311

**Education:**  
BS, natural resources, soil management and MS, agronomy, The Ohio State University; Certified Crop Adviser (CCA); Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg); commercial pesticide applicator

**Professional Background:**  
Educator, agriculture and natural resources, OSU Extension; agronomic systems manager, Monsanto Corporation; senior field biologist, BASF Corporation; product development agronomist, Calgene Inc; market development agronomist, BASF Corporation – Wyandotte site; owner and operator of grain farm

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Agronomic crop improvement including weed management, nutrient management, product testing, alternative crops, international agriculture

**Plan of Action:**  
Conduct field research and gather information on yield improvement; deliver information on yield improvement. Maximize economic value of nitrogen.

**Team Work:**  
Agronomic Crops Team, Sustainable Ag Team

**Academic Connections:**  
Horticulture and Crop Science; School of Environment and Natural Resources; Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Plant Pathology; Entomology; Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics
Beef Cattle

Garth Ruff
ruff.72@osu.edu
(cell) 740-651-7140
16714 Wolf Run Road
Caldwell, OH 43724

Education:
MS and BS, animal sciences,
The Ohio State University

Professional Background:
Educator, agriculture and natural resources,
OSU Extension

Specialization/Focus Area:
Beef cattle management, meat science, forage systems

Plan of Action:
Work with producers to improve efficiency of the breeding season, feeder cattle management, and forage systems. Educate producers and consumers on fresh meat quality and Beef Quality Assurance principles.

Team Work:
Beef Team, Ohio Ag Manager

Academic Connections:
Animal Sciences

Community Economics

Nancy Bowen-Ellzey
bowen-ellzey.1@osu.edu
419-995-8624
(cell) 419-203-4148
Galvin Hall, Room 204E
4240 Campus Drive
Lima, OH 45804

Education:
BS, general studies/geography and community economics, University of New Orleans; Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP), University of New Orleans; Certified Economic Developer (CEcD), International Economic Development Council

Professional Background:
Educator, community development, OSU Extension; economic development director, Van Wert County; consultant, Bowen and Associates; executive director, Louisiana Council on Workforce Development; business development manager, Jefferson Economic Development Commission

Specialization/Focus Area:
Sustainable economic development, community and regional planning

Plan of Action:
Collaborate with Extension colleagues, campus-based faculty, community leaders, and students to identify needs and implement strategies to improve the economic conditions and increase capacity in communities along the rural-urban continuum in Ohio.

Team Work:
Business Retention and Expansion, Shale Sustainable Development, Renewable Energy Development, Entrepreneurial Communities, Local Government Toolbox, Tourism and Downtown Development

Academic Connections:
Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics; John Glenn College of Public Affairs
Dairy Production Economics

Dianne Shoemaker
shoemaker.3@osu.edu
330-533-5538
(cell) 330-257-3377
490 S Broad St
Canfield, OH 44406

Education:
BS, dairy science, and MS, dairy science agribusiness, The Ohio State University

Professional Background:
Leader, Ohio Farm Business Analysis Program; dairy farm financial management specialist; educator and dairy specialist, OSU Extension; Ohio FINPACK leader; dairy farm manager

Specialization/Focus Area:
Farm financial analysis and management, dairy production economics, dairy farm management, cost of production

Plan of Action:
Work with Ohio State colleagues, farmers, and industry partners to improve the competitiveness and profitability of Ohio’s farmers.

Team Work:
Dairy Working Group, Farm Office, Ohio Ag Manager Team, Ohio Farm Business Analysis Team

Academic Connections:
Courtesy associate professor, Animal Sciences; Veterinary Preventive Medicine; Horticulture and Crop Science; Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics

Energy Development

Eric Romich
romich.2@osu.edu
419-294-4931
109 S Sandusky Ave
Upper Sandusky, OH 43351

Education:
BS, business administration and process management, Franklin University; MS, exercise, leisure and sports administration, Kent State University

Professional Background:
Educator, community development, OSU Extension; director, Wyandot County Office of Economic Development; director, Wyandot County Regional Planning Commission

Specialization/Focus Area:
Distributed (behind-the-meter) solar development, utility-scale solar energy development, solar leasing, peak demand energy management in agriculture, renewable energy policy

Plan of Action:
Develop and deliver educational programming concentrated on distributed (behind-the-meter) solar development, utility-scale solar energy development, and peak-demand energy management.

Team Work:
OSU Extension Energy Outreach Program, Energize Ohio, Business Retention and Expansion, OSU Extension IMPLAN Modeling Team
### Family Wellness

**Jim Bates**  
bates.402@osu.edu  
614-688-1468  
151C Campbell Hall  
1787 Neil Ave  
Columbus, OH 43210

**Education:**  
BS, marriage, family and human development, Brigham Young University; MS, child development and family studies, Purdue University; PhD, child and family studies, Syracuse University

**Professional Background:**  
Assistant professor, South Dakota State University; project manager, Syracuse University, hub of the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center; assistant family services coordinator, Mountainland Head Start

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Intergenerational family relationships, aging, family resilience and wellness, family life educational programming

**Plan of Action:**  
Work collaboratively with county, state and national Extension professionals to address the familial, relational, psychological, and developmental needs of Ohioans. Engage public and private human service agencies and educational organizations to provide educational programs to families. Conduct high-quality research that can be translated into family life educational programming.

