



# The Seedling

## Cultivating Agricultural Sustainability

Agriculture Newsletter of the Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District

Volume 1, Issue 1

### U.S. Congressman Steven LaTourette Visits First Preserved Farmland in Lake County

On July 8th, as the sunshine ripened the red and black raspberries at Rainbow Farms in North Perry, U.S. Congressman Steven LaTourette and 17 other local residents and officials toured Lake County's first preserved farm. The tour was sponsored by The Farmland Center and the Lake Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD).

The tour was designed to promote farmland preservation in Lake County and to give local elected officials who were involved in the preservation of the three North Perry farms a chance to see



Larry Klco left, owner of Rainbows Farms, gives U.S. Congressman LaTourette and other local officials a tour of this year's raspberry field.

what they helped protect. In addition to Congressman LaTourette, other local elected officials in attendance included Lake County Commissioner Dan

Troy, North Perry Village Mayor Tom Williams and three North Perry Village Councilmen. Opening remarks were given by Amalie

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#### Special points of interest:

- *New ways to market farmland preservation*
- *Farmers market now open in Mentor*
- *New study promotes local agriculture*

### 16 Receive Preservation Offers from State Program

2005 marked the completion of the fourth round of the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. This year 168 applicants from 27 counties applied for a portion of

the \$3.1 million in funding available.

Once the Ohio Farmland Preservation Advisory Board had reviewed the applications, 16 farms were selected

for funding. The farms selected represented 3,423 acres farmland that, once completed, will be preserved forever through perpetual easements. The funding

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## Website Highlight



If you happen to be driving through Portage County anytime soon, watch for some catchy signs promoting farmland preservation. The signs may distract your driving but that's the idea according to Fred Maier. The signs are placed about 100 feet apart on well-traveled highways, promoting farmland preservation with funny jingles.

The idea for this type of marketing campaign came for the old Burma-Shave promotions for their

*Old MacDonald had a cow  
Old MacDonald had a pig  
...or once he did!  
Now the yellow 'dozers dig*

shaving cream. Instead of shaving cream, Fred is trying to get people thinking about where their food comes from and how important it is to make sure family farms thrive. Each of the signs that Fred puts out have short original jingles about sav-

ing family farms, keeping open space and promoting local produce. The last sign in each series of jingles says "Save A Farm" and then provides the link to Fred's website at [www.saveafarm.org](http://www.saveafarm.org).

*Carrots from out west  
Greens and all the rest  
Import them? Why, oh?  
Grow 'em in Ohio*

## New Farmers Market Now Open in Mentor



With this year's growing season in full swing, area farmers are preparing to harvest and sell their locally grown produce to Lake County residents. In addition to farmers markets in Willoughby and Painesville, a new market has been opened in

Mentor near the Great Lakes Mall.

The Great Lakes Mall Farmers Market will take place from 3 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays in the southwest parking lot of the mall, near Plaza Boulevard and Route 84 in Mentor. The market will have local vendors selling fresh fruits, vegetables, organic

cheese and fresh baked bread.

To inquire about selling at the market or for other questions, contact the market manager Harvey Mone at (440) 951-1904.

## Vintage Ohio



As the grape crop grows and flourishes in the summer heat, area growers and vineyards prepare for this year's Vintage Ohio. Held annually in Kirtland at the Lake Metroparks Farmpark, the event will take place on August 5th and 6th from 1 to 10 p.m. each day. This year's activities include: souvenir wine glass, live

music, local restaurants & caterers, regional artisans & crafters, Friday night fireworks display, cooking demonstrations, a carry out store, children's entertainment, and a designated driver program.

For more information or to purchase tickets online visit the Ohio Wine Growers online at [www.ohiowines.org/Events](http://www.ohiowines.org/Events)

Advance tickets are \$18. Tickets will also be available at the gate for \$20. The tickets are good for one complimentary wine glass and wine sampling from the event's vendors. Designated driver tickets are available for \$8 which includes unlimited free soft drinks.

