

Biographical Narrative

Located in northwest Ohio, Paulding County sits just east of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Much of the county is rural, with a healthy agricultural economy. The Census Bureau's 2020 population estimates Paulding County to have 18,672 residents. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, approximately 219,663 acres are designated as farmland, which constitutes 82% of the county's 266,432 total acres. There are 622 farm operations in Paulding County. Crop and livestock sales annually account for \$173,451,000, with corn, soybeans, wheat, and hogs producing the highest revenue.

While Paulding County is one of the smallest counties in Ohio, the county has conducted a Paulding County Community Health Assessment (CHA) since 2011. Within the countywide CHA, community leaders have been actively involved in utilizing an assessment tool for creating the Paulding County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The most recent plan covering 2018 to 2021 identified the following top priority topics of mental health and addiction, chronic disease, and sexual behavior. The gaps identified in the mental health and addiction section of the CHIP were lack of resources including collaboration among agencies, education, and funding; lack of guidance for mental health services; lack of available services for mental health counseling including telemedicine with providers; and lack of education regarding mental health issues including programs in schools and community education.

As the Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator for Paulding County, I, Sarah Noggle, am responsible for developing educational programming that meets county clientele' needs. I have served as the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Extension Educator for the past seven years. With a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education and a minor in Production Agriculture from Ohio State, and a master's degree in General Education and Curriculum Development from Marygrove College, I have a well-versed background to address a range of issues that face county residents. Additionally, I hold a Fertilizer Certification and Pork Quality Assurance Certification, which gives me credibility with my clientele.

Over the past seven years, a few themes have emerged through my programming, teaching, and research in a county with a prosperous agricultural economy. My work as an Extension Educator falls under three themes: Farm Management (35%), Agronomy (35%), and Home Horticulture (15%). I have also held administrative roles; County Stewardship and County Director, which accounted for 15% of my effort. While this relates to an older Ohio Extension mission, I always try to keep the theme in the back of my mind and ask, *"Does this program create a better life, better business, or stronger community?"* when thinking of my focus on a local, regional or state level.

Program Area Focus

In 2018, during the Extension Annual Conference, I attended a session about opioid use in rural communities based upon identified gaps in our Paulding County CHIP. The information presented by the College of Pharmacy was lacking in the Extension realm and connection to rural communities and farms. After researching the topic and presenting "Opioid Misuse in Farm Families and Rural Communities" at a local Agronomy night, the survey at the end of the night concluded this was the highest-rated topic with 89% of the eighty-four attendees ranking it as #1. The next day, I had four farmer phone calls before 8:30 AM and two Agribusinesses phone calls before noon, commenting, *"I need you to present this information for my local church. Could you present this to my wife and her friends? They need to hear this topic. Just because we live on a farm, I never thought that opioid misuse could be a part of my farm, but I have dealt with it with two hired individuals. There are no drug tests, we require on the farm, but it is a topic I need more information on."* These comments lead to investigating the need for education due to stresses on the farm. I continued to pursue additional education in this area for awareness for my county, myself, and Extension statewide.

This led to my farm management focus area and specialization of rural and farm stress. After attending Farm Stress training at Michigan State in January of 2019, I brought the farm stress topic to the local, regional, and state front of education from an Agriculture and Natural Resources standpoint. Connecting with other Extension program areas on the topic of farm stress/mental health has been my long-term goal, including FCS, Community Development, and 4-H Youth Development during this process. The cross-program connection has strengthened my ties to the local community, regional area, and state area inside and outside Extension. With all the prevent plant acres in 2019, the need for a team was imminent. Two groups were formed, *Rural and Farm Stress Dean's Task Force* and the *Ag Crisis Task Force* (later changed to *Rapid Response Team*).

Additionally, I have focused on best management practices for farm record keeping, cash rental rates, contracts, computerized record-keeping, crop/livestock marketing, Farm Bill education, and farm succession planning. The topic for the 2014 and 2018 Farm Bill educational program was differences between ARC-IC, ARC-CO, and PLC as well as how to update farm historical yields. While, I have kept my primary focus on tying the farm management topics and addressing farm-level stress among owners, managers, workers, families, and a resilient farm's relationship. I have

pushed the need for all county Extension employees to have training in Mental Health, First Aid (MHFA), and Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) through becoming a National Trainer for the MHFA-Youth area and a statewide trainer for TIC.

