Hardin County Extension News Release
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National Ag Week Celebrated March 15-21
By Mark Badertscher

Hardin County – Hardin County agriculture will celebrate agriculture’s role as part of National Ag Week March 15-21 and Ag Day on Wednesday, March 18. The National Ag Day program encourages every American to: Understand how food and fiber products are produced. Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products. Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy. Acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food and fiber industry.

According to the most recent National Agricultural Statistic Service Census for Agriculture, Hardin County had 247,839 acres in cropland in 2012. The most common farm size is 50-179 acres. The most common farmer is male, with an average age of 58.6 years old. Hardin County ranked 4th in Ohio for agricultural sales of crops and livestock, generating $272,452,000 in sales.

Hardin County farmers produced 15,950,000 bushels of corn on 95,000 acres in 2014 with an average yield of 167.9 bushels per acre. Ohio produced a total 610,720,000 bushels of corn statewide this past year with an Ohio yield average of 176 bushels per acre. Most of this corn was sold and used as the main ingredient for livestock feed.

Hardin County farmers produced 610,000 bushels of wheat on 8,880 acres in 2014 with an average yield of 68.7 bushels per acre. Ohio produced a total 40,330,000 bushels of wheat statewide this past year with an Ohio yield average of 74 bushels per acre. Hardin County farmers produce winter wheat, which is planted in the fall and harvested in the summer.
Hardin County farmers produced 6,186,000 bushels of soybeans on 116,400 acres in 2014 with an average yield of 53.1 bushels per acre. Ohio produced a total 254,100,000 bushels of soybeans statewide this past year with an Ohio yield average of 52.5 bushels per acre. These soybeans were mainly used for their oil and as a protein source for livestock feed.

Hardin County cattle producers cared for and fed 14,700 head of cattle and calves in 2013. This ranks Hardin County 30th in Ohio for beef production. There were also 6000 dairy cows producing milk in Hardin County in 2013, ranking our county 13th in Ohio for dairy production.

Hardin County pork producers cared for and sold 319,256 head of hogs in 2012. This ranks Hardin County 3rd in Ohio for number of hogs sold. Most of the swine raised in the county are cared for in environmentally controlled and monitored buildings, which provide for the best in animal care standards.

Hardin County sheep producers cared for and fed 1,200 head of sheep in 2012. This ranks Hardin County 35th in Ohio for sheep production. Lambs raised in Hardin County are mostly sold for meat production, while wool is marketed for the production of clothing and other uses.

Hardin County agriculture is very diverse with fruit and vegetable producers, who produce and sell their products through a local produce auction, local farmer’s markets, and roadside stands. There are also Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) businesses which provide fresh, locally grown products to consumers on a subscription basis. In addition, some fruits and vegetables are grown in both in traditional and hydroponic greenhouses.

The next time you see a Hardin County farmer, thank them for the vital role they play in producing a safe and abundant food supply for our county, state, nation, and world. They care for their crops and animals in an environmentally responsible way so that enough food can be produced to meet the needs of a growing world population.