

Ohio Livestock Coalition

*"Assisting Ohio's livestock industry
in expanding its positive contributions"*

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2006 Annual Report & Highlights Programs, Projects, Activities

STRATEGIC PLAN

During 2006, OLC developed and approved a strategic plan that will guide the organization for the next two years. The plan's top two priorities are (1) Increase positive acceptance of livestock farms (2) Engage in the legislative/regulatory process.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Equine Environmental & Liability Awareness Program

In partnership with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, OLC developed the Equine Environmental and Liability Awareness Program that will help horse farm owners, operators and managers, as well as equine enthusiasts, economically address various environmental and potential liability challenges. After one year, the new program is well on its way to achieving its goals and objectives as 13 local training sessions have been held by program partners with 323 participants attending.

Student LEAP

Students enrolled in agricultural education programs now have the opportunity to participate in a cutting-edge curriculum that integrates animal sciences with environmental, ecological and agronomic sciences. The Student Version of LEAP has been made available to all agricultural education programs in Ohio.

The program was created by OSU's departments of Animal Sciences, Human and Community Resource Development, and Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering. It includes 4 CDs and a notebook – a box set consisting of notebook with student version, DVD with presentations, teacher version, and power point presentations packaged together.

The primary goal of Student LEAP is to produce a new generation of highly qualified individuals who can work in fields that interface with production agriculture. These environmental fields would include manure management, air and water quality issues, while linking environmental assurance with agriculture,

food production systems and public health.

The student version of the program's curriculum matches-up with agricultural education standards for plant science, animal science, business operations and environmental science. Twenty-nine benchmarks in the areas of care and management, contaminants, plant nutrition, water, air, land, waste management, emergency response and issue identification/discussion are identified in each of the program's 13 chapters.

LEAP

More than 6,000 livestock producers have participated in the Livestock Environmental Assurance Program (LEAP) that is coordinated and administered by the OLC. LEAP helps farmers economically address environmental challenges on their farm, and is partially funded by a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Soil & Water Conservation.

Nine local LEAP training sessions (Pasture, Level 1) were hosted and conducted by local LEAP program partners – OSU Extension, SWCDs and USDA NRCS. Participation in LEAP helps eligible livestock, dairy and poultry farms, as well as custom manure applicators, meet certified livestock manager (CLM) training criteria as required by the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Livestock Environmental Permitting Program. Various members of OLC's Producer Education Committee serve as instructors for special CLM training sessions.

Manure Management

To help create additional awareness about manure management, particularly during the winter time, a direct-mail piece was developed and distributed to more than 5,600 livestock producers. The piece included a copy of *Ohio's Country Journal* insert regarding winter manure management issues, challenges, and solutions; a pocket size manure management record keeping notebook; and USDA NRCS practice standard 633.

Additionally, more than 1,500 *Ohio's Country Journal* inserts regarding winter manure management issues, challenges and solutions were requested by county SWCD, OSU Extension or USDA NRCS offices/service centers to distribute to livestock producers via newsletters and upcoming meetings. Thus, the project helped create awareness about manure management with more 7,100 livestock producers.

OLC's Producer Education Committee worked to ensure that OSU Extension Bulletin 604, "Ohio Livestock Manure Management Guide," was revised and published.

Most farm and agricultural publications featured an article developed by OLC regarding winter manure management, "Livestock Producers Need to Take Additional Precautions When Applying Manure onto Frozen or Snow Covered Ground."

Advocacy

OLC strongly encourages crop and livestock farmers to have a nutrient management plan, which includes following best management practices

(BMPs), maintaining records and following agronomic rates, to be in compliance with EPA's agriculture stormwater exemption and Ohio's affirmative defense provisions.

Working with the Animal Agriculture Alliance and LEARN Inc., OLC hosted a two-day anti-terrorism training seminar that focused on the threat of international and domestic groups acting against businesses, agriculture in particular, to cause havoc, promote a cause and hurt the infrastructure of the United States. The training program helped seminar registrants ask the right questions that will provide answers on how to protect their business and industry.

