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Free Webinar Series Offered For Specialty Crop Farmers *Registration is Now Open for January and March 2012 Sessions*

Press Release

Countryside Conservancy and the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) are offering a series of free webinars designed for specialty crop growers. Two webinars have been scheduled and will be offered in January and March. There is no charge to participate, but pre-registration is required.

On January 30, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. the first webinar in the series, **“A Systematic Approach for Increasing Fruit and Vegetable Quality on Your Farm,”** will be presented by Dan Kittredge of the Real Food Campaign. Kittredge will discuss techniques and systems that can be used to increase the quality of fruit and vegetables produced on Ohio farms. Practices such as soil testing, mineral balancing, focusing on seed size and weight, and using brix to monitor crop quality will be shared. To register, go to <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/117344990>.

On Friday, March 9 at 1 p.m., Steve Groff will be presenting the second webinar, **“Effective Cover Cropping Systems for Specialty Crop Farms.”** He will discuss the effectiveness of tillage radish as an annual cover crop alternative. A passionate advocate for sustainable agriculture, including soil conservation, soil health, and food quality, Groff began using no-till practices in the early 1980s. He later began using cover crops as another soil conservation measure, improving his technique over time to plant specific cover crops based on what will be planted the following year. Some of his fields have not been touched by any tillage equipment for over 30 years! To register, go to <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/468533342>.

The third and final webinar in the series will address insect management. Date, time, and details will be announced soon at www.oeffa.org and www.cvcountrieside.org.

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Partial funding for this webinar series is provided through a grant from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the State of Ohio, and the United States Department of Agriculture under the provisions of the Specialty Crop Block Grant.

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About Countryside Conservancy

Countryside Conservancy advances the vision of a Northeast Ohio filled with thriving farming and food entrepreneurs: where farms are viable businesses, farmland is a treasured resource, and local food is commonplace. We support up-and-coming farmers, share innovative land-use and business models, facilitate networking opportunities and advocate community-based agriculture. We connect communities and farmers, provide alternate market choices, and create venues that foster civic engagement through fun and informal education. To learn more visit www.cvcountryside.org.

About OEFFA

The Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1979 and is a coalition of farmers, gardeners, consumers, retailers, researchers, and educators who share a desire to build a healthy, sustainable food system. For more than 30 years, OEFFA has used education, advocacy, and grassroots organizing to promote local and organic food systems, helping farmers and consumers reconnect and together build a sustainable food system, one meal at a time. For more information, go to www.oeffa.org.