



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

For Further Information Contact:

Mark Badertscher

Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator

Phone – 419-767-6037

E-Mail – badertscher.4@osu.edu

For Immediate Release – July 9, 2020

Water Quality Extension Associate Services

Hardin County – Six Water Quality Extension Associates are working in northwest Ohio through a three-year grant to provide services in the western Lake Erie basin. The Water Quality Extension Associates are supported through partnerships with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Cargill. Serving Hardin County is Boden Fisher, who also has responsibilities in Hancock and Putnam Counties.

The goal of this program is to engage farmers and their trusted advisors in new production strategies, technologies, and best management practices to improve fertilizer use efficiency and farm profitability while promoting soil health and reducing nutrient and sediment losses within the western Lake Erie basin.

Through education, outreach, and demonstrations highlighting the benefits of practices, it is hoped to encourage widespread practice adoption and sustained practice implementation. In order to achieve the program's goals, help and cooperation is needed with learning about the unique challenges that face area farmers; finding partners interested in adopting new technologies and conservation practices along with understanding their potential water quality, soil health and agronomic benefits; and identifying potential sites for on-farm applied research trials and case studies.

Program staff will provide assistance with soil test interpretation, new tri-state fertilizer

recommendations, and use of On Field Ohio online decision tool for estimating phosphorus losses. They will also provide consultation on nutrient management practices and technology, including in-field and remote sensing technologies, modern planting and fertilizer application equipment, use of drones for field scouting, mobile applications to support field operations, and data storage and retrieval programs.

Providing guidance on best management practice selection and implementation including managing cover crops for success will also be a priority of program staff in addition to understanding manure nutrient content and utilization as a resource while promoting soil health and reducing water quality impacts. Other priorities of work include identifying low return on investment (ROI) areas that may be appropriate for conversion to conservation practices; generating cost-return data for conservation and nutrient management practices; and referral to shared community resources and funding opportunities.

Boden Fisher has a B.S. in Agriculture with a major in Agronomy from The Ohio State University. He has a background in research and retail agriculture, with interest in farm profitability/return on investment, soil retention and health, economic fertilizer use, cropping systems and rotations. Fisher is working in cooperation with the local OSU Extension and NRCS offices. He can be reached at fisher.1466@osu.edu or (419) 523-6294.

Water Quality Extension Associates work as a team with faculty, extension specialists, and educators to bring current information, applied research, and resources to the agricultural community. More information about this new program can be found at <https://waterquality.osu.edu> or by contacting staff directly.

Article written by Mark Badertscher, OSU Extension-Hardin County with information provided by Boden Fisher and OSU Extension.

Photo caption: OSU Extension Water Quality Associate Boden Fisher takes a soil health sample in a Hardin County soybean field.