# Entrepreneurial Agriculture Report



A new study on the effects of entrepreneurial agriculture in Northeast Ohio was completed and

released this week by The Farmland Center. The report entitled "Entrepreneurial Farming" makes the case for preserving farmland on economic, social and environmental grounds. One of the main focuses of the report is profiling farmers in the region who have made the transition to retail farming from

wholesale agriculture.

While the report promotes farmers markets, it also discussed untapped areas with future potential, such as agritourism and value-added agriculture. The region's prime soils and unique microclimate are also reviewed.

Although the Entrepreneurial Ag report focuses on farmers and their business activities, the goal according to Amalie Lipstreu, program director for the Farmland Center is to reach con-

sumers, economic developers and farmers about the positive impact entrepreneurial agriculture has on a community.

The multiplying effects that local agriculture has on other local businesses, which is often overlooked, is also addressed in this study. For more information about this study or to request a copy, visit The Farmland Center online at

[www.centerforfarmlandpreservation.org](http://www.centerforfarmlandpreservation.org) or by phone at (330) 657-2355

## LaTourette Visit

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Lipstreu from the Farmland Center and Sam Klco from Lake SWCD. Amalie talked about the loss of farmland in Northeast Ohio over the last few decades and cited many reasons why our region needs to promote and protect its valuable farmland.

Sam Klco gave some of the background about the easements, including funding and easement specifics. Sam made it clear that the completion of the three farmland preservation easements would not have been

possible without the cooperation of the Lake County Commissioners, North Perry Village, The Farmland Center, The Lake SWCD, the Lake County Farmland Conservation Taskforce and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The farm tour was given by the owner of Rainbow Farms, Larry Klco. Larry discussed the unique qualities of the preserved farmland which included the micro climate, unique soils and high productivity. While giving the tour Larry stopped by

the irrigation pond to explain how all the cropped fields were currently being watered through an extensive drip irrigation system. Other stops on the farm tour included the strawberry and raspberry fields and a large greenhouse with early tomatoes. As the tour concluded, participants shared bite-sized desserts topped with fresh raspberries grown on the first protected farmland in the county.

## Preservation Offers

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to purchase the development rights on these 16 farms will come from a combination of \$3.1 million from the Clean Ohio Fund and \$1.7 million from the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program.

The 16 farms selected represent the following counties: Clark, Fulton, Greene, Knox,

Madison, Portage, Preble, Seneca, Warren and Wayne. During the first three years of the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, \$12.5 million in state funds and \$3.3 million in federal funds purchased agricultural easements on 50 farms totaling 10,086 acres in 19 counties.

The \$9.7 million remaining in

the Clean Ohio fund that is allocated for farmland preservation will be used to purchase more easements over the next two or three years.

**LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**125 E. Erie St., Painesville, OH 44077**

**•440-350-2730 (main number) •FAX 440-350-2601**

**Toll-free •298-3334 ext. 2730 Madison/Perry**

**•918-2730 Cleveland/Western Lake County**

**•1-800-899-LAKE outside Lake County only**

**Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 am-4:00 pm**

**E-mail: [soil@lakecountyohio.org](mailto:soil@lakecountyohio.org)**

**Web site: [www.lakecountyohio.org/soil](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/soil)**

**STAFF**

PAM BROWN, District Secretary/Treasurer 350-2730

DAN DONALDSON, District Administrator 350-2030

CHAD EDGAR, Urban Stream Specialist 350-2032

SAM KLCO, Agricultural Program Specialist 350-5863

BETH LANDERS, Education/Information Coordinator  
350-2033

BRETT RODSTROM, Storm Water Specialist 350-2092

MATTHEW SCHARVER, Resource Protection Technician  
350-2031

AL BONNIS, District Conservationist, NRCS 350-2730

JOHN NIEDZIALEK, Western Reserve RC&D Coordinator  
350-2034

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All Lake SWCD and USDA programs and services are available without regard to race, age, gender, national origin, political beliefs, color, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

The public is invited to attend Lake SWCD's monthly Board meetings, held the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at 125 East Erie St., Painesville. Meeting announcements appear under the public agenda in the News-Herald and on the District website. Please call in advance to let us know you will be attending.

Lake County Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
125 E. Erie Street  
Painesville, Ohio 44077

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