

March 14, 2017
 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 David Dugan
 OSU Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources
 Adams/Brown/Highland Counties
 Ohio Valley Extension Education Research Area

Is it Too Late to Frost Seed Clover?

It is that time of year. People often ask if it is too late to over seed clover onto pasture or hayfields. The answer is it depends. It depends on how much residue remains on the field. If the field has been rested, and has a good covering of grass that covers the surface, the chances of getting a good result is minimal at best. However, if the field has been over grazed and abused you probably have bare ground. Bare ground would give seed a much better chance of getting good seed to soil contact and eventually a good stand.

If you want to improve your pasture or hayfield with clover and do not feel like your chances are good with frost seeding you may want to look at improving your chances with a no-till drill. This will get the seed to the soil. There are several places around the area that will rent, or lease, a no-till drill. Check with your local farm supply stores and in Adams County the Soil and Water office has a drill available.

Eastern Tent Cats on the Horizon

I recently received a report about overwintered eastern tent caterpillar (ETC) moth eggs than have started hatching in Georgetown (Scott County), KY recently from OSU Extension's Joe Boggs. Larry Hatch has been reporting his egg-hatch observations for around 20 years and this is the earliest he has ever observed this important life-cycle event.

You may recall the Eastern Tent Caterpillars who form web like nest in the forks of several fruit trees, but seem to be fond of Wild Cherry trees in this area. These are not bagworms, but I often get calls thinking they are. Bagworms are most often found on evergreens, and will be a single worm in a cocoon, unlike these Eastern Tent Caterpillars who have mass of worms in the nest.

ETC spends the winter in shiny, blackish-brown egg masses wrapped around twigs on their host plants. A close examination will reveal that the eggs are encased in a structure that resembles bubble-wrap. The accumulated Growing Degree Days (GDD) that predicts ETC egg hatch is 92 and full bloom of Callery pears is a pretty good phenological indicator. Pears are blooming in Greater Cincinnati; however, I have not yet seen egg hatch in our part of the state. We are currently experiencing a dramatic dip in temperatures that's forecast to last through much of next week. I don't know what effect this will have on egg-hatch or the caterpillars.

ETC caterpillars are accomplished and prolific tent-makers producing highly visible silk nests in the forks of branches. They begin producing silk nests immediately upon hatching from eggs. Look closely for the tiny, hairy first instar caterpillars clinging to small, silk nests that surround their egg mass. The caterpillars prefer to feed on trees in the family Rosaceae, particularly those in the genus *Prunus*, such as cherries. They also occasionally feed on ash, birch, maple, and oaks. The caterpillars are covered in short; grayish-white hairs and they have a distinct, unbroken white stripe down their backs.



The caterpillars are capable of causing serious stress to their host trees; newly planted trees are particularly vulnerable. Leaves lost to caterpillar feeding this spring must be replaced using energy stored from last season. Small nests can be eliminated digitally using five-fingered "smash and/or smear" techniques. Less hands-on methods include applications of the naturally occurring bacterium, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), applied to early instar stages, as well as standard insecticides labeled for general caterpillar.

Feed a Farmer in Highland Co.

On March 21, in recognition of National Ag Day, the Highland County Soil and Water office will offer farmers a free breakfast starting at 8:00 a.m. This breakfast is sponsored by Highland County NRCS, FSA and SWCD for farmers in Highland County.

Agriculture is the number one industry in Highland County with 1,412 farms. Highland County was named for the "High lands" between the Scioto and the Little Miami Rivers. It was established in May of 1805 and covers approximately 357,000 acres, with 264,521 acres being used for farmland.

Adams and Brown County Sportsman's Banquet

The Adams and Brown County Sportsman's Annual Banquet is April 8 at the Red Barn Convention in Winchester. There are several levels of membership with the basic membership and one dinner being \$50. The event has several sponsors and more information and tickets call Mike Ranly at 549-2274.

Ohio Tobacco Museum Tickets

There are still a few tickets available for the reverse raffle on April 8 at the Ripley Elementary School to support the Ohio Tobacco Museum. Only 300 tickets will be sold and the last ticket drawn will win \$8000, with every tenth ticket getting \$100. The \$100 ticket includes a meal catered by the Scioto Ribber. For tickets call me at 515-2314 until the last ticket is sold.

Dates to Remember

March 21	Highland Soil and Water Feed a Farmer Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m.
March 21	Farm Bureau Safety program at the Brown Co. Fairgrounds at 9:00 a.m.
March 21	GAP for Tobacco at Southern Hills Board Office at 6:30 p.m.
March 22	GAP for Tobacco at Southern Hills Board Office at 1:00 p.m.
April 8	Ohio Tobacco Museum Fundraiser/Reverse Raffle at Ripley Elem.
April 8	Highland County OSU Extension's Dinner and Auction at the Highland Co. Fairgrounds in the evening.
April 10	Pesticide Testing at the Old Y Restaurant at noon. Must pre-register at http://pested.osu.edu or call 800-282-1955. As always, this test is offered on the second Monday of each month.