WCSM Broadcast Script

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Hello western Ohio, this is Jamie Hampton with the Auglaize County extension office bringing you your western Ohio OSU extension ag update.

Soil testing provides key information about the fertility and nutrient availability of soil. Soil tests for biological and physical characteristics can provide a more complete picture of overall soil health. Gardeners, farmers, and landowners can benefit from soil testing recommendations to optimize nutrient management and prevent under- or over-application of lime and fertilizers. In Ohio, there are several laboratories to choose from, all of which offer a variety of soil tests. There are some important factors to consider. **Consistency** is key to tracking soil fertility or soil health over time. Using the same lab and same analysis enables you to monitor changes in your fields. Although price is important, using cost alone as the selection criteria is a misguided approach. Most labs offer a 'standard' soil testing package, that typically includes pH, cation exchange capacity (CEC), and availability of nutrients such as P, K, Ca, and Mg. The standard package may also include total organic matter and micronutrients. Standard soil testing methods and recommendations vary regionally. For Ohio soils, it is best to choose a lab that follows recommendations from The North Central Regional Research Committee (NCERA-13). Soil-testing laboratories in Ohio are not regulated by state or federal agencies. However, laboratories can enroll in voluntary proficiency programs. Consult with county educators, other farmers, crop consultants. Additional time and effort spent in selecting a quality soil-testing laboratory will pay off. Don't assume the laboratory gives quality test results or has responsive customer service. Save yourself trouble by finding out for sure.

https://u.osu.edu/beef/2023/01/18/consider-feeding-options-for-challenging-conditions/

Lets take a few minutes to discuss feeding hay to livestock. Hay is an input, with that being said we need to use it as efficiently as possible. If you are feeding hay, you ideally don't want to put out too much at a time, limiting availability creates some competition, reduces waste and improves efficiency. Additional hay could be set out for the next feeding or two and fenced off with some temporary electric fence in lots of cases. Some producers in late fall strategically place large round bales out in the field where they will be fed and then move electric fence and ring feeders, if you use them, allocating the hay as needed. Unrolling bales is also an option and almost always better on the soil structure than standing bales. Unrolling bales spreads out the hay, dispersing the livestock more and helping to disperse nutrients and organic matter in the aftermath a lot more evenly. Quality hay is consumed readily and if conditions are good, you may not see much negative impact at all. With this method, you will need to put out one bale at a time. The hay feeding location should be carefully thought out. It should have proper drainage, be close to a water source if possible and not be located where it will cause problems such as along a stream or above or adjacent to a water body. The ideal site should always be where water is available, and nutrients are lacking.

https://bygl.osu.edu/index.php/node/2089

Safety around large trees is important. Cutting heavy branches seems to make sense. But in the long run, the trees become even more hazardous to people and property when trees are topped. It would

seem, removing the weight off the top of a tree, would make the tree safer. Not so. Actually, by topping a tree, you are creating weak crotch angles that can lead to dead tops and broken branches. Also, these large open cuts will almost never close up, leading to trunk rot and insect infestation. In a wooded lot, trees tend to shade each other's bottom branches, which naturally leads to better growth structure and healthier trees. Tree pruning is important to the health of trees and the landscape. Trees that could fall on power lines need to be thinned. Trimming around power lines should be done by experienced professionals that know the hazards and how to avoid them.