

## **Report on September 2014 “Agricultural Fertilizer Applicator Certification” Programs**

Three educational programs were planned by Ohio State University Extension in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Agriculture after SB 150 legislation became law on August 22, 2014. The programs met the educational requirement established by ODA Director David Daniels through his authority.

The three programs were held in the Western Lake Erie Basin Watershed on September 12 in Archbold (Fulton Co.), September 25 in Findlay (Hancock Co.) and September 26 in Paulding (Paulding Co.). All programs were three hour programs starting at 8:30 am. Agenda topics included, “Nutrient Management Certification Program”, “Link between Phosphorus, Harmful Algal Blooms and Agriculture”, “Soil Testing for Confidence and Adaptive Management”, “Best Management Practices for Phosphorus, Yield and Water Quality Impacts” and “Best Management Practices for Nitrogen, Yield and Water Quality Impacts”.

The total attendance at the sites was 777 with 751 ODA Agricultural Fertilizer Applicator forms submitted to ODA. The attendance balance was government employees, press and other interested parties. Eighty three percent of the participants identified themselves as farmers. They reported farming a total of 522,250 acres.

An 18 question evaluation form was prepared for the meetings and complete by 600 attendees. Highlights of the evaluation questions and responses included:

- Farm field P loss is a significant problem to our waters resources.  
77 percent agreed with the statement, 16 percent were neutral
- I have improved my knowledge about nutrient management  
89 percent agreed with the statement
- I will change my nutrient management practices as a result of this meeting.  
49 percent agreed with the statement, 40 percent neutral

Ohio State University Extension staff involved in the organizing the programs were Greg LaBarge, Steve Prochaska, Harold Watters, Ed Lentz, Sarah Noggle and Eric Richer. Staff assisting with setup and registration on the day of the events was Florian Chirra, Bruce Clevenger, Curtis Young, Jim Hoorman, Steve Lichtensteiger, Glen Arnold, Mark Badertscher, Les Ober, Mimi Rose, Cindy Folck and Kathy Biery. At all sites Ohio Department of Agriculture personnel were on hand to assist is completing paperwork plus Director Daniels or Deputy Director John Schlichter spoke briefly to the audience.

Multiple opportunities to obtain Agricultural Fertilizer Applicator Certification are being planned by Agriculture and Natural Resources, Extension Educators across the state of Ohio with some session as early as December 2014. Participants will be required to pre-registration for these meetings. Information for these sessions can be found at <http://pested.osu.edu/NutrientEducation/> .