One of my favorite roles is serving as a board member on the national level Midwest Cover Crops Council (MCCC). The MCCC serves a twelve-state area and the Canadian province of Ontario and providing a connection between Ohio State and the nation. In December 2020, I lead a team to update the MCCC mission and vision. The new vision and mission align with my education on soil health, water quality, nutrient management, and cover crop topics. In 2018, I co-wrote a \$159,789 McKnight Grant to update the MCCC Cover Crop Tool Selector for Ohio and the other state covered by the MCCC. My agronomy role has been education and research in pesticide and fertilizer application, phosphorus runoff, and soil health/cover crop issues. I have also taught new pesticide and fertilizer applicator classes and recertification classes for those with existing licenses.

For a little over two years, I also served as the County Director. As such, I directly managed three staff members, maintained the budget, and served as a communication link between local and state offices, encouraged diversity, stimulated creative programming, and organized and utilized local economic development committees. I led staff development, provided supervision, coaching, and encouraged teamwork across program areas. During my time as a county director, I led the county hiring process for two summer interns. I still serve as the county budget steward. I have developed the annual county budget, which has grown from \$45,000 in 2013 to \$373,000 in 2021. The budget increase is due, in part, to the rise in county appropriations via a successful county levy for OSU Extension. It has also led to offering additional program areas from the Extension standpoint.

I am also fortunate to be the County Coordinator of the Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program, 21 volunteers strong. Over the past five years, I have co-trained with Defiance County an additional eleven volunteers with a retention rate of 91%. We have increased our live weekly countywide hotline answering home horticulture questions to over 135 questions answered per calendar year over the past five years. The Paulding County MGVs have volunteered through 8,429 hours and completed 2,088 education hours while driving 62,554 miles primarily in Paulding County but also across the state. The impact to the county and state-based upon the 2019 *Independent Sector Value of a Volunteer* for education and service is \$288,378. Additionally, in the last five years, the Paulding County MGV program has been awarded a "Program of Excellence" award.

Major Accomplishments: Programs and Teaching

The 2014 and 2018 Farm Bill has allowed for excellent Extension educational opportunities with farmers, families, and Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offices from all over the state. I took on the co-leadership role for the Farm Bill education in the Maumee Valley EERA. The connections made have allowed for great partnerships between FSA and Extension. Additionally, with the prevent plant season in 2019, the farmers hold Extension to a higher level due to the research and education on the ARC-IC program and ARC and PLC options. Between the 2014 and 2018 Farm Bill educational sessions, I have educated 2,268 farmers, agribusinesses, and landowners in 123 group sessions from Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan and over 100 individual sessions. Finally, in 2019 after conducting eleven educational sessions on the role of the Ag District (Right to Farm Law) following the Lake Erie Bill of Rights (LEBOR) with 292 farmland owners in NW Ohio, SW Michigan, and NE Indiana. Based upon this education, 1,535 parcels of land were signed into an Agricultural District via their county auditor's office. The applications totaled 88,660.67 acres in NW Ohio. From this partnership on education with the Ohio Farm Bureau (FB), our team (FB Organizational Director Jessica Vandebroek, Paulding, Putnam, Allen, and Van Wert Counties, and myself) were awarded the Ohio Farm Bureau County of Excellence state award at the 100th Annual Meeting in December 2019. In 2020, our team was the national winner at the 101st Annual American Farm Bureau Federation for the County Activity of Excellence and Innovation award in Austin, Texas.

My personal points of pride and impact were seen both on a local, regional, statewide, and national caliber.

