



Field Notes for The Week Of

3-27-2023

Do you Know What your Customers Want?

The roller coaster ride of March continues, but April will soon arrive! This past week mother nature was all over the place, from cold to warm, dry to wet, and don't forget about the wind! March has been a windy month creating much work for farmers and landowners, cleaning up the debris left behind. This past week did have a small window of opportunity for farmers to get out in the field, spreading manure, building fences, moving hay, applying fertilizer, and some early season hay seeding was accomplished before a large round of rainfall reached the region late week bringing as much as 2.8 inches of rain. Spring is a busy time on the farm, and it can be challenging to keep up with all the business and then learn about ways to improve the operation. Farming is a business and as a farmer, I have learned that taking time to expand my education and improve the farm business is critical. Lately, I have been working with a few young producers on their business plans and marketing plan. This can be a very daunting task but very necessary. Farmers make up about 1.2% of the country's population and the rest 98.8% of the population can be thought of as customers or consumers. Just as with any business it is important to make the customer happy and satisfied so they will return to continue supporting the business. Farming is no different, this was the main topic at hand this past weekend at the Adams County Cattlemen's annual banquet.

The cattlemen's welcomed Lyda Garcia, OSU Extension Meat science specialist, and professor. The main subject Lyda discussed was the quality and grading of beef meat cuts. Lyda explained that many factors go into meat quality but at the end of the day, there is a consumer for all cuts and quality grades. Some consumers like lean, some like more fat or finish, and some prefer a little bit of both. For this reason, it is important to know your customers wants. Direct marketing off the farm has been growing in popularity for the last 5-10 years but especially after the pandemic. Consumers are continuously wanting to learn more about where their food comes from and how it was treated and raised, in the last National Beef Audit, consumers' concerns over animal welfare and its effects on the environment surpassed flavor and eating quality on the list of importance! Lyda discussed grades of beef cuts and how producers can affect in a positive or negative way by management and learning how to judge animal body condition. At the end of the day learning to communicate with customers and being more mindful of animal conditions will make marketing a positive experience and more lucrative to boot!

