



# Northumberland County Farm Bureau Newsletter

Affiliated with the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau Federation

Volume 2, Issue 4

July 2017

## We welcome you to attend the Northumberland County Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting

Friday, September 8th 2017

Townside Too  
271 Front Street, Northumberland, PA

6:30 P.M.

\$10/Person

Chicken Cordon Blue, Marinated Pork, Green Bean Almandine, Oven Roasted  
Potatoes, Garden Salad, Dessert & Beverage

We look forward to you joining us!

Please RSVP and make checks payable to NCFB on or before Thursday, August 28th,  
2017. Mail your payment to Shirley Snyder at 581 Spruce Hollow Road,  
Northumberland, PA 17857.

Phone contact: Shirley Snyder 570-473-9996

(Please cut and mail to Shirley with your payment)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_

## **Farm Bureau Airs Concerns Over Proposed Biotechnology Rules**

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and more than 100 other agriculture groups across the nation are asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make changes to its proposed overhaul of regulations governing biotechnology to ensure that the rules don't stymie innovation.

In a letter to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, the coalition — which also included American Farm Bureau Federation and other state Farm Bureaus — said the proposed revisions take some bold steps in the right direction but also require significant changes so they do not impose additional barriers.

"The biggest concern for farmers and ranchers is that we obviously want to have confidence in our regulatory system that's based on science, but also fosters an environment of innovation," said Andrew Walmsley, Congressional Relations Director for AFBF. "And if USDA doesn't get this right, the impact would be huge both for competitiveness for U.S. farmers and global markets."

## **Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board Alternates Bill Passes House**

A bill that would give the farming community two alternate members on the state Agricultural Lands Condemnation Board has passed the state House.

House Bill 1518, sponsored by Rep. Martin Causer of McKean County, now heads to the Senate for consideration. The board, which meets as needed to review the condemnation of farmland enrolled in Agriculture Security Areas or farmland preservation for highway projects and other measures, includes secretaries from four state agencies and two farmers. The secretaries can select an alternate member to attend meetings if they're not able to make it but the farmers cannot. The bill would change that, allowing two alternate farmer board members, who would be appointed by the governor with consent of the Senate.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau supports the bill and believes it's important that the farming community has alternates on the board to ensure its voice is heard in the event that one of the farmers on the board is unable to attend a meeting.

## **Membership Season Kicks Off**

Farm Bureau thrives on volunteer members and now is the time of year to renew your own Farm Bureau membership and help attract new members. PFB memberships signed up for in July are good through the end of 2018. That's 18 months of membership for the price of one year.

PFB leaders and staff held a pair of Growing with Farm Bureau Leadership Conferences at the end of June in Clarion and Montour counties to officially kick off membership season and get county Farm Bureau volunteers the information needed to help grow PFB membership.

Please help PFB expand its ranks by getting involved with membership work in your county.

## **Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus Program Reaches Milestone**

Four million pounds of food has gone to Pennsylvanians struggling with hunger through a state program that helps connect farmers' surplus with families in need.

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus Program helps offset the cost of harvesting, producing and packing goods to be donated, making it easier for farmers and processors to see that their surpluses go to good use.

The program, which Pennsylvania Farm Bureau supports, was created in 2010 and first funded in the 2015-2016 state budget. Since then, 78 producers from 39 counties have donated surplus dairy products, produce and meat to food banks, serving 558,000 households statewide, according to the state Department of Agriculture.

## **Agriculture Education Bill Clears State House**

A Pennsylvania Farm Bureau-supported effort to beef up agriculture education in Pennsylvania's public schools has cleared the state House. House Bill 944, by Rep. Mark Keller of Perry County, now heads to the Senate for consideration.

The measure would combine now-separate efforts into a new Commission for Agricultural Education, which would be responsible for developing agricultural educational standards and curriculum, connecting students with careers in agriculture, and help facilitate FFA.

## Regional Organization Director Field Notes

Greetings Farm Families,

I would like to extend a warm Thank You for joining or renewing your farm bureau membership! Your County Farm Bureau Board of Directors has been working very hard to represent the agricultural community in your home area. I would like to highlight keys to Farm Bureau's success.

- Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization with 54 County Farm Bureau's across PA, each with a Board of Directors driving the organization's mission forward from the ground up
- The organization has State and National Legislative Conferences which bring 300+ members to Harrisburg and 180 members to Washington, DC, respectively, to discuss issues with legislators
- Our educational and outreach efforts have reached more than 1 million students through the Mobile Ag Labs over the past 14 years

PFB would also like to feature additional member benefits for your farm family. Please see the PFB website for discount details and ways to save with these new benefits. If you have questions or concerns about member benefits, please contact the Member Relations Division at PA Farm Bureau at 717.761.2740 or visit the website at [www.pfb.com](http://www.pfb.com).

- A \$500 Cash Bonus toward the purchase or lease of any eligible new Ford vehicle or a \$750 Cash Bonus toward the purchase or lease of any eligible new Lincoln vehicle through Dec. 31 (Some customer & eligibility restrictions apply)
- A 10% discount on new or renewed Lancaster Farming subscriptions for Farm Bureau members
- Save up to 46% off 2017 gate admission rates at Hershey Park

Again, on behalf of your County Farm Bureau and Pennsylvania Farm Bureau we thank you for your membership! Please consider encouraging a neighbor or family member to join this leading agricultural organization in Pennsylvania.

