

NORTHEAST OHIO AGRI-CULTURE NEWSLETTER

Your Weekly Agriculture Update for
Ashtabula, Portage and Trumbull Counties

June 15, 2021



Hay Season is Here in NE Ohio

In This Issue:

- Ø Higher Temperatures Mean Higher Risk of Spray Drift
- Ø Troubling tick season expected
- Ø Increase in seasonal worker visas a temporary solution for Ohio's food and agricultural labor markets
- Ø Recognize and Mitigate Crop Heat Stress
- Ø OSU Extension – Ashtabula County Participates in Summer Internship Program

Hello Northeast Ohio Counties!

The rain over the last week can only be described as sporadic. Rainfall totals differed drastically even from township to township. There was hay being made around the area with more cut to be made this week before we see more rains around Friday.

Check out the second article on the increase of ticks here in Ohio.

Have a great week!

Lee Beers Trumbull County Extension Educator	Andrew Holden Ashtabula County Extension Educator	Angie Arnold Portage County Extension Educator
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Roughstalk Bluegrass in Cereal Grain and Forage Crops

By Richard Purdin, Taylor Dill, Les Ober, CCA

Source: <https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/18-2021/roughstalk-bluegrass-cereal-grain-and-forage-crops>

There is a new and emerging weed challenging cereal grain and forage producers across the state. Roughstalk Bluegrass has taken root in wheat fields and newly established forage stands. This weed has reached population levels high enough to inhibit the harvest of cereal grains, reduce the quality of forages, and crowd out newly established forages.



What is it?

Roughstalk Bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*) is a perennial cool-season grass that has traditionally been an issue in turfgrass production. This plant can be found growing throughout the Midwest.

Rough Stock Bluegrass has a high level of tolerance to shade and wet conditions or poorly drained soils. This weed can reach heights of 1-3 'tall. Often climbing above winter cereal grains and reducing growth. Most commonly Roughstalk Bluegrass is not noticed by producers until late May or early June when cereal grains are in the boot stage of growth.



How does it spread?

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Roughstalk Bluegrass has two means of reproduction and spread, by stolon's or above grown creeping stems and seed heads. The majority of spread in Cereal grain crops is by seed but for forages and turf stolon's can be the main way this weed can spread.

Identification

Roughstalk Bluegrass is very similar to turf bluegrass species. However, Roughstalk Bluegrass leaves are folded in the bud and have a membranous ligule that can be absent or be very long. "Rough" stalk Bluegrass gets its name from small hairs on the leaf surface and margin. This bluegrass, like turf-type bluegrasses, has a broad collar and a boat-shaped leaf tip. Roughstalk Bluegrass has yellow-green leaves that are shiny. The leaves can turn red during drought and heat stress. The plant goes to seed from mid-May to June, with an open panicle, like Kentucky Bluegrass.

Control and Prevention

Controlling this weed species takes diligence and scouting early in the season. Early April is a good time to start scouting for Roughstalk Bluegrass seedlings. Preventing this weed species from going to seed is very important. Use of grass herbicides as part of your overall weed management program can be successful, including best management practices such as proper seeding rates, planting dates, and fertility programs will also help to keep this weed from getting established in your fields.

Resources

- <https://www.canr.msu.edu/wheat/weeds/Roughstalk%20Bluegrass%20Handout.pdf>
- <https://turf.purdue.edu/roughstalk-bluegrass/>
- https://weedid.missouri.edu/weedinfo.cfm?weed_id=215

Troubling tick season expected

By Alayna DeMartini

Source: <https://cfaes.osu.edu/news/articles/troubling-tick-season-expected>

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Cicadas may be getting a lot of hype these days for their cameo appearance, but one of the state's year-round regulars can cause a whole lot more problems.

Less exotic looking than cicadas and far smaller, ticks are easy to miss—that is, until they bite.

With steadily increasing reports of illnesses from ticks biting people and pets in Ohio, ticks are concerning especially in the late spring and summer. During the warmest months, these tiny creatures are most active and most likely to pass on diseases.



A warmer winter triggered an earlier start this spring, so ticks will be active for more of this year, said Risa Pesapane, a tick researcher and assistant professor with the colleges of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) and Veterinary Medicine (CVM) at The Ohio State University.

"Likely every year will be a bit worse, at least for the next few foreseeable years as ticks continue to expand in Ohio and become established in new counties," Pesapane said.

In some parts of the state, up to 60% of the blacklegged ticks are believed to be carrying Lyme disease, Pesapane said.

Although found in most counties in Ohio, blacklegged ticks, also called deer ticks, are most abundant on the eastern side of the state.

One of the newest ticks in Ohio is the Gulf Coast tick. The Gulf Coast may be a ways away from Ohio, but these ticks can travel on birds and have done so,

heading north and into the Midwest. Last summer, the first established populations of Gulf Coast ticks were found in Hamilton and Butler counties.

