

December 23, 2022

Agriculture Easement Program and Soil Health

Happy Holidays! On behalf of myself and the Nye Family, we want to wish you and yours a safe, joyous, and most uplifting holiday season. In honor of the holiday tradition, I thought I would provide you with the “12 Days of Christmas” farm style. Here it goes:

On the twelfth day of Christmas a Farmer gave to me... 12 pairs of gloves - 11 pigs a oinking - 10 goats a kidding - 9 scoop shovels - 8 truck tires changing - 7 seed reps calling - 6 bills for paying - 5 old tractors - 4 grain loads hauling - 3 cows mooing - 2 snowplows plowing - and a farmer with no day off.

Now let’s see how long it takes you to get this song out of your head. Merry Christmas everyone!

The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) has announced they will be taking applications for the 2023 Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP).

The LAEPP provides funding to farmland owners for placing an agricultural easement on their property. Monies are issued for up to 75 percent of the appraised value of a farm’s development rights. A payment cap has been set at \$2,000 per acre, with a maximum of \$500,000 per farm. All easement transactions are recorded on the property deed and transfer with the land to successive owners.

According to the Ohio Department of Agriculture website, landowners must apply for Clean Ohio funds through local governments (such as counties, townships, and municipalities), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), or a charitable organization. These entities are referred to as “local sponsors,” and once they are certified, they have the ability to submit applications on a landowner’s behalf to the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) for consideration. Application opportunities are open for a maximum of 90 days. Interested landowners are encouraged to contact a potential local sponsor.

According to the application process, these requirements must be met by the farmland and owner at the time of application submission:

The farm must be enrolled in CAUV and the Agricultural District Program through the county auditor’s office. The farm must be a minimum of 40 acres unless the farm is adjacent to a preserved farm, then it must be a minimum of 25 acres.

NOTE: Farms that are 10-24 acres and also share a substantial border with permanently protected land compatible with agriculture must submit a written request with supporting documentation before eligibility for application can be determined.

The farmland owner must certify that the property does not contain hazardous substances.

The farmland owner must have been in compliance with state and federal agricultural laws for the past five years.

The farmland owner must have possession of the clear title to the applicant property.

The local sponsor must agree to share monitoring and enforcement responsibilities.

A minimum of 25 percent of the points-based appraised value of the agricultural easement must be provided either in cash match by the local sponsor, donation by the landowner, or a combination of donation and cash match.

For more information contact Jason Sneed, Administrator CSWCD, (937) 382-2461 or contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Farmland Preservation office at (614) 728-6238. Application deadline for this program is Friday, January 27, 2023.

As the new year approaches, so do several OSU Extension programs. One of those that I am very proud to be a part of is the 2023 Soil Health Webinar series sponsored by Ohio State University Extension and the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences.

The first of four webinars is scheduled for **Thursday January 5, 2023**. Precipitation & Management and their Effect on Soil Health will be discussed by Dr. Peter Tomlinson, Kansas State University at 8:00 AM. Dr Tomlinson will examine the influence of precipitation and management including cover crops on soil health. CCA credits are available.

To register for this event at go.osu.edu/soilhealthweb

Three other webinars are scheduled for Thursdays, February 2, March 2 and March 30, 2023.

Know your Biologicals and What They Can (or Cannot) Do for You – Dr. Mark Licht, Iowa State University **February 2, at 8:00 AM**. Separate fact from fiction and learn about the types and potential applications of biological crop inputs

Intercropping & Soil Health – Lucas Criswell, No-till Producer, **March 2, at 8:00 AM**. Are you interested in relay cropping on your farm? Lucas Criswell will share his experience with relay cropping on his family's operation in Lewisburg, PA

Soil Health & Water Quality – Dr. Vinayak Shedekar, The Ohio State University & Dr. Will Osterholz, USDA-ARS will present **March 30, at 8:00 AM**. Learn more about the impacts of cover crops and no till systems on Ohio water quality



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