

Current Appointments

OSU Extension Educator 2, Agriculture and Natural Resources/Community Development

Degrees

B.S., Agriculture Communications, The Ohio State University, 2012

M.S., Agriculture Communications, The Ohio State University, 2014

Ph.D., Agriculture Extension and Education, The Ohio State University, 2017

Biographical Narrative

Highland County is a rural community in the Ohio Valley, nestled at the foothills of Appalachia. Despite its equidistance location between three metropolitan cities, Highland County has been challenged by attracting and retaining young, ambitious minds to stay in the community's workforce. Agriculture is the county's top industry, and it is the only county east of the Mississippi River that has two operational stockyards. In addition to agriculture, Highland County has a diverse business and manufacturing sector.

As the ANR/CD Educator in Highland County, I am responsible for developing educational programming that meets the needs of the community. I reach my agricultural and natural resources clientele through diverse programming related to crop production, livestock production, specialty crops, and woodland management. I reach my community development clientele through the Leadership Highland program and close partnerships with the Highland County Visitor's Bureau and Highland County Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, I conduct research projects relevant to my programming and eFields trials. I secure additional external funding, utilize program impact evaluations and provide timely updates to public officials, legislators, and other key stakeholders.

I serve as the county steward for the hiring process; fiscal; community engagement, equity, and inclusion; and external communications/media relations. Since beginning my role as the ANR/CD educator in Highland County, I have grown the budget for ANR/CD programming from \$0 to over \$19,000 through programming and grants. My program areas of specialization are leadership development (40 percent), local food systems (40 percent), and digital marketing for agriculture and small businesses (20 percent). Approximately 15 percent of my time is dedicated to statewide efforts in the areas above.

Major Accomplishments: Programs and Teaching

As a dual program area Extension educator, I use creativity to meet the needs of my clientele. Highlighted programs include Leadership Highland, beef quality assurance trainings (BQA), fertilizer and pesticide recertification and the 2019 Germinate International Film Fest.

The Leadership Highland program was established in the mid-1990s to early 2000s. However, due to poor management, the program was canceled. I resurrected and redeveloped the program in 2018. Annually there is an average of 10 participants who participate in the nine-month course, who pay a \$1,000 registration fee. Leadership Highland highlights agriculture, local business sectors, local and state government, history and fosters leadership skills. Participant surveys have come back positive and acknowledge that the course helps them obtain a deeper understanding of their community and encourages them to become more civically engaged.

Having two stockyards, Highland County has an extensive draw for livestock programming, in particular BQA trainings. I held 11 BQA trainings in 2018 and 2019, certifying 811 beef producers. Participants in these trainings resided in Highland County, multiple other counties in Ohio and several residents of Kentucky and West Virginia. These BQA certifications are valid for a three-year period, therefore I am planning multiple BQA recertifications for the summer and fall of 2021.

Fertilizer and pesticide recertification is an annual program to recertify agricultural producers with safety procedures for fertilizer and pesticide application. In total there are 283 Highland County applicators which I recertify on a three-year basis. Due to the challenging nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, I created a drive-in theater experience to complete the recertification of nearly a dozen private applicators in September of 2020.

In 2019, I launched the Germinate International Film Fest (GIFF). GIFF was the first film festival in the United States focused on discussing topics related to agricultural producers, researchers, and rural communities. By utilizing filmfreeway.com, the world's leading online film festival submission platform, GIFF received over 70 submissions. Films selected to participate in the GIFF included filmmakers in seven countries and 15 states. The GIFF was a blended teaching method film festival where educational workshops were taught in collaboration with content from the films. The program utilized cross-county and cross program Extension involvement. Workshops included walking tours of downtown trees, cooking demonstrations, beef carcass demonstrations, astronomy and tours of the historic Bell's Opera House. Attendees traveled to attend GIFF from Ohio, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Minnesota, and New York. The GIFF provided a unique educational opportunity for local residents, filmmakers and agricultural producers to learn about other forms of agriculture production and to have an open discourse on the representation of agriculture and rural communities in media.

Major Accomplishments: Creative and Scholarly Work

I proposed the concept for the Southern Ohio Farm Show (SOFS) in the spring of 2020 as an alternative teaching method to reach clientele during the pandemic. I work with a team to produce the SOFS. In total, there have been over 70 other collaborators (both internal and external), to produce over 40 episodes of the SOFS. I serve as the director and editor for the show and also teach during the program. Additionally, I maintain and track all of the analytics for the program. The SOFS is broadcasted weekly via Zoom, Facebook, YouTube and the local access channels in Adams, Brown, Clermont, Highland and Pike Counties. The average number of views is 1,700 per episode. Viewership has occurred in 38 states and 8 countries.

In conjunction with the Digital Ag Team and special assignments for the Farm Science Review (FSR), I produced nearly 50 videos for the online FSR in 2020. Twenty-five of the videos were field demonstrations, which included a combination of 360-degree virtual reality experiences and traditional 2D videos. On average, the 360-degree virtual reality videos received 43 percent more views than the traditional 2D videos. The increase was most apparent on Facebook, where the views were 71 percent higher. The videos primarily attracted views and engagement from men aged 25-34, a demographic that has been challenging to reach via traditional Extension outreach approaches. Viewership of the videos occurred in 20 states and 36 countries.

Since March of 2018, I have created over 130 videos for Extension education. As of January of 2021, these videos had a combined viewership of over 275,000 through online archives and face-to-face exhibits. By incorporating the videos where I taught during the COVID-19 pandemic, I increased the reach of my Extension programming by 4010 percent in 2020 in comparison to 2019 due to increased online traffic.

I have presented 12 conference presentations and two poster presentations at state and national conferences since March of 2018. I have presented in Ohio, Indiana, North Carolina, Florida and virtually at the 2020 NACAA Conference and Annual Extension Conference. Additionally, I have presented in multiple online webinars on video production, field demonstrations and leadership development. In 2019, I won the national Cross Programming award for my virtual reality programs through the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP).

Published Journal Article:

Beam, B.W., & Hawkins, E. (2020). Virtual Reality for Extension Education and Learner Engagement. *Journal of the NACAA*, 13, 1.

Major Accomplishments: Service

Locally, I have served as a member of the Highland County Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Committee, Highland County Planning Commission, Energize Clinton County board member and an executive committee member of the Highland County Jr. Fair Sale Committee. For state level service, I serve on the planning committee for the OSU Extension ANR Retreat. As of January of 2021, I will serve a three-year term on the State Master Gardener Volunteer Advisory Board. I have also served as a guest lecturer for the Citation Needed club on OSU's main campus. I am a member of the Digital Ag and Direct Marketing Teams. I am also an active member of the Ohio Farm Bureau and the Hillsboro Rotary Club, receiving the 2019 new Rotary member of the year award.

Plans for the future

My future plans for teaching and programming are centered on the needs of the community. Livestock production, leadership development, agronomic crops, specialty crops and solar power are among the list of programs planned for the future to meet the needs of Highland County. I plan to continue to conduct on-farm research to share with local farmers and build upon my agronomic and specialty crop production knowledge.

I plan to continue producing the Southern Ohio Farm Show, as well as support my colleagues and Ohio State University Extension by continuing to help produce engaging, innovative and timely educational videos for online and face-to-face programming. Plans are in place to continue the Germinate International Film Festival, when appropriate given COVID-19 restrictions. In 2022, I will assume the role as the president of the Ohio NACDEP. I will continue to seek national and international conference presentation opportunities to share my research and projects, including an accepted presentation at the European Conference on Precision Agriculture in 2021.