



NEWS RELEASE

Central State University
College Of Engineering, Science, Technology, And Agriculture
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For Immediate Release

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Women in Agriculture/Women's History Month:
CSU Extension salutes those professionals working in the growing industry

WILBERFORCE, OH – Growing up surrounded by a 1,500-head beef feed lot, thousands of acres of cropland, a grandfather who was an agriculture extension agent and parents who were 50-year 4-H advisors, Central State University Extension (CSUE) Agriculture/Natural Resources Program Leader Dr. Alcinda (Cindy) Folck seemed destined to take her place within the agriculture industry.

“I have an aunt who used to always insist on planting the cornfields because her rows were straight and her brothers’ rows were not,” Folck adds. “I grew up surround by agriculture and women in agriculture and appreciate the contributions of those who have gone before us and those who are coming with youth and enthusiasm.”

Dr. Folck has 30 years of experience professionally in agriculture and oversees the state-wide implementation of agricultural and natural resources programming as well as regional agricultural and natural resources extension educators for CSUE. Programs focus on underserved and underrepresented populations---minorities, refugees, veterans and counties with a high-poverty rate, particularly in the Appalachian region of Ohio.

Prior to joining CSUE in 2019, Folck worked for 18 years for Ohio State University Extension in agriculture and natural resources and before then worked for 10 years with livestock commodity groups and soil and water conservation. She received her undergraduate degree in agricultural communications from Michigan State University, her master's degree and Ph.D. from The Ohio State University in Agricultural and Extension Education.

Communications within the agricultural industry has always been her goal.

“I always wanted to communicate with the consumer or producer about agriculture and feel like I've come full circle with my present position with CSU Extension,” Dr. Folck says. “With CSUE, I get to work with beginning farmers or farmers looking for new methods or alternative crops or livestock. I love educating farmers about sustainability, which encompasses the ability of the farm to provide

environmentally, financially and maintaining quality of life. Education and communications are so closely related; I get to do both at CSU Extension.”

Dr. Folck describes the agricultural industry as vital to all society and one females should consider as a career choice.

“My 10 years in 4-H gave me the confidence and leadership skills to work within a male-dominated industry,” she adds. “I would tell young women starting out in the field to ‘own’ their expertise and don’t diminish their skills. They should ‘own’ they are an expert in agriculture. Women have made great strides in agricultural leadership roles; there is so much opportunity.”

Dr. Folck and her husband, Bob, currently operate a small farm---Folck Family Farm--- raising strawberries, caneberries, peas and sunflowers in Champaign County. The couple also owns Folck Winery that produces fruit wines. Grapes will be added to the farm this coming year to expand the winery business. In the past, they also had a pasture-based farrow-to-finish hog operation.

Dr. Folck and her husband have three grown children carrying on the family’s agricultural traditions.

Their oldest daughter is pursuing her graduate degree in sports turf management and a middle daughter is an engineer with the Bureau of Land Management working with grazing lands. Their son is a student at The Ohio State University studying logistics with a goal of working with international grain shipping.

For more information about any CSUE agriculture or natural resources program, contact Dr. Folck at afolck@CentralState.edu or call (937) 376-6101.

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Cutline(s):

Sidebar:

Women take leadership roles at Central State University’s Extension agricultural program

Wilberforce, Ohio---Central State University Extension (CSUE) Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Leader Dr.Cindy Folck may lead her team working across Ohio, but other females working in leadership roles as educators are also taking their place within the ag industry.

The CSUE agriculture/natural resources team includes:

- Dana Hilfinger, educator for southwestern Ohio;
- Michelle Wallace, educator for northwest Ohio;
- Denise Books, educator for southeast Ohio; and
- Clare Thorn, associate/Seed to Bloom Garden educator.

Other team members include Marc Amante, educator, southwest Ohio; Phil Hollingshead, educator, southeast Ohio; Adam Regula, educator, northeast Ohio; Logan Walter, educator, northeast Ohio; and Brian Kampman, small fruit and vegetable technician.

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About Central State University: Central State University, located in Wilberforce, Ohio, is a regionally accredited 1890 Land-Grant University with a 133-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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