

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**MCFB Board**  
7:30 p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the  
Month  
Extension Center

**FARMER Dinner**  
March 24  
Harrisburg

**State  
Legislative  
Conference**  
March 25  
Harrisburg

**MCFB Spring  
Meeting/ Dinner**  
6:30 p.m.  
April 3

**Farm Energy  
Day**  
April 17  
Mercer County  
Extension Center

## Spring Dinner



### “Land as Your Legacy”

Bill Lonsinger will speak about the importance of having a transition plan. Bill is a certified financial planner® with over 30 years experience. He will share how to take control of your legacy. Topics to be covered include: the benefits of a transition plan; who needs one; why you need one and what you need to do to get your plan in place.

Come to the spring dinner to learn more. The dinner is at 6:30 p.m. April 3 at the Leslie N. Firth Education Center, home of Mercer County Extension, 463 N. Perry Highway, Mercer. Mail form is on page 3.

Reservations are \$15 for singles and \$28 per couple. Please make reservations with Sandy Craft, phone or text: 814-715-4244 or email: [craft5@windstream.net](mailto:craft5@windstream.net)

We are pleased to welcome Bill back to Mercer County. Bill is the regional vice president in Pennsylvania for Millennium Brokerage Group.

He has bachelor's degree in human resources from Geneva College, an executive certificate in financial planning from Duquesne University and numerous professional designations. Bill resides in Johnstown with his wife Cara and their three children.

Also, members are reminded to bring items to be given to the Ronald McDonald House in Pittsburgh. They always need paper products and personal care items like toothbrushes, soap, shampoo and conditioner. Sandy Craft will take our donations to the House April 16 along with items from other county Farm Bureaus in western Pennsylvania.

### 2020: An Election Year

Though there are elections every year. This year is generating a lot of excitement. Voters in the 8<sup>th</sup> District will be voting March 17 to fill the seat of former Representative Tedd Nesbit. He was elected as a judge in the Mercer County Court of Common Pleas.

Everyone will have the opportunity to vote for state and federal candidates during the spring primary April 28. Exercise your right to vote in these spring elections.

The general election will be on Nov. 3.

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## Responding to Action Alerts Is Easier For Smartphone Users

It is important for members to respond to the Action Alerts from PFB. This is how our legislators and regulators find out how we as farmers feel about the current issues. Responding is easy by computer but now is also available through a text messaging system.

In less than five minutes, you can send a timely message to members of the General Assembly, Congress or regulatory agencies that could influence important legislation or regulations to the benefit of the agricultural community.

Now, you can receive and respond to Action Alerts via text message. Here's how to sign up:

1. Text "PFB" to 50457.
2. You will receive a text message thanking you for signing up. Just click on the link highlighted in blue to complete the registration.
3. The link will send you to a registration page. Fill out the information and click SAVE.
4. Start receiving and responding to important Action Alerts from PFB, right from your smartphone!

## Report from Women's Leadership Committee

☼ Pick up information about this year's safety contests for youth. The contestants need not be children of members. This year Safety Coloring Page Contest for ages 4 – 6; Safety Poster Contest for ages 7 – 12; and a Safety Photo Contest for ages 13 – 18. (Photo release is required) Contact Sandy or visit the PFB website to get guidelines. Please share these contests with the children that you know and with teachers to use with their students.

☼ This year's book, *Milking Time*, will be available for purchase for \$10 at the spring meeting. The Minnesota Historical Society published the book, so the story depicts a dairy farm from in the 1950s rather than what it is like today. We encourage members to purchase books for their local schools and libraries.

☼ Be watching for information about the Regional Women's Leadership event this summer. This event always attracts outstanding speakers and an opportunity to interact with women in agriculture from all over western Pennsylvania.

☼ Carol Horne has agreed to be a co-chair for the county women's committee. The board is delighted to have someone in the position.

## Make Your Voice Count by Responding to U.S. Census

In April, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin counting every resident of the U.S., a process that occurs every 10 years. The information collected will be used to guide public policy and influence our representation in Harrisburg and Washington for the coming decade.

That's why it's so important that you make sure your voice is counted. The attention and resources our rural communities receive depends greatly on the number of rural residents who respond. Make sure to respond yourself and encourage friends, neighbors and other community members to do the same.

**Watch for your invitation.** Most households—95 percent—will receive an invitation in the mail by April 1, which will include information about how you can answer the Census. Some residents will have their invitations delivered by a Census worker.

**Respond.** All households have the option to respond online, by phone or by mail. Instructions will be on your invitation. Encourage your friends, family and neighbors to respond as well.

