With 20 more acres of exhibit space than last year, the premier outdoor agricultural education and industry trade show on Sept. 18-20 now has more room for showcasing machinery and educational displays.

Experts will be on hand to discuss a range of topics including applying fertilizer, avoiding and dealing with crop diseases, planting cover crops, and tending to cattle and other livestock. “A lot of farm operations are diversifying, so we want to make sure Farm Science Review is as diverse as possible and responsive to all the major commodities including beef and other livestock,” said Nick Zachrich, FSR manager. “This makes our show appealing to all in the agriculture industry—producers of all kinds as well as commercial agricultural businesses.”

Visitors to FSR can peruse 4,000 product lines and more than 700 commercial and educational exhibits, as well as engage in presentations delivered by experts from CFAES at Ohio State.

Improvements to the FSR site at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center near London, Ohio, include changes to the parking and exhibit area for easier access, more stations for drinking water, and more seating in the dining areas.

“The changes we’ve made this year will improve the overall experience of visitors, making it easier for people to get to the offerings they care most about,” Zachrich said.

This year, FSR includes advice on ATV and tractor safety, a Universal Design home and garage with accommodations for older or disabled individuals, a solar energy exhibit, and talks on soil health, water quality, women in agriculture, and other topics.

Advancements in weed control on display include sprayers and a new way to manage weeds. Livestock owners can learn from a new exhibitor if baling their silage is a better option than traditional storage methods.

For high school groups, FSR offers the First Step Program that eases the admission process, provides educational presentations specifically geared toward high school students, and includes an orientation to the event by the London FFA Chapter.

For more information about FSR, visit fsr.osu.edu.

Farm Science Review 2018 offers a larger exhibit area, better access to parking, and a lineup of new farm equipment sure to impress.
With the many new tariffs on U.S. agricultural exports and a federal farm bill under negotiation, there’s a lot to talk about.

It seems fitting that this year’s FSR features three agricultural economics experts discussing “Ohio Agriculture and the Current Policy Environment” on Sept. 18.

The speakers are Ben Brown, manager of the farm management program in CFAES, Ian Sheldon, an agricultural economist and Andersons Chair in Agricultural Marketing, Trade and Policy in CFAES, and Brent Sohngen, an environmental economics professor in CFAES. Joe Cornely, senior director of corporate communications for Ohio Farm Bureau, will moderate the event.

The flurry of announcements of new tariffs on U.S. agricultural exports, including soybeans and corn, have some farmers in Ohio and elsewhere worried. Farmers became concerned about the potential loss of agricultural export markets in April when China announced it would impose a 25 percent tariff on U.S. soybeans, corn, and more than 100 other American products. The move was retaliation for President Donald Trump’s March announcement of a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum that the United States imports from most countries, including China.

Since China is Ohio’s most important soybean export market, a tariff on American soybeans is expected to drive down crop demand and the price Ohio farmers receive for the crop.

“The longer the tariffs remain in place, the bigger effect they will have,” Brown said. “Some farms can make it through, but some are going to fall out at different times depending on their financial situation.”

Another concern for farmers is the terms of the next federal farm bill now being negotiated in Congress. The farm bill includes funding for crop insurance programs and payments to farmers to compensate when commodity prices or revenues dip below a certain level.

Uncertainty about the levels of safety net that will be offered concerns farmers, Brown said. “We like to know what the rules are that we’re going to be playing with,” he said.

Differences between the U.S. Senate’s and House of Representatives’ versions of the federal farm bill are being worked out. A final federal farm bill is at least several weeks away.

The Sept. 18 talk is 10-11 a.m. in the Tobin building at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center near London, Ohio. 

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BEN BROWN
manager of the farm management program in CFAES Resources

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How solar power, biobased markets can benefit your farm

If you want a new source of power on your farm, or you’re interested in exploring new uses for your crops, there’s a place just for you at the FSR Energy Tent.

