



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **\$30 Million Available for Farmers Through Governor DeWine's H2Ohio Plan**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Dorothy Pelanda announced today that \$30 million in H2Ohio funding will be available for Ohio farmers in more than a dozen counties beginning next month. The funds will be awarded as part of Governor DeWine’s [H2Ohio plan](#) to reduce agricultural phosphorus runoff and prevent algal blooms in Lake Erie.

“Since announcing the details of my H2Ohio plan in November, we’ve had a great deal of interest from farmers in the Maumee River Watershed who want to do their part to improve the health of Lake Erie,” said Governor DeWine. “H2Ohio will provide farm-by-farm support to help farmers minimize phosphorus runoff while increasing profit over the long-run.”

Farmers living in the following 14 northwest Ohio counties will be eligible to apply for funds at their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts starting on February 1, 2020: Allen, Auglaize, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Mercer, Paulding, Putnam, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood,



H2Ohio will fund investments in 10 [scientifically proven interventions](#) to reduce nutrient runoff from agriculture, which is the primary cause for algal blooms in Lake Erie and elsewhere. Algal blooms can threaten drinking water and impact the health of both people and animals.

“Ohio farmers want to be part of the solution to water quality concerns in our state,” said Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Dorothy Pelanda. “The Ohio Department of Agriculture is excited to work with our

partners to help farmers implement these best practices which is a critical first step toward achieving better water quality through H2Ohio.”

The Ohio Department of Agriculture, in partnership with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative, will host informational meetings next month to outline the application process, explain the H2Ohio certification process, and answer questions. Farmers living in any of the 14 qualifying counties are welcome to attend any of the following meetings.

<b>February 4</b> <b>3 p.m.</b> Owens Comm. College Veterans Hall 30335 Oregon Road Perrysburg	<b>February 5</b> <b>6 p.m.</b> Defiance K of C Hall 111 Elliott Road Defiance	<b>February 18</b> <b>6 p.m.</b> American Legion Hall 601 N. 2 <sup>nd</sup> St. Coldwater	<b>February 27</b> <b>6 p.m.</b> Kissell Community Bldg. 509 N. Main Street West Unity
<b>February 5</b> <b>2 p.m.</b> Delphos Eagles 1600 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Delphos	<b>February 11</b> <b>6 p.m.</b> Auglaize Co. Jr. Fair Bldg. 1001 Fairview Drive Wapakoneta	<b>February 20</b> <b>6 p.m.</b> Fogle Center 815 E. Mathias St. Leipsic	<b>February 28</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> Ohio Northern University McIntosh Center 525 S. Main Street Ada

The H2Ohio phosphorus reduction plan will focus first on reducing runoff into the Maumee River Watershed and Lake Erie but will eventually be offered to other parts of the state.

The \$30 million announced today is part of an overall \$85 million provided by the Ohio General Assembly for H2Ohio in the first year of the biennium. The remaining first-year funds will focus on reducing phosphorus runoff through the creation of wetlands, as well as on improving water quality by preventing lead contamination and addressing failing septic systems.

H2Ohio is a partnership between the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Lake Erie Commission, and [a broad coalition of agriculture, education, research, conservation, and environmental partners](#).

For more information on Governor DeWine’s H2Ohio plan, visit <http://h2.ohio.gov>.