Anyone bitten by this tick could experience spotted fever, which typically causes a fever, rash, and headache. A dog bitten by a Gulf Coast tick may not be affected. However, if a dog eats the tick, the dog can experience a fever along with weight loss, decreased appetite, and muscle pain, all symptoms of [canine hepatozoonosis](#). Typically, Gulf Coast ticks prefer grassy fields that may be periodically mowed or are transitioning into forest.

"We don't yet know the extent of their distribution within Ohio. That's an area of active research," Pesapane said.

The Gulf Coast tick is the latest tick species to make a home in Ohio over the past two decades. The others are the blacklegged or deer tick, the lone star tick, and the Asian longhorned tick. Among all ticks in Ohio, the blacklegged tick poses the biggest threat, Pesapane said.

Once bitten by a tick carrying Lyme disease, a person might experience a fever, headache, fatigue, and often, a characteristic skin rash that looks like a bullseye. But about one third of people who get Lyme disease do not have the bullseye rash, Pesapane said.

Left untreated, the infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

Blacklegged ticks frequently hang out under piles of leaves, at the edges of wooded and brushy areas.

"There's this ongoing misconception that people are exposed to ticks away from their homes only in rural or rugged areas. Actually, a lot of people are exposed to ticks in their own neighborhoods or local parks," Pesapane said.

Dogs too are vulnerable. With dogs being furry and ticks being so small, the ticks can go unnoticed.

Last year, 12,260 dogs in Ohio tested positive for Lyme disease, which is significantly higher than the two previous years, Pesapane said.

One of her tick studies is on dogs brought to shelters in southern Ohio. Over a third of the shelter dogs she and her colleagues have screened in the past two years had been exposed to a tickborne disease, with the most common being Lyme disease.

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"The increasing cases of dogs with Lyme disease mirrors the trend in human cases very closely."

For more information on ticks,
visit go.osu.edu/tickfacts and go.osu.edu/beticksmart.

Increase in seasonal worker visas a temporary solution for Ohio's food and agricultural labor markets

By: Dr. Margaret Jodlowski

Source: <https://aede.osu.edu/news/increase-seasonal-worker-visas-temporary-solution-ohio%E2%80%99s-food-and-agricultural-labor-markets>

Access to labor was a concern for Ohio's food and agriculture sectors before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which brought more volatility to the food supply chain. In April 2021, the federal government moved to bolster the available labor supply by increasing the number of available H-2B (non-agricultural) visas.

A new report, Ohio's H-2A and H-2B workforce: An update, by Margaret Jodlowski, Assistant Professor in The College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Department of Agricultural, Environmental & Development Economics, says the move offers a temporary solution but doesn't address a long-term resolution to ongoing labor shortages.

"This increase is far less than the requested number of H-2B visas for the first half of FY2021," says Jodlowski. "Labor supply access is likely to remain a significant area of concern for both agricultural and non-agricultural operations."

H-2A and H-2B are both visa programs that offer U.S. employers the opportunity to hire noncitizens for temporary work in agricultural and non-agricultural positions, respectively. Food processors, including meatpackers and poultry processors, hire workers through the H-2B program rather than H-2A; this is important because while there is no limit on the number of H-2A visas issued, H-2B visas are subject to a cap. In a typical year, meaning one without the disruptions that characterized the pandemic, the cap for H-2B was set at 66,000 workers, split evenly between the two halves of the fiscal year. Demand for these visas routinely exceeds this cap.

The most recently available data on state-level H-2B participation comes from requests made during the first quarter of FY2021: October 2020 through December 2020. Ohio businesses requested 522 H-2B positions during this quarter, of which 413 (79%) were certified.

Jodlowski adds that the true extent to which there is unmet demand for labor on farms or in agricultural processing positions is still unknown.

Even though H-2A positions are not capped, there are many features that make the program unappealing. The process for filing a petition involves a not-insignificant amount of time, or the services of an agency that prepares the materials on behalf of an operation. These requirements mean that larger operations, and especially those with dedicated HR personnel, are more likely to be able to take advantage of these programs and therefore secure the workers they need.

“Many operations were already deterred due to either due to the time or expense involved in filing a petition or hiring an agency to prepare the materials on behalf of an operation.

Jodlowski says measures such as temporarily raising the cap on H-2B workers and providing additional flexibility for workers who are already in the country are valuable, they are, of course, only temporary. As such, it remains imperative that continued progress is made towards a solution, legislative, programmatic, or otherwise, that connects US operations with workers and workers with these critically important jobs.

Recognize and Mitigate Crop Heat Stress

Source: <https://u.osu.edu/vegnetnews/>

Recent conditions in some areas (soaked soil, fog- and dew-filled mornings, high daytime humidity) can give a different impression about the season so far than weather data at <https://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weather1/> and various forecasts. Temperature, rainfall, and other data are collected around the clock at OSU vegetable (and other) research sites in Fremont, Celeryville, Wooster, and Piketon and have been for decades. So far in 2021, these four locations have accumulated less precipitation and more growing degree days (GDD) than their historical averages. Also, climate and weather authorities reported on June 11 that the Upper Midwest, including Ohio, is set to experience hot, droughty conditions. Most agree that a dry year is less problematic than a wet one — provided irrigation is possible. However, it can be difficult for vegetable growers to escape the unwanted effects of excessively high temperatures. A way to separate potentially minor, moderate, and severe heat stress, example effects of moderate-severe heat stress, and main strategies for mitigating heat stress during production are summarized below.