LEGISLATIVE-REGULATORY AWARENESS

NPDES Delegation Authority

OLC supported SB 393, which clarified several important issues identified by U.S. EPA's Region 5 office that include amendments necessitated by changes in the federal program since the passage of Senate Bill 141 and House Bill 152. By making these subtle, yet important, changes, the likelihood that US EPA will approve transferring NPDES authority from Ohio EPA to the Ohio Department of Agriculture increases significantly. Additionally, these changes do not weaken the Department's authority to regulate large livestock farms, but in fact sustains its current regulatory program and helps implement the final remaining component of Senate Bill 141.

OLC also supported proposed changes to various sections of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's rules related to regulation of Ohio's large livestock and poultry farms

in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulatory program. A vast majority of the amendments were technical corrections on rules previously adopted by the Department as part of a set of rules enabling it to become the state of Ohio's federal delegated agency for issuing and enforcing NPDES permits as such permits relate to CAFOs.

Proposed NPDES rules

OLC filed comments with US EPA regarding its proposed NPDES rules. The proposed rules are in response to the February 2005 ruling of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in *Waterkeeper Alliance et al. v. EPA*, which invalidated or remanded several key provisions of EPA's 2003 NPDES regulations and Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELGs) for CAFOs.

The Coalition also filed comments with the US EPA regarding Revised Compliance Dates for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Regulation and Effluent Limitation Guidelines for CAFOs.

State permit rules

OLC continues to monitor proposals and actions taken by the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Concentrated Animal Feeding Facilities (CAFF) advisory committee, which provides direction, guidance, counsel and advice to ODA's Livestock Environmental Permitting Program. OLC coordinates support and resources for representatives from the livestock commodity organizations who serve on ODA's CAFF Advisory Committee.

Federal Conservation Programs

OLC continues to actively participate in state USDA-NRCS meetings to help establish priorities and guidelines

regarding Ohio's funding allocations for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Security Program (CSP).

Advocate for the Industry

OLC participated in Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) Forum hosted by US EPA Region 5.

OLC and its membership continue to dialogue with members of Ohio's General Assembly and Ohio's Congressional delegation regarding issues related to growth and expansion of Ohio's livestock, dairy and poultry industry.

Opposed SB 230 that essentially proposed a moratorium on livestock growth and expansion in Ohio.

Opposed HR 503 and S 1915 that proposed to ban the slaughter of horses in the United States. In addition to removing a humane end-of-life option for neglected and abandoned horses while providing no alternative for their care or welfare, both bills would have negatively impacted the entire animal agriculture industry by setting a dangerous precedent by banning a livestock product for reasons other than food safety or public health. The prohibition on processing horses would create a negative precedent for other animal protein segments by legitimizing efforts to end consumption of food derived from any animals. The animal agriculture sector and industry directly provide income to more than 520,000 plant employees in all 50 states, in addition to thousands more farmers, ranchers, contractors, and hundreds of local communities across the country. While OLC members strongly support and

encourage the humane treatment and handling of animals and livestock for both ethical and economic reasons, the legislation proposed to go far beyond humane treatment of animals and mandate unprecedented government authority over the animal agricultural sector without scientific justification.

Legal Precedents

Filed an amicus curae (friend of the court) brief in THORNELL ET AL. v. COOPER FARMS, INC. ET AL regarding the constitutionality of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 903.13.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & INDUSTRY IMAGE

Industry Image Campaign

As a result of a grant awarded by the Ohio Soybean Council and additional funding provided by various members, OLC launched an industry image/public relations campaign in northwest and southwest Ohio.

The campaign included the placement of billboards, print media advertising and radio advertising that featured the tag line, "Ohio Needs Livestock & Poultry Farmers." Mobile billboards were placed in the main parking lot of Farm Science Review and "quick look" fact cards were distributed to all OSU College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Vice President's Luncheon attendees.

The project followed a survey that indicated that many grain farmers and rural residents were not supportive of new or expanding livestock operations. The ads also reminded grain farmers that their number one customer is livestock.