Wishing you a safe and productive growing season!

Johanna Rohrer

Regional Organization Director

## Nationwide is on Your Side

Nationwide Insurance began in 1925 as the Farm Bureau Mutual Automobile Insurance Company with the goal of providing quality auto insurance at low rates for Farm Bureau members in Ohio. Nine state Farm Bureaus promote Nationwide and provide discounts to members. The Nationwide agents in Any County are:

### Craig Love

28 N Oak St  
Mount Carmel, PA 17851-1475  
570.339.3900  
[lovec1@nationwide.com](mailto:lovec1@nationwide.com)

### D'Arcy Sampsell

519 Market St 28 Bound Ave  
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## Account Supervisors in Northumberland County

The Accountant Supervisors in Northumberland County – who can handle all of your tax planning/preparation, accounting and business needs –are ready to lend a hand.

### Tim Wirt

570-742-3199

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Call 717.731.3517  
 Email: [FMS@pfb.com](mailto:FMS@pfb.com)      [www.mscls.net](http://www.mscls.net)

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Northumberland County Farm Bureau  
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 Sunbury, PA 17801

**Parts of State Budget Finalized**

The main part of Pennsylvania's 2017-2018 budget is now law although, as of mid-July, funding for some programs — including several important to agriculture — remained in flux.

Gov. Tom Wolf allowed the spending plan, which passed the General Assembly June 30, to become law without his signature as lawmakers continued to hash out a plan to raise the money needed to cover a \$2 billion gap between the spending called for and available revenue.

The plan funds the state Department of Agriculture's general operations at just more than \$31 million, restoring \$1.5 million that officials had said was crucial for programs such as PA Preferred, Farmland Preservation and food inspection. But the outlook for other agriculture priorities was unclear.

The state Senate passed a separate bill fully restoring the state's \$30 million contribution to the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, which plays a critical role in helping farmers produce healthy food, monitor for diseases and train the next generation of Pennsylvania veterinarians. But that bill had not passed the House as of mid-July.

Funding for Penn State Extension also remained in flux as of mid-July. That spending bill passed the Senate but not the House.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau will continue to advocate for agriculture's priorities as the budget talks continue and thanks the grassroots members who sent more than 1,100 emails and letters to lawmakers advocating for programs important to farmers and explaining why supporting agriculture is critical to Pennsylvania's economy and food security.

## **Bill Extending Safe Harbor to Local Taxes Advances**

A Pennsylvania Farm Bureau-supported bill that would make it easier for farmers to estimate local tax payments is advancing in the state Senate.

Now, the state and federal governments allow farms and other businesses to estimate tax payments based on the previous year's tax liability. But local taxing bodies don't give those same "safe harbor" provisions. House Bill 866, sponsored by Rep. George Dunbar of Westmoreland County, would extend those provisions to local taxes.

The bill cleared the Senate Finance Committee and will now be considered by the full chamber. It already passed the House.

PFB believes farmers should be allowed to estimate based on the previous tax year given the difficulty in predicting farm income, which varies widely from year to year and is influenced by market forces, commodity prices and input costs.

## **Noxious Weeds Update Passes Senate Committee**

A Pennsylvania Farm Bureau-supported update to the state laws governing control of noxious weeds has cleared its first hurdle in the state Senate. House Bill 790, by Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski of Luzerne County, was approved by the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and now heads to the full chamber for consideration.

The measure would add to the list of noxious weeds to be controlled several new species that are adversely affecting agriculture. It would also, by default, include weeds that are on the federal list and allow the state Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee to conduct studies to add or delete plants from the list. The bill would also allow beneficial weeds with the potential to become invasive — such as *Miscanthus*, which is used for biofuel — to be cultivated in a controlled environment with a permit for research.

## **Reminder...**

### **County Board Meetings:**

First Monday of every month at 7 P.M.  
Northumberland Conservation District  
Office

### **Northumberland County Fair**

August 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>

### **Time to Apply for YF&R Awards**

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau will be accepting applications throughout the summer for three Young Farmer and Rancher contests: Achievement Award, Excellence in Agriculture Award and Social Media Video Contest. Applications for all three are due by Sept. 1.

The Achievement Award recognizes an individual or couple who has made significant achievements in production agriculture and leadership and who has the majority of their income subject to normal production risks.

The Excellence in Agriculture Award has a similar focus but recognizes an individual or couple who does not have the majority of their income subject to normal production risk.

The Social Media Video Contest invites participants to make a fun, educational video about a farm or agricultural facility that helps promote modern agricultural practices to consumers.

All applicants for the Achievement and Excellence in Agriculture awards and the first four applicants for the Social Media Video Contest will receive \$50 Visa gift cards for their efforts.

To learn more, review contest guidelines or apply, visit [www.pfb.com/award-applications](http://www.pfb.com/award-applications).

Northumberland County Farm Bureau  
903 Boyer Hill Rd  
Sunbury, PA 17801

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