Five Major Factors Influencing Whether Heat Stress is Minor, Moderate, or Severe

1. Crop and variety (sensitivity 1). All crops and varieties have a range of temperature in which they perform best. A crop's genetic past (i.e., heritage/Center of Origin) and level of improvement through breeding matter.

- Individual crops and varieties are thought or proven to be relatively heat tolerant or intolerant.
2. Timing (sensitivity 2). When high temperatures occur in the crop cycle is key. Crop plants can tolerate high temperatures more reliably at some stages than others. Even relatively tolerant varieties can be impacted by temporary spikes in temperature at the “wrong” time.
 3. Intensity. The extent to which actual temperatures exceed the crop’s and variety’s optimal range is important … 5 degrees? 15 degrees?
 4. Duration. The length of time the temperature was consistently above optimal. Short periods of intense stress can be problematic although the effects of prolonged moderate stress typically accumulate.
 5. Mitigation: were steps taken to lessen the stress?

Combinations of these five factors represent common scenarios. For example, for vegetables for which pollination is required, excessively high temperatures lasting only hours can disrupt pollination or trigger flower or fruit drop or interruptions in normal developmental patterns. The result can be loss of a “set” (dip in production) and/or malformed or misshapen units to be harvested (e.g., pods, fruits, roots, stems, leaves, tubers). Longer periods of above-optimal temperatures can speed (e.g., bolting) or delay (e.g., prolonged vegetative state) maturity depending on the crop and when they occur in the crop cycle. Heat stress is also implicated as a contributing factor in fruit ripening and physiological disorders (e.g., blossom-end rot). Above-optimal temperatures can also trigger changes in the chemical composition of plant tissues, possibly affecting the color and/or taste of marketable units. Similarly, prevailing temperatures can influence a crop’s tolerance to typical inputs and protectants. Irrigation and shading are among the most common strategies for mitigating the effects of excessively high temperatures in field and high tunnel vegetable production. Irrigation is essential for the obvious reason that evapotranspiration is the crop’s primary means of cooling itself. A warm period or season calls for the best irrigation (scheduling) practices, not just pouring water on because, as we know, excessive irrigation (soil moisture) *disrupts* water uptake, compounding the heat stress problem. Circumstances allow some growers to shade the crop (e.g., in high tunnels) as they attempt to reduce the temperature around it.

At this time, 2021 has not earned the label as a “hot or heat stress” year. Let’s hope that remains true even as we remain aware of factors contributing to heat stress and ways of addressing it. In addition to proper irrigation, shading (if possible), and careful application of inputs and protectants, consider tracking variety performance closely to aid in variety selection going forward.

OSU Extension – Ashtabula County Participates in Summer Internship Program

By: Jenna Hoyt, Extension Educator & Jesseca Housel, Summer Student Assistant, 4-H

The Ashtabula County OSU Extension Office is once again participating in the Ohio State University Extension Internship Program and welcomes Jesseca Housel as a summer intern. The internship takes place from June 7th through the Ashtabula County Fair, and duties include supporting camp and 4-H youth programming, helping with Camp, the Ashtabula County Fair and project judging, and coordinating this year's 4-H Cloverbud Camp. She will also be attending various meetings and programs throughout the summer.

Jesseca will be graduating this August from Kent State University with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Criminology and Justice Studies. Her focus is towards Justice and Human Relations and how the community can positively influence these areas. She is pursuing a career in the social field and is looking forward to learning how OSU Extension reaches out to various parts of her community. Jesseca was born and raised in Jefferson, Ohio and is excited to give back to her community through this internship.



Jesseca was heavily involved with 4-H in Ashtabula County, where she showed livestock, was the 2018 Fair Queen, served as President to the Jr. Fair Board, a Camp Counselor and current Dean, and is excited to help coordinate events this summer. Jesseca has a passion for working with youth and thrives to teach each of them the power of community and leadership. She is ready to be serving Ashtabula County this summer and is looking forward to learning all about OSU Extension!



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Canner Pressure Testing Drive-Thru Clinic

DATES: Monday June 21, 2021 & Monday August 16, 2021

TIME: 9 AM - 12 PM

LOCATION : PSWCD, 6670 OH-88, Ravenna, OH 44266

Are you preparing to can fresh fruits and vegetables from your garden or local market? Before starting, come out to our canner pressure gauge testing clinic. We will be offering two drive through clinic days this summer.

Details: This is a FREE drive-thru clinic please stay in your car. Be ready to hand your pressure canner to a staff member.

For more information: Scan the QR code, go to
<https://go.osu.edu/cannertestclinic>

or call the Portage County Extension Office at 330-296-6432



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