**Your response affects representation.** Census data will determine how many seats Pennsylvania holds in Congress and how those districts are drawn.

It will also affect state House and Senate districts. That means that for rural Pennsylvanians to be effectively represented in Harrisburg and Washington, we need to make sure we're counted. (Continued)

**Your response benefits your community.** Census data directs how \$675 billion in federal money is spent each year. Your response is needed to make sure your community receives important investments in areas like infrastructure, health care, education, food security and technology. Learn more about the Census by visiting [pa.gov/Census](http://pa.gov/Census).



**Farm Energy Day**

April 17, 2020

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Includes site tours

The Farm Energy Day will provide an overview of sustainable and renewable energy issues as they related to farmers. This program will cover an array of topics related to energy generation and efficiency. The program will end with a tour of a solar energy installation at the Cary Cooper Farm and a methane digester at Fairview Cheese.

Want to learn more contact Craig Conforti, [cxc1688@psu.edu](mailto:cxc1688@psu.edu) or Ginger Fenton at 724-662-3141, [gdc3@psu.edu](mailto:gdc3@psu.edu) .

To register go to: <https://extension.psu.edu/farm-energy-day>

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**PFB Members Lobby in D.C.**



Eleven Pennsylvania farmers, including Steve Paxton, Mercer County, had an opportunity to strengthen their advocacy skills and advocate for the issues important to Pennsylvania agriculture during a federal affairs trip to Washington, D.C. last month.

**RESERVATIONS for the April 3 Spring Dinner**

*At the Mercer County Extension Center, 463 Perry Highway, Mercer, PA 16137.*

*Reservations are due March 27, 2020*

Make reservations with Sandy Craft, 27 Cassidy Drive, Mercer, PA 16137; phone or text: 814-715-4244 or email: [craft5@windstream.net](mailto:craft5@windstream.net)

Please bring items for the Ronald McDonald House. They need cereal, paper or cleaning products, toiletries, or monetary gifts.

Number of people attending \_\_\_\_\_ Singles — \$15.      Couples — 2 for \$28

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## Contact information for our national and state legislators:

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### **PFB Members Can Save on Farm, Household Items from MKSalesDirect.com**

Shopping for tools, household and garden items or even a new computer? As a Pennsylvania Farm Bureau member, you have access to special savings from MKSalesDirect.com, an online retailer based in Juniata County.

Your PFB membership will save you 15 percent off your order from MKSalesDirect.com and free shipping on orders of \$99 or more. Orders can be shipped to your home or they can be picked up at the company's brick-and-mortar store, Mifflintown Hardware.

According to owner Klaus Sperlich, what sets MKSalesDirect.com apart from other retailers is a huge selection combined with the customer service of a neighborhood business.

"We are a local business," he said. "We are down to earth. We value our customers. You're not just a number."

The online store has more than 140,000 different products available from tools and home improvement items to electronics to farm supplies, housewares, and lawn and garden items. In addition, the store has access to more than 9 million replacement parts for appliances, electronics, building systems and more.

"We can get you what you need," Sperlich said. "We have these resources at our fingertips that we're working with."

And if you can't find what you're looking for, the store is happy to take special orders.

"If it exists, we'll get it for you," Sperlich said.

To take advantage of your Farm Bureau member benefit, use the discount code PFB15 at checkout. Learn more about this benefit and others at [pfb.com/membership/benefits](http://pfb.com/membership/benefits) or by contacting PFB's Member Relations Division at 717-761-2740.

### **Are You Wanting to Create a Business Plan? MSCBS Can Help**

MSC Business Services is available to work with Farm Bureau members to develop business plans that ensure long-term economic viability through a new state grant program that assists with the majority of the cost.

The Pennsylvania Farm Bill adopted last year established up to \$1 million for the Farm Vitality Planning Program. Funding is available for farmers or prospective farmers to create or obtain business plans to enhance the farm's long-term viability, transition ownership of the farm to a family member or another owner or to diversify or expand an existing farm.

Grants are available to cover up to 75 percent of project costs with a maximum grant amount of \$7,500. Funding is first-come, first-served. The application period will close April 3, 2020 or when funding is exhausted.

MSC Business Services is a company affiliated with Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. Learn more about how MSCBS can help you by contacting them at 717-731-3517 or [mscbs@pfb.com](mailto:mscbs@pfb.com).

Mercer County Farm Bureau  
Robert Craft, president  
27 Cassidy Drive  
Mercer, PA 16137

stamp

**Members living in the 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District**

The special election to fill the seat vacated by Rep. Tedd Nesbit  
will be **March 17.**

Be sure to go vote.  
Your vote is important.

