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The Ohio State University
South Centers include:

- Business Incubator & Training Center
- Enterprise Center
- Manufacturing Small Business Development Center
- Ohio Cooperative Development Center
- OSU Extension South District
- OSU Learning Center South
- Piketon Research & Extension Center
- Small Business Development Center

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—Or—

Visit our website at:
<http://southcenters.osu.edu>

QUESTIONS
ANSWERED

by South Centers Horticulture Research

"What do you think of the disease resistance in the new varieties available?" "Do you think this variety will be more profitable for me than what I am currently growing?" "What research is OSU doing that will help my local growers?" These are examples of the questions that the horticulture program routinely receives from growers and county agents. Using the guidance of our program advisory committee and the questions we have been asked, we evaluate what questions we can effectively answer with the resources we have available and plan our research accordingly. Whenever possible we try to maximize our outreach by doing much of our research on the grower's farm in order to test our hypothesis in a real world setting.



One research project, at Brown's Family Farm in Butler County, evaluated 18 cultivars of fresh market tomato from 7 different sources. Brown's Family Farm provided space and applied pesticides, and the Ohio Vegetable and Small Fruit Research and Development Program provided funding. We evaluated many parameters including early season yield, total yield, and average fruit weight. There was little statistically significant difference in yield across varieties however 'Solar Set R' was a consistent performer during the whole season. The full report is available on our web page at <http://south->

centers.osu.edu/hort/data/2003/fm_tomato03.pdf

Another on-farm research project in Greene County evaluated 17 cultivars of summer squash (zucchini and yellow) from 5 different sources. GroCo Farm provided space, and the Ohio Vegetable and Small Fruit Research and Development Program provided funding. We evaluated many parameters including marketable yield, and percentage of small, medium and large fruit. An

old established variety 'Spineless Beauty' was one of the top performers as was a new numbered variety provided by Sunseeds. The full report is available at <http://south-centers.osu.edu/hort/data/2003/gsquash03.pdf> and will be published in the Midwestern Vegetable Variety Trial Report. The horticulture program also assisted OSU Extension Entomologist

Celeste Welty with a research project on the farm by monitoring beet armyworm traps. The results of the monitoring are available at <http://ipm.osu.edu/traps/03vegrpt.htm>.

In addition to these on-farm trials, we had trials at the South Centers in Piketon and the Enterprise Center in Hillsboro. Plasticulture strawberry production has become an accepted production system in Ohio and we continue to refine the system to make it more profitable for growers. Foliar fertilization has been heavily promoted recently and we investigated the effec-

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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tiveness on tomatoes, watermelon and black raspberry production. We have a heavy focus on bramble production at the South Centers and continue our research in production system practices and cultivar evaluations. With the Extension redistricting that has taken place we have even more opportunity to expand our green industry focus. Last summer, in collaboration with Dr. David Tay of the USDA Ornamentals Germplasm Lab, we evaluated 10 *Cuphea* lines, and in November we began plot preparation for an ornamental crabapple evaluation trial. Current and past research results are available at <http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort/data/results.htm>. In addition to our research programs we are also actively engaged in Extension programming. The Horticulture program is committed to being responsive to the needs of growers throughout the South District and across Ohio and look forward to continuing to serve our clientele by researching practical, timely and grower-centered questions. We know that our opportunities will continue to expand because the more questions we try to answer, the more questions we generate. Please contact Shawn Wright, wright.705@osu.edu for further information on these trials or any other aspect of the South Centers horticulture research program.

Ground Breaking for Endeavor Center Construction



Ground was broken on October 31, 2003, to mark the start of construction on a new building at South Centers to house the Endeavor Center for Business Incubation and Training. Over 100 representatives from area businesses, local economic development agencies, county government, OSU units and residents from throughout southern Ohio attended the event. The new 27,000 square foot facility, scheduled to be up and running in 18 months, is expected to enhance economic development by creating new businesses and jobs.

When completed, the facility will offer 26 spaces of various sizes and types for lease to entrepreneurs. The training wing of the

new building will provide housing for Ohio State's Learning Center South. The new and expanded learning center will include two classrooms with video conferencing technology, a computer laboratory with high speed internet access and conference area to accommodate meetings for various sized training classes and events. The Endeavor Center for Business Incubation space and services are aimed at new and expanding businesses in Pike, Scioto, Ross, Jackson and adjoining counties. Contact Steve Shepherd for further information about the Endeavor Center, shepherd.156@osu.edu.

Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteers in Montgomery County

In October a group of Montgomery County Master Gardeners were recognized for their volunteer efforts and a new class of interns graduated after completing their service requirements. Graduating interns not only passed the fifteen-week course but were also required to complete at least fifty hours of volunteer service to qualify as certified Master Gardeners. Some of them went far beyond the minimum service, and the same is true of many veteran Master Gardeners.

In total during 2003 Master Gardener volunteers gave over 7,000 hours of service to the Montgomery County community. Seven individuals reported over 200 hours of volunteer service, and the list of places they served indicates a variety of interests. Joyce Wolfe was the top worker with an amazing total of 815 hours. That's equivalent to twenty weeks of full-time work, or the lion's share of an entire growing season. And growing is exactly what she does, as the main caretaker and volunteer coordinator for the rock gardens at Cox Arboretum.