Recognition: Good Neighbors & Environmental Stewards

Barry and Bryan Black, Canal Winchester, and John Wyman, Johnstown, were named the recipients of the Neighbor of the Year Award, a partnership project of the OLC and Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. Regional finalists for the award included Hollis and Lowell Kemp, Bethesda, and John Richardson, Wapakoneta.

The award recognizes the effort neighbors – farmers and non-farming rural residents – have made in Ohio's countryside to positively develop and enhance rural relationships and communications. It also serves to increase awareness about how rural neighbors and residents can adopt and follow suggested practices in a positive manner that benefits their community and neighborhood. Recipients must comply with the OLC's "It Takes Two to be a Good Neighbor" guidelines.

Six family farmers who do an outstanding job of implementing management practices that protect the environment and conserve previous natural resources were presented with Environmental Stewardship Awards:

Beef: David Noll, Somerset, Perry County

Grain: Ricketts Farm, Gene and Johnita Baumgardner, Jeffersonville, Fayette County (formerly of Pickerington, Fairfield County)

Dairy: Olney Taber Farm, Donald Guindon and Mike Britton, Barnesville, Belmont County.

Pork: Dawson Farms, Doug Dawson, Delaware, Delaware County.

Poultry: Kissinger Brothers Poultry, John and Ed Kissinger, Versailles, Darke County.

Sheep: Locust Springs Farm, Richard and the late Dorothy Sechrist, Mount Vernon, Knox County.

Outreach

To help members of Ohio's General Assembly better understand the issues affecting and impacting family farmers who wish to establish a new livestock, dairy or poultry farm, or expand a current facility, OLC hosted and conducted a tour of modern livestock farms for members of the Ohio General Assembly, Ohio's congressional Delegation and their aides.

More than 5,000 copies of the publication "Guidelines for Livestock Producers" have been distributed to elected and appointed local officials, farmers, neighbors, the media and other interested parties to help them develop a better understanding of the types of regulations, permits and plans that may be required of livestock farms. The publication contains valuable information pertaining to water resources, livestock programs, regulatory authority, financial assistance programs, strategies and tips, federal and state incentive programs, resource concerns, contact information and industry terminology.

A display featuring environmental stewardship award recipients was a part of the "Land & Living, Your Link to Life" exhibit at the 2006 Ohio State Fair and Farm Science Review.

Representatives from OLC serve on the Ohio State University (OSU) College of Food, Agriculture & Environmental Sciences' Livestock Industry Task Force, which was created to provide guidance, direction and counsel to the College in helping to identify and prioritize education, outreach and research needs to address issues impacting and affecting Ohio's livestock industry.

The Executive Director's column, "Around Ohio with OLC," is featured in every issue of *Ohio's Country Journal*, which is published 24 times a year, as well as other farm/agricultural publications. The column serves to educate and inform the publications' readers about issues affecting and impacting Ohio's livestock and poultry industry.

Media Relations & Coverage

During the past year, OLC responded to media requests for interviews and responded to the media regarding various articles, editorials, opinions and letters to the editor.

Media reported on the following topics/issues related to OLC programs, projects and activities during 2006: industry image campaign, winter manure management, certified livestock manager training, neighbor relations, equine

environmental and liability awareness program training sessions, LEAP training sessions, national environmental stewardship award winners, annual meeting/industry symposium, legislative farm tour, neighbor of the year, Earth day, environmental stewardship award winners, anti-terrorism training, US EPA NPDES rules, environmental management issues for the equine industry, horse slaughter ban, and the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report.

Animal Care

OLC continues to monitor animal rights activities and activists and create awareness about the impact and affect this issue is having on animal agriculture. Upon request, OLC provides copies of the Ohio Farm Animal Care Commission's (OFACC) guidelines and policy statement to be placed in livestock exhibition barns, show rings and sale rings at independent, county and state fairs in Ohio. The guidelines serve as mandatory rules for all market livestock exhibitors to follow.