**Team Work:**  
Healthy Relationships, Parenting, Successful Co-Parenting, Aging

**Academic Connections:**  
College of Education and Human Ecology

### Food, Nutrition and Wellness

**Dan Remley**  
remley.4@osu.edu  
740-289-2071 (x241)  
(cell) 513-277-9150  
1864 Shyville Road  
Piketon, OH 45661

**Education:**  
BA, zoology, Miami University; MS, public health, University of Alabama – Birmingham; PhD, nutritional sciences, University of Kentucky

**Professional Background:**  
Educator, family and consumer sciences, OSU Extension; regional nutrition specialist, University of Missouri Outreach and Extension; certified ServSafe instructor and proctor

**Specialization/Focus Area:**  
Developing healthy and sustainable food systems, chronic disease management, youth and worksite wellness

**Plan of Action:**  
Develop relationships with those working on food, nutrition and wellness issues around the state; find teaching and research opportunities that focus on changing individuals’ eating behaviors; collaborate on a multi-state AFRI grant focused on preventing childhood obesity; collaborate on an AFRI grant focused on improving food security and healthy food access in rural communities.

**Team Work:**  
Healthy People, Dining with Diabetes, Health and Wellness in the City Team, Healthy Eating, Active Living (Heal) Maps Team, Local Foods
Manure Nutrient Management Systems

Glen Arnold
arnold.2@osu.edu
419-422-3851
(cell) 419-235-4724
7868 CR 140, Suite B
Findlay, OH 45840

Education:
BS, agricultural mechanization and systems and agricultural education, The Ohio State University; MS, education, Purdue University; Certified Crop Advisor (CCA); Certified Livestock Manager (CLM)

Professional Background:
Educator, agriculture and natural resources, OSU Extension; vocational education instructor and FFA advisor

Specialization/Focus Area:
Manure nutrient management systems; livestock mortality composting

Plan of Action:
Conduct on-farm applied research and demonstration plots on utilizing liquid manure with wheat and corn to better capture manure nutrients. Share results through OSU Extension Manure Science Review, Agronomics Crops Team, Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference, Farm Science Review, Midwest Professional Nutrient Applicators Association, and North American Manure Expo. Teach livestock mortality composting workshops.

Team Work:
Agronomic Crops

Academic Connections:
Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Organizational and Community Leadership Development

Brian Raison
raison.1@osu.edu
937-736-7210
(cell) 937-510-1423
100 Fairground Road
Xenia, OH 45385

Education:
BS, business, The Ohio State University; MA, sociology, Ohio University; PhD, agricultural Extension education, The Ohio State University

Professional Background:
Educator, community development, and associate professor, OSU Extension; communications and government affairs manager, Mead Corporation (Chillicothe, Ohio and Kingsport, Tennessee); economic development director, Chillicothe, Ohio

Specialization/Focus Area:
Community and organizational leadership development (leadership programming and facilitation, process facilitation, strategic planning, vision-to-action, evaluation, business and non-profit leadership). Special focus on local food systems leadership needs, as well as individual and community health and engaging older youth/emerging adults in building networks for collaboration.

Plan of Action:
Bring together resources – people, information, ideas and processes – to positively affect outcomes larger than otherwise possible. Accomplish this by building collaborative partnerships among faculty, staff, and community members. Conduct targeted research-based programming and facilitation.

Academic Connections:
Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership
Volunteerism and 4-H Community Clubs

Jeff Dick
dick.7@osu.edu
419-630-6140
8770 SR 108, Suite A
Wauseon, OH 43567

Education:
AS, ag business management and animal science, Northwest Technical College; BS and MS, agricultural education, The Ohio State University

Professional Background:
Educator, 4-H youth development (Sandusky and Williams counties), OSU Extension; county Extension director; interim director, 4-H Camp Palmer

Specialization/Focus Area:
Risk management, 4-H club/affiliate financial management, volunteer screening/orientation/education, 4-H SPIN clubs, 4-H policy, Ohio 4-H shooting sports

Plan of Action:
Strengthening volunteerism and 4-H club management throughout Ohio.

Team Work:
Volunteerism and 4-H Community Club Design Team, 4-H Professional Development, OSU Extension Insurance and Risk Management Team, Ohio 4-H SPIN Club work group, Companion Animal eXtension Community of Practice

Youth Nutrition and Wellness

Carol Smathers
smathers.14@osu.edu
614-688-1801
163A Campbell Hall
1787 Neil Ave
Columbus, OH 43210

Education:
BS, community health, Oregon State University; MS, education, Western Oregon University; Master of Public Health, The Ohio State University

Professional Background:
Research manager, Prevention Research Center, Ohio State College of Public Health; program coordinator, Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) project based in Ohio 4-H; high school teaching; nonprofit leadership

Specialization/Focus Area:
Youth nutrition and wellness, public health strategies including policy and environment change, Farm to School, promotion of healthy beverages, youth advocacy for healthy living

Plan of Action:
Creating better nutrition outcomes for youth through improved policies, systems, and environments; supporting procurement of and interactive education about local foods within Ohio schools; developing resources to support community collaborations and youth advocacy initiatives that foster healthy living.

Team Work:
Statewide Farm to School Network, “Growing Teachers” School Garden Curriculum Team, FCS Early Childhood Team, 4-H Healthy Living Design Team, Cooperative Extension’s Positive Youth Development for Health Action Team

Academic Connections:
Adjunct appointments in the College of Public Health and College of Education and Human Ecology