Mabel Leyes, spreads her work among Wegerzyn's 2nd Street Market and Gardening Conference committee as well as Washington Township's Volunteers in Parks and Public Beautification Project. Combined with the time she spends with the Master Gardener class committee and public relations for Extension, her total came to 430 hours. Michelle Ruby helps out at Woodland Cemetery and Aullwood Gardens. She also edits the Master Gardener Association's newsletter to bring her total to 370 hours. Judy Perdue volunteered 352 hours at Cox Arboretum, the Washington Township project, and doing 4-H project judging. Others volunteering in excess of 200 hours during 2003 included Buddy Cohen, Yvonne Dunphy and Marlene Trigg. Veteran Master Gardeners are only required to do fifteen hours of service annually, yet this year's total hours exceeded last year's by 2,000 hours. For more information about the Master Gardener program in Montgomery County contact Pete Lane, plane@postoffice.ag.ohio-state.edu.

ORDP Award for Rural Development Leadership

Don McFeeters was recognized for “Outstanding Rural Development Leadership” at the Rural Policy Summit on December 10, 2003, cosponsored by the Ohio Rural Development Partnership and several other statewide development agencies. Ohio Farm Bureau Vice President of Business Services Mike Pullins presented the award plaque to Don to highlight his leadership and service as Director of OSU South Centers for the last seven years. Prior to his work in Ohio, Don served as an extension community development and agricultural educator plus held a number of administrative roles in the University of Vermont Extension System.

The following paraphrases comments made by Mr. Pullins as he introduced Don and announced the award. “Don has built upon the core programs that were centered at OSU Piketon from the start, including research and extension programs in Aquaculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Wood products, Soil and Water resources and Business Development. Under Don’s leadership additional centers and programs have been concentrated within South Centers that have enhanced and expanded the breadth and depth of rural development work carried out there. Don has exhibited entrepreneurial spirit for innovative education and research programs and formed many collaborative partnerships to build and support the programs at OSU South Centers. Under Don’s leadership, South Centers programs provide farmers with information on



diversifying crop and livestock enterprises; small business owners receive assistance with marketing, management and financing alternatives; policy makers and local leaders gain insight into rural development and land use planning issues; and diverse audiences from 4-H youth development members to senior citizens gain new knowledge and make better decisions for themselves, their families and their communities.”

Co-op Center Continues to Provide Technical Assistance

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center (OCDC) recently received a fourth year of grant funding from USDA Rural Development to continue providing technical assistance to groups and cooperatives throughout Ohio. OCDC works in partnership with OSU faculty in the Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics; USDA’s Rural Cooperative Development Specialist and OSU Extension personnel statewide. This team assists groups to explore and form cooperative businesses by providing technical assistance and advisory services, conducting training programs and assisting with information access. OCDC works to strengthen all types of existing agricultural and natural resource-based cooperatives as well as introduce and initiate community infrastructure development and health care cooperatives where needs can be identified.

The Co-op Center is working in collaboration with other personnel at OSU South Centers to explore cooperative ventures. A group of perch growers are meeting with Center personnel and Laura Tiu, Aquaculture Specialist, to explore a cooperative marketing venture. The perch industry in Ohio has developed significantly over the last five years; growers want to expand their operations, but they

want to see further development of potential markets for additional yellow perch production. By organizing a cooperative, the perch growers can expand and explore markets that cannot be served by a single grower, but could be supplied by a cooperative of several perch growers. The Center is working with Dave Boulay, MSBDC, to explore the formation of a cooperative of local trucking companies to obtain affordable liability insurance. Insurance rates have skyrocketed for trucking companies in the last three years and the group is considering a cooperative structure to gain more bargaining power to obtain a reasonable and cost effective liability insurance policy.

OCDC is sponsoring an Appalachian Outlook Conference on March 11, 2004, in partnership with the Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics. The conference will be targeted at the individual producer, as well as the development professional. Topics will include the Changing Demographics in Ohio, Retail Trade Area and Analysis, Media’s Influence on Public Opinion and the Outlook for Horticulture and New Markets: Alternatives on Appalachian Farms. For more information on these and other cooperative activities, contact Travis West at west.222@osu.edu.

Our Mission

We enhance southern Ohio by assisting people with informed decision-making through responsive research, education, entrepreneurial application and collaborative partnerships. We are a leading, respected contributor to the land grant mission of The Ohio State University.

Our Vision

We create an environment where our research based educational resources unite to inspire confident decision-making, by:

- ◆ Fostering objectivity in research and programming
- ◆ Interacting with the public and responding respectfully to their needs and opportunities
- ◆ Utilizing a holistic approach to problem solving and program delivery to strengthen youth, individuals, families and communities
- ◆ Facilitating technology advancement
- ◆ Demonstrating and developing leadership
- ◆ Educating volunteers for community service
- ◆ Helping people achieve excellence

Third Frontier Internships

In partnership with Shawnee State and other local universities, the OSU South Centers will be placing interns in advanced manufacturing and information technology roles within local companies. This effort is made possible through a grant awarded from the Third Frontier Internship Program to the Ohio Business Connection and the Manufacturing Small Business Development Center. This is a three-year project administered by the Ohio Department of Development.

The Third Frontier Internship Program aims to develop a pool of talented workers for Ohio businesses, create student work experiences, and enrich educational experiences of college students. Some of the local businesses that have expressed interest in hosting interns include General Mills, Greenfield Products, McDermott Industries, Pickens Farms, Quality Equipment, Refco, T.L.C. Oilube, and VinylKraft. To learn more about the opportunities, contact Jerry Driggs at driggs.8@osu.edu or David Boulay at boulay.1@osu.edu.



All educational programs conducted by The Ohio State University South Centers are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.