

The University of Toledo and USDA grow a garden

by Michael Schlesinger

- (0:00) Jim Locke works for the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, or ARS, on UT's main campus. He and his agency are responsible for solving problems and creating solutions when it comes to food and agriculture. Think of him as an advocate for nature and nurture.
- (0:16) Jim Locke makes it a point to get his hands dirty every day; that's his job. He works within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, spending a good deal of time in the greenhouse at the top of UT's Wolfe Hall. He strives for the betterment of plants and people.
- (0:32) "Our goal is to be able to control powdery mildew without having to use pesticide sprays." He studies ways to make flora flourish while sparing the environment of harmful pesticides through the use of certain elements, like silicon.
- (0:46) "Silicon has been shown to reduce a lot of stresses in plants, be they from diseases, micronutrient toxicities, insects, and so, we're looking to find ways to introduce that with the idea that would reduce the amount of pesticides that might have to be applied to plants."
- (1:02) While Locke digs deeply into the dirt, he thrives on what his research may reveal and how it can assist in improving quality and safety of agricultural commodities and products.
- (1:13) "We're now looking at essentially what are being developed as biofuel crops, a number of things like grasses and wood products that are, that producers are learning how to grow and process, and we're taking a spin-off on that and looking at these as possible alternatives and additions to the growing media."
- (1:34) And as northwest Ohio places itself in the hub of the green movement with its solar and wind energy usage, those involved in farming and planting know they have a role too.
- (1:45) "Ohio, Northern Ohio is really leading the charge. They're right out there in front with the best of them in looking for alternatives and we're trying to match that in the greenhouse industry to find good sustainable ways to keep this industry going in this area."
- (2:02) To learn much more about the University of Toledo's role with the USDA, log on to our website Toledoonthemove.com for much more information.
- (2:08) Reporting for the Green Report, Michael Schlesinger, NBC-24 News.