



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Julie Strawser
OSU South Centers
740-289-2071. ext 223

An educational tour of Ohio fish farming operations is being held in Northwest Ohio on Saturday, June 7. Join fellow fish enthusiasts as they tour four unique aquaculture facilities. Visits include the Castalia State Fish Hatchery, Woodside Farms, the OSU Bowling Green Aquaculture Facility and Olive Mae Farms, a unique farm that has ponds and raises other crops totally off the electrical grid.

The event is sponsored by the Ohio Aquaculture Association, a group that promotes the fish farming industry and research in Ohio. The cost is \$45 per person and includes a box lunch. The tour will be held rain or shine, so participants should bring appropriate clothing and boots based on the weather.

The day will begin at 8:00 a.m. at Woodside Farms on State Route 4 in Bellevue, Ohio, where participants will tour their facility of yellow perch, bait fish and gold fish production. A coach bus will take the group to the remaining locations.

The Castalia State Fish Hatchery raises more than 470,000 steelhead and rainbow trout annually at this 90-acre facility. Fish are used to stock Lake Erie tributaries and inland lakes. The highlight of a tour is one of the area's spring-fed ponds.

The bus will continue to Olive Mae Farms in Burgoon, Ohio, to tour their baitfish growing operation. Here you will learn how they operate their multifaceted crop facility using alternative energy.

The stop at OSU's Bowling Green Aquaculture Facility will offer a look into the first known indoor spawning operation of the spotfish shiner, a discovery that may mark the beginnings of a modest baitfish industry for Ohio, and reduce our dependency on imports from other states. The bus will return to Woodside Farms at approximately 4:30 p.m.

According to the 2005 USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service, Ohio ranks number one in sales of yellow perch for food in the U.S., and fourth in terms of largemouth bass sold for sport. Since 1998, there has been a 67% increase in number of fish farms and a 78% increase in total sales in Ohio.

To register for the tour or to get more information, contact Julie Strawser at 800-297-2072 ext. 223 or email strawser.35@osu.edu. Registration deadline is Wednesday, June 5, and is limited to the first 55 paid attendees.