Inside, you’ll find displays and information on solar energy, anaerobic digestion (which turns food waste and manure, for example, into biogas), and biobased products and materials like those made from soybeans and corn. CFAES experts will be there to talk to and answer your questions. You can even play a Jeopardy-style biobased trivia game and possibly win biobased prizes.

Nick Zachrich, manager of FSR, said the exhibit shows ways to reduce your energy use, lower your energy costs and produce your own renewable energy. It’s helpful information, he said, because electricity use and demand have gone up as farms have become more tech-intensive.

Eric Romich, energy development field specialist with Ohio State University Extension, the CFAES outreach arm, will have a solar panel displayed in the tent, as well as resources and a modeling tool for evaluating projects. You can also check out preliminary results from a study of peak electric demand in agriculture; advanced energy meters, installed on swine and dairy farms, tracked peak demand and power quality for specific motor loads.

Romich said that, overall, the aim is to increase what you know about energy consumption and management so you can make informed decisions on your energy investments.

You’ll find the biobased trivia game in the part of the tent organized by CFAES Ohio Bioproducts Innovation Center (OBIC). The game will test your knowledge of biobased products, materials, careers, and more, said Casey Needham, communications specialist with the center. Biobased products also include, for example, ethanol, bioplastics, and soy-based industrial lubricants.

“We’ll have three iPad kiosks where contestants can choose a fun avatar and buzz in when they think they know the answer,” Needham said. You can compete on all three days. A leaderboard shows the top contestants, and “at the end of FSR, we’ll crown a winner” and award the prizes.

He said the idea is to be both fun and educational—a way to learn about biobased materials and “find out they’re used in more ways than you think.”

Read more about adding solar energy to your farm at go.osu.edu/OnFarmSolar. Learn about OBIC programs and services at bioproducts.osu.edu.
FSR health screenings and safety exhibits

Get free health screenings and other health information during FSR at the McCormick Building, located on the main street, Friday Avenue. In addition, visitors will see examples of how Universal Design concepts help make a home more accessible and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

Garden talks

Interested in learning about how to garden with a disability? How about what fruits are best for your backyard plot? Or want to know more about the basics of beekeeping? These topics and more will be presented at the Utzinger Memorial Garden near Friday Avenue and Market Street during FSR. CFAES and Purdue University experts along with Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteers facilitate these workshops, which also include information on lawn care, soil health, weeds, and companion planting of vegetables and flowers.

Firebaugh building offers updates on ag law, taxes, and more

What’s new in agriculture law, taxes, and management is just one of the many displays housed in the Firebaugh Building at 384 Friday Ave. at FSR. Other topics and information available at the Firebaugh include soil health, climate and weather, women in agriculture, and water quality. In addition, educators from OSU Extension, Purdue University Extension, and Central State University Extension will be on hand to speak with FSR patrons.

The Gwynne is a green oasis at FSR

Visitors can hop a free shuttle to the Gwynne Conservation Area, home to nearly 70 acres of ponds, woods, prairies, and a stream. Called the “Gwynne” for short, it’s the perfect setting for more than 50 free talks and demonstrations on conservation. Topics will range from bees to bats, chainsaw safety to year-round grazing, and harvesting timber to making maple syrup. One demonstration will even feature “electrofishing,” a method scientists use to sample the fish in a lake or stream. The fish—briefly stunned—are netted, counted, measured, and safely released. Read more at fsr.osu.edu/gwynne-conservation-area.

Small Farms Center offers information on how to fund sustainable agriculture

Growers and producers who want to add sustainable agriculture practices to their farm operations can learn how to obtain funding during a presentation offered at the FSR Small Farms Center. OSU Extension educators will provide details on grants awarded from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture in partnership with regional and state coordinators nationwide. Other topics discussed at the Small Farms Center include commercial hops and barley production, agritourism, and food safety basics. The center is located at the corner of Beef Street and Corn Avenue on the FSR grounds.