Major Accomplishments: Creative and Scholarly Work

Writing and being a Co-PI for a National grant for Ohio State Extension, part of a larger multi-state team was an accomplishment in 2020. As a Co-Principal Investigator with Chris Zoller, Dee Jepsen, Ken Martin, and Jami Dellifield, our team was awarded a \$7.2 Million USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) grant through the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) as part of a 12-state collaborative. The grant will specifically create and expand mental health resources and services to producers and stakeholders with the \$400,000 Ohio portion. Within Ohio, one of our resources will be a position creation of Behavioral Health Extension Specialist. This grant created an appointment for a statewide behavior health specialist for Ohio State, telehealth options, and further education in an area that was lacking across the state. In the 2020 *Ohio Private Applicator Pesticide Proceedings*, my information sheet titled "*Farm Stress and Safety Resources*" on pages 7-8 had over 4,200 statewide distributed printed

copies to Ohio Private Pesticide Applicators recertifying in 2020. Additionally, the proceedings are distributed online to agribusinesses and farm cooperatives in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. The online booklet has been downloaded over 400 times. While tying teaching farm stress during the CORE Pesticide Recertification as the non-traditional pesticide topic, I have seen the true tears from farmers across the state because they have been touched in one way or another on this topic.

I created my first two statewide Ohio State Extension Factsheets for further education on cover crops in 2020. ANR-84 *Post Corn, Going to Soybean: Use Cereal Rye* and ANR-85, *Post Soybean, Going to Corn, Use Oat/Radish* were published in July 2020. These factsheets were published nationally via the Midwest Cover Crops Council showing as publications MCCC-116 and MCCC-117. They were added to a national series on Cover Crop Beginning Recipes for Farmers covering 12 states and the providence of Ontario.

Major Accomplishments: Service

As part of my state work, and to enhance my specialization in farm management and agronomic crop production, I have been involved with the OSU Extension Agronomic Crops Team for seven years. As a member, I not only attend biannual meetings and participate in weekly team calls, but I have been active on several special projects. First, I have been an editor for the Crop Observation and Recommendation (CORN) Newsletter for four years. In June each year, I lead weekly team calls; solicit, gather, and edit pertinent articles for the newsletter; publish the online newsletter; and send the e-newsletter to over 4,800 subscribers.

In June of 2019, I was a founding member of the Rapid Response team and in July, I was an invited member by Dean Kress and Dr. Anne Dorrance to the Rural and Farm Stress Task Force, both multi-disciplinary teams with members from OSU Extension, CFAES, and OARDC. Additionally, I have an active role in the Ohio Ag Manager Team (OAM) helping to connect the topic of farm stress to the other areas of farm management.

Locally, I serve as an active member of the Paulding County Farm Bureau Board. I have served two years as the secretary. I am also an appointed board member for the Paulding County Economic Development (PCED) Board. For the past five years, I have served as the secretary of PCED.

Passing our county levy was also a point of pride for OSU Extension in Paulding County with the opportunity to increase jobs and the increase of a Family and Consumer Science Extension Education for Paulding County.

Plans for Future.

My programming focus for the next five years will be: provide continued leadership as the Paulding Office designs, develops, and moves OSU Extension forward. My plans for teaching and programming are centered on the topics of farm management and soil health issues. I will continue to focus on the farm stress topic. I want to become a certified Mental Health, First Aid Adult trainer. I have a goal to promote and teach this curriculum to at least one office associate/office assistant in all Ohio counties.

Connecting with the Paulding County community on our home horticulture topics and still offering the horticulture weekly hotline is important. Our community needs this vital education to ensure our housing and community needs a beautiful and healthy environment.

There has been a surge of interest in farm management issues about the passing of the farm from one generation to the next. To meet this need, I will co-teach a program at the local and state level that can be scaled to other counties to provide education on the farm stress issues that take place during a farm transition. I want to continue to help in the Farm Stress area by expanding the Agricultural Crisis hotline for more relevant information for Ohio Farmers.

My plans for creative and scholarly work include developing a series of cover crop informational fact sheets starting with the crops of cereal rye, radish, and annual ryegrass. This will fit nicely with the other two factsheets, I developed in 2020. Additionally, I plan to present a poster at the National Midwest Cover Crops Council meeting in 2022.

I will continue to conduct on-farm research to share with local farmers and build my agronomic crop production knowledge. In 2021, I will serve as NACAA award judge at the state level. I am also seeking an international conference beyond the Midwest Cover Crops Council national meeting to present programming or research in the cover crop topic area. I plan to receive the national teaching certification for Mental Health, First Aid – Adult Instructor but I am moving this goal to 2022 due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions.