WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for July 29, 2024
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about resiliency, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

Yellow flowered canola fields that expand in all directions seem to kiss the soft blue sky that somehow truly does seem higher and wider, and well, bigger. That's how I would sum up the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, just north of Montana and North Dakota in the US.

Two weeks ago, I traveled there to attend the International Farm Management Association Conference at the University of Saskatchewan. There is a richness in being able to learn from the many perspectives of farmers, farm management business consultants, and university professionals.

The theme was resiliency in agriculture, and I was stretched as I learned and heard statistics and personal stories throughout the four days. Two of the days were spent listening to presentations at the university and two days were tour days of farms and agricultural businesses outside of Saskatoon. We toured several dairy farms with a variety of management approaches utilizing scale, efficiency, and value-added opportunities (like ice cream) to create viable business models. The Canada milk quota system is different from our dairy marketing system here. We also learned about barley and the malting process to produce beer, especially for smaller craft breweries.

In Saskatchewan, farmers plant about the first week of May and hope to begin harvesting by the first week of September. Farms there can use up to seven different crops in rotation including cereal crops (like barley, oats, wheat), oilseed crops (canola, flax) and pulse crops (peas, lentils, chickpeas) among others.

Saskatchewan is home to Nutrien, formerly known as PotashCorp, which is the largest potassium producer in the world. They are also the world's third largest nitrogen producer. The speaker from Nutrien shared that because of the way nitrogen is generated, the cost of natural gas makes up 70-90% of the cost to produce nitrogen.

Government policies and regulations in many other countries limit the amount of nitrogen farmers are allowed to apply. There were so many valuable nuggets of information and experience. Here are some of the quotes I captured from farmers.

- "The paradigm must shift to farm the best land, and farm it better."
- "We should shepherd the use of fertilizer and treat it as precious and powerful."
- "Consider output of grain per input of nitrogen fertilizer."
- "Resentment is a cancer on a family farm."

Another favorite part of the trip was visiting Wanuskewin Heritage Park to learn about the first nations that lived in Canada. On this site, the bison roamed the plains and many different tribes gathered for hunting and other spiritual ceremonies. Just as there are many efforts to restore race relations in the US, there is a desire to make restitution with the indigenous people groups in Canada. It is a complicated situation, but my outside observation is that there is some genuine effort to learn from one another and a desire for a better future for all people in Canada.

And now let's see what else is new from OSU Extension. We had a wonderful freeze drying class las week at Schumaker Farms. I'm looking forward to the next class - a Canning Basics workshop at Schumaker Farms on Wednesday, August 7 from 6:00-7:30 PM. The workshop is free, but registration is required at coshocton.osu.edu.

Also, mark you calendar for a "Tick Talk" program on September 5. That's t-i-c-k t-a-l-k. Confirmed cases of Lyme disease continue to rise in Coshocton County, and black-legged deer tick populations are also increasing. The featured speaker will be Tim McDermott, DVM and Assistant Professor with OSU Extension. This program is a joint effort between Coshocton Public Health District and OSU Extension.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and empower our families, individuals, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!