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***OSU Extension hires New Field Specialist focusing on Beef Cattle***

**Columbus, OHIO** – Garth Ruff has been selected as the new field specialist, beef cattle for Ohio State University Extension in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) at The Ohio State University, per Jackie Kirby Wilkins, interim director of OSU Extension. This full-time appointment is effective September 1, 2020.

“We are extremely pleased to be partnering with our CFAES Department of Animal Sciences to jointly fund this important position, which will work in tandem with our research faculty and our commodity and industry partners, as well as producers and community stakeholders to translate and apply the newest university knowledge to meet the timely and most critical issues facing the beef industry in Ohio,” said Wilkins.

“The College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences is committed to our land-grant mission, including serving Ohioans. OSU Extension is critical in connecting us with producers, consumers, industry, and youth. Garth Ruff will bring expertise and experience to this important leadership role, and will ensure we continue to strengthen and support our partnerships. We look forward to the many contributions Garth will make in this role,” said Cathann A. Kress, vice president for Agricultural Administration and dean, CFAES.

“My goal is to help Ohio’s beef industry to grow, while focusing on profitability and improving herd efficiency at the farm level and engaging consumers,” said Ruff. To accomplish these goals, Ruff will develop relationships with producers, industry partners, and CFAES specialists, while coordinating efforts with county-based OSU Extension faculty and staff.

“My primary focus will be producer-driven education, research, and on-farm implementation of management practices that improve the bottom line of the beef cattle enterprise,” said Ruff. “Engaging consumers and youth to provide beef education is also key to growing the industry, and that can best be accomplished by identifying and collaborating with both internal and external partners. I’m looking forward to engaging and serving Ohio’s beef producers and hope to make a positive impact on Ohio’s beef industry.”



“Garth’s work will continue to build and strengthen numerous connections between the CFAES Department of Animal Sciences and Extension across Ohio. His strong background in consumer needs and a desire to add an economic piece to this work will truly enhance the impact of this position for the beef industry on behalf of the college and Extension,” said Sam Custer, interim assistant director for agriculture and natural resources, OSU Extension.

Ruff has served as the Extension educator for agriculture and natural resources in Henry County since May 2017. Ruff has specialized in livestock production and marketing, farm management, and meat science. His current Extension research and teaching efforts include direct marketing of animal products, forage and field crop trials, and the OSU Extension Grill Smart program (a course looking at the science of great grilling).

Prior to joining OSU Extension, Ruff was a student in the Department of Animal Sciences at Ohio State, earning a BS in 2015 and MS in 2017. In addition, Ruff was appointed to the Ohio Beef Council in January 2019. A native of Morgan County, Ruff continues to be active in the family livestock and forage operation.

Ruff joins several other OSU Extension field specialists, who each have a particular subject matter focus and provide overall leadership for a comprehensive teaching and applied research program to address statewide issues. The field specialists work to expand existing partnerships, develop new relationships, and foster collaborations across the state, including with campus researchers, to complement what local Extension educators are doing.

Other topics addressed by current Extension field specialists include: agronomic systems; dairy production economics; food, nutrition and wellness; energy development; manure nutrient management systems; community economics; agricultural and resource law; volunteerism and 4-H community clubs; youth nutrition and wellness; family wellness; and organizational and community leadership development.

“Please join OSU Extension in welcoming Garth Ruff to this role, which is so important to the continuing success of Ohio’s beef cattle industry and OSU Extension’s agriculture and natural resources efforts throughout the state,” said Wilkins

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