



NEWS RELEASE

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OHIO CONGRESSWOMAN JOYCE BEATTY AND OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE FRANK LAROSE JOINED A HOST OF DIGNITARIES FOR CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION FIRST – OHIO SMALL/AGRI-BUSINESS INFORMATION SUMMIT

*Central State University Extension's Community and Economic Development Program's **Ohio Small/Agri-Business Information Summit**— Designed to Inform and Improve the Lives of Ohio Entrepreneurs, Business Owners, Agri-Businesses, and Farmers!*

WILBERFORCE, OH – Central State University Extension's (CSUE) Community and Economic Development hosted an Ohio Small/Agri-Business Information Summit on Wednesday, October 13, 2021. This live and virtual event included both state and federal leaders in Small Business and Agribusiness Development. **Due to demand, the Summit will re-air on YouTube from Monday, November 8, 2021 through December 31, 2021.** Visit www.centralstate.edu/SmallBusinessSummit to receive the viewing link.

The free Ohio Small/Agri-Business Information Summit took place from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and featured notable guests and speakers including U.S. Congresswoman Joyce Beatty, 3rd District of Ohio, Frank LaRose-Ohio Secretary of State, and Dr. Jack Thomas, President of Central State University.

“The Summit showcases the newest federal, state, and local resources available to agencies and organizations,” said President Thomas. “It educates Ohio small businesses, agri-business, women owned, veteran owned, farmers and citizens and serves as an information platform to assist small and agri-businesses— existing, revised, new and farming learn about financial assistance programs that our resource partners are promoting, to better assist them with their entrepreneurial endeavors post covid.”

Dean of CESTA and Director of 1890 Land-Grant Programs at CSU Michelle Corley Ph.D., stated in her remarks that “we (CSU Extension) are here to serve our stakeholders and are looking forward to building and strengthening these partnerships as we are moving full throttle in our Extension outreach, particularly in this area (small business, farmers, women, minority, and agri-business) in Ohio.”

“The purpose of the Summit was to provide information and to connect small and agri-business owners with federal, state, and local resources that can assist with business growth and sustainability,” says CSUE Community and Economic Development Program Leader Anthony Barwick. “One impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is that it has led to a record number of new business formations across the State of Ohio,” he added.

“While this is a silver lining, it also means that if these businesses are to succeed, they will need vital information, education, and assistance. The Summit helps ensure that our Ohio businesses and farmers are connected with the organizations and resources they will need to grow and thrive.”

Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose agrees. “Despite the headwinds posed by the pandemic, Ohioans continue to create new businesses at a record pace. To help maintain this momentum, the State of Ohio needs to be a collaborative partner with agri-businesses to connect them with the resources available to help them launch, grow and prosper. In hosting a forum to facilitate these discussions, Central State is helping to promote good government, entrepreneurship, and job creation in our communities.”

The Summit also consisted of remarks from organization executives and agency overviews from Summit partners including Michael Rutherford, Business Program Director—Rural Development, USDA who stated, “I was impressed with all the speakers and presentations at the first Ohio Small/Agri-Business Summit hosted by Central State, an important 1890 Land-Grant Institution in Ohio. We look forward to working together in the future.”

A panel discussion/Q&A session was led by CED Extension Educator Ambrose Moses followed by closing remarks by Congresswoman Joyce Beatty who said, “We are stronger together than by ourselves, and when you talk about small businesses and agri-business we have to be in this together. The partners who have worked on this from the state level, academic level, etc., have all been stellar. This Summit is just the beginning of what we are doing in partnership.”

While the live event is over, businesses can still view the Ohio Small/Agri-Business Information Summit by visiting www.centralstate.edu/SmallBusinessSummit.

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CESTA/1890 Land-Grant Programs at CSU.

About Central State University: Central State University, located in Wilberforce, Ohio, is a regionally accredited 1890 Land-Grant University with a 134-year tradition of preparing students from diverse backgrounds and experiences for leadership, research and service. The University, which has been named HBCU of the Year by HBCU Digest, fosters academic excellence within a nurturing environment and provides a strong liberal arts foundation and STEM-Ag curriculum leading to professional careers and advanced studies globally.

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