

**Ohio Vegetable & Small Fruit Research & Development Program**  
**Final Report**  
**2017**

**Project Title:** Increasing the Research Impacts of Integrated Pest Management in Small Fruits in Ohio

**Principal Investigator(s):** Melanie L. Lewis Ivey, Celeste Welty, Gary Gao and Brad Bergefurd

**Phone Number:** 330-263-3849

**Fax:** 330-263-3841

**E-mail:** [ivey.14@osu.edu](mailto:ivey.14@osu.edu)

**Cooperating Institution:** The Ohio State University-Wooster Campus (OARDC), Department of Plant Pathology

**Mailing Address:** 1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, OH 44691

**Other Key Personnel:** Rachel Medina, Department of Plant Pathology

**Other OSU Contributors:** Doug Doohan, Diane Miller, Heping Zhu, Erdal Ozkan, Brad Bergefurd, and Jim Jasinski.

**Why was this project funded?** The goal of this project was to increase the impact of small fruit research in Ohio through the development and publication of a state wide small fruit newsletter that focuses on IPM. Newsletters are an important reinforcement of brand and can keep stakeholders interacting with researchers and other contributors. Newsletters also provide an opportunity to promote dialog and build relationships with stakeholders; as a result, short term impact (in this case IPM awareness and adoption) increases because the information is being delivered to a trusted audience. Printed newsletters also allow us to reach a wider and more diverse audience. For example, the Plain (Amish) and Mennonite communities rely on person-to-person and printed materials to receive information on IPM.

**Project outline:** A name for the newsletter was determined and a logo and template for the newsletter was designed. Project investigators and key personnel met six weeks prior to publishing each quarterly newsletter to identify production and integrated pest management topics and contributors for the newsletter. Time sensitive or urgent information was delivered by email in the form of mini-newsletter. Names of stakeholders interested in receiving the newsletter were collected and either emailed or mailed to interested stakeholders. A survey was developed and delivered to stakeholders to identify stakeholders' perceptions of the newsletters; style, content, functionality, and timing will be assessed. The fourth quarter newsletter presented 2017 OVFSFRDP supported research pertaining to small fruit.

**Take-home messages:** Ohio Fruit News provided small fruit, tree fruit and hop growers throughout Ohio with current and relevant information on fruit and hop production, integrated pest management and, workshops, trainings and conferences on fruit production and pest management. Through OFN, we were able to reach fruit growers in the Plain community. Growers overwhelmingly responded to OFN positively and many gave suggestions for future topics and supported continuation of OFN. OFN will continue to be offered free to email subscribers and through the Fruit Pathology Website. A subscription fee to subsidize printing costs for hard copies is being discussed. Surveys will be distributed at the Ohio Produce Network (January 15-17, 2018) and the Mid-Ohio Growers Meeting (January 11-12, 2018) to collect more responses from growers, especially Plain growers in the state.

### Impacts:

1. Approximately 163 local growers and 258 OSU Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) extension personnel received copies of OFN directly by e-mail. The newsletter was also distributed to Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association (OPGMA) members. Hardcopies of each edition of OFN to date were mailed to 37 Plain growers and 30-50 hardcopies were placed at Yoder's Produce Supplies (Fredricksburg, OH), Mt. Hope Auction (Mt. Hope, OH), Blooming Grove Auction Inc. (Shiloh, OH) and, Coit Road Farmers Market (East Cleveland, OH).
2. Through the OSU Fruit Pathology Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FruitPathology/>) 539 users viewed the first edition of OFN, 155 viewed the second edition and, 268 viewed the third edition. Over 1400 unique visitors have accessed OFN via the OSU Fruit Pathology website (<https://u.osu.edu/fruitpathology/fruit-news-2/>) for all editions. The articles have been accessed by 45 different countries with the top three being USA, Australia, Canada. The OFN page itself has been visited over 4, 112 times indicating that users are visiting the website multiple times and exploring additional resources available on the site. Fifty percent of the viewers use a desktop to access the website and 50% use mobile devices.

### What was discovered?

Through this grant we developed the Ohio Fruit News (OFN) with a custom logo (**Figure 1**). Rachel Medina is the editor of the newsletter and has coordinated the publication and distribution of OFN. The first edition of OFN was published in May, followed by a second edition in July and a third edition in October. In addition to these quarterly publications, three mini-newsletters were published (two in May and one in August).



Figure 1. Ohio Fruit News (OFN) logo.

Multiple OSU Extension Specialists and Extension Educators contributed to articles in the newsletters including: Celeste Welty, Doug Doohan, Melanie Lewis Ivey, Diane Miller, Heping Zhu, Erdal Ozkan, Gary Gao, Brad Bergefurd, and Jim Jasinski. Dr. Dan Olmstead (Cornell University) also contributed an article in the October edition.

While the main focus of OFN is small fruit IPM, tree fruit and hops were also addressed. Topics covered in the newsletter included:

- Preparing for insect pest management in 2017 (Edition 1)
- The addition of NEWA to Ohio (Editions 1 and 3)
- Spring fruit tree bloom update (Edition 1)
- Weed control of berry crops (Edition 1)
- Managing downy and powdery mildew in fruit crops through accurate diagnosis (Edition 2)
- Spotted wing drosophila and stink bug updates (Editions 2 and 3 and mini-newsletters 2 and 3)
- Peach borer management (Edition 2)
- New sprayer technology (Edition 2)
- Tips for plant sample collection and submission (Mini-edition 2)
- Herbicide drift management (Mini-edition 2)
- Tree fruit update (Mini-edition 3)
- Winterizing the hop yard as part of an IPM program (Edition 3)
- Blackberry downy mildew (Edition 3)
- Ohio strawberry season recap (Edition 3)

Each newsletter also included upcoming grower events and links to fruit IPM resources. The newsletter was distributed by email, Facebook, and OSU Fruit Pathology website. Hardcopies of the quarterly editions were also distributed to Plain growers by mail and at local businesses, auctions houses and farmers markets. (Yoder's Produce Supplies, Fredricksburg, Ohio), one farmers market (Coit Road Farmers Market, East Cleveland, Ohio) and three auction houses (Mt. Hope Auction, Mt. Hope, OH; County Line Produce Auction, West Salem, OH and; Chesterhill Produce Auction, Chesterhill, OH).

A survey was conducted to assess the viability of OFN and the usefulness of the content. Data from the survey is provided as a separate document. In summary, only 18 readers responded to the online survey and no responses were collected from Plain growers. The majority of readers (66.7%) were very or extremely satisfied and the remaining 33.3% were somewhat satisfied. None of the readers who responded were unsatisfied with OFN. Most of the readers who responded to the survey thought the content has some relevance to their fruit production and IPM practices and 50% indicated that they changed a production or IPM practice based on information provided in OFN. All the readers indicated that they would like OFN to continue for a second year and will recommend it to other growers. Forty-four percent indicated that they

would like monthly issues of OFN and 38.9% indicated that they would like issues published every other month.