

It takes **Two** to be a good **Neighbor**

Compiled by the Ohio Livestock Coalition

Through hard work, commitment and dedication, Ohio has become one of the richest and most diversified agricultural states in the nation. Ohio's farmers are recognized as leaders for being near the top of the list for egg, dairy, corn, soybean, nursery and greenhouse, fruit and vegetable, tobacco and hog production. Many other commodities, such as sheep and wool, beef cattle, wheat, hay, Christmas trees, maple syrup and turkeys, are also grown and produced on Ohio's farmland.

Be a Good Neighbor

Being a good neighbor means being responsible, courteous and respectful of others. Being respectful of private property and the need for farmers to safeguard their businesses will help preserve the rural landscape that everyone enjoys. Take the initiative to get to know your neighbors. Knowing your neighbors and letting them get to know you will speed the new relationship you will be building. Here are some tips to be a good neighbor.

Rural Residents and Country Dwellers:

- Keep your property neat, clean and trim. The vast majority of farmers and rural residents take pride in keeping their homesites presentable. Be a good neighbor and do your share.
- Keep your pets and other domestic animals restricted to your property. The open land may be a temptation to let your animals run loose, which may cause crop damage and put livestock under stress.
- Keep your trash in a covered, enclosed receptacle. Refuse that blows onto an active farm can cause serious threats to crops, livestock and farm machinery and equipment.
- If you have a question about a farming or agricultural practice, talk to a farmer. As you discuss your needs with them, you will gain an understanding of the agriculture business. The goal is to find satisfying resolutions to any issues that may arise.
- Don't assume that farmland is open and available for your off-road vehicle or even for walking, any more than your own backyard is open for others to access without permission.

Livestock Farmers:

- Avoid applying manure on weekends whenever possible. Ask neighbors to let you know when a fresh application of manure may infringe on entertainment plans. Weekend application of manure should target fields that least expose neighboring residences to odors.
- Take the time to explain what you do and why. For example, spreading manure on cropland recycles nutrients and puts the manure to productive use. Find out what your neighbor does for a profession as well.
- Explain why, at planting and harvest times, farmers must work late into the night and on weekends. If neighbors know there are environmental benefits to applying manure and performing tillage when soil and planting windows are optimal, they may be more understanding.
- Take opportunities to educate. Consider hosting an open house or picnic for this purpose. Invite the neighbors over to see a newborn animal. Explore if there's a way that you can help the neighbors' kids with a class project.
- Be helpful. For example, when it snows, dig out your neighbors if you have a snow plow.
- Share with neighbors that animals require attention and care 24 hours a day, regardless of holidays and weekends.

Agriculture is an Integral Part of Ohio

Ohio's farmers make their living from the land by being good stewards. They protect the environment and conserve precious natural resources by using best management practices. Normal day-to-day operations of an active farm may cause annoyances to neighbors who are not involved in the business of farming.

- Dust, odors, pesticide applications and late-night farming are just a few of the examples of the annoyances you may encounter. Ohio law protects established farm operations that use best management practices from nuisance complaints and lawsuits. It helps enable farmers to responsibly produce the food and fiber to feed, clothe and house our nation and the world.
- Farmers sometimes work around the clock. Often that work involves the use of large farm equipment. Your daytime and nighttime peace and quiet may be occasionally interrupted by common agricultural practices, especially during the spring and fall field work seasons.
- Planting, harvesting and other operations can result in dust, especially during windy and dry weather. That dust can easily invade your home and vehicles.
- Some farmers occasionally burn their ditches and grassy areas to keep them free of weeds or to promote growth of native plants. This burning may create smoke that you could find objectionable.
- Fertilizers and pesticides are used in growing many of Ohio's abundant and healthy crops. These products are applied by licensed applicators who take precautions to properly handle and apply them. Learning more about the safety of these products can be as simple as contacting the Ohio State University Extension office in your county.
- At certain times, farm animals and manure can cause objectionable odors. Farmers use best management practices and best available technologies to limit that odor and follow government guidelines during field application to minimize odor. Manure serves as a valuable source of organic fertilizer and its use lowers dependency on synthetic nutrients.

For more information, contact your local Extension office or your county Farm Bureau office.

