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| *ACFB* | Adams County Farm Bureau Newsletter |
| October, November, December 2024 | Volume 7, Number4 |
| **In This Issue**   * **Scholarship winner** * **Membership Dues** * **ACAP Funding** * **State Budget** * Board of Directors   **Brian Davis**  **President 717-528-4485**  **Debra Stock - Secretary /Treasurer- 717-624-2592**  **Sally Scholle First Vice -President 717-359-9472**  **Earl Stock Second Vice- President 717-476-5920**  **Brock Widerman 717-752-5402**  **Robert Niner 717-334-1937**  **Bob Clowney 717-334-7269**    **Frank Penning 717-465-8115**  **Gene Moose**  **717-334-5684**  **Amy Welker**  **717-580-0562**  **Suzanne Shea**  **717-321-6514**  **District 9 Director**  **Kevin Mountz**  **717-377-0297**  **ROD Ken Sechrist**  **717-409-9170**    **Calendar of Events**  **O**cotber  1. Ag Literacy Week Registration Opens  3- Board Meeting  **1**4- Columbus Day  **2**4- State Policy Dev. Meeting  **3**1 - Halloween  **N**ovember  **3 – Daylight Savings Time Ends**  **5- General Elections**  **7- Board Meeting**  **11- Veterans Day**  **17-19- PFB Annual Meeting**  **28 - Thanksgiving**  **December**  **5- Board Meeting**  **13- Ag Literacy Week Registration Closes**  **25 - Christmas Day**  Service Provider  Quick Reference  **Nationwide Insurance Providers**  **Pabody Insurance**  **Larry Blount**  **147 Carlisle St. Gettysburg**  **717-339-0055**  **Jillian A. Mylet Insurance**  **Jillian Struble**  **147 N. Fourth St.**  **Gettysburg**  **717-334-1161**  **Adamik Insurance Agency**  **5356 Baltimore Pike**  **Littlestown, PA. 17340**  **717-359-7380**    **PFB Health Services**  **1-800-522-2375**  **Check us out of Facebook**  **Visit our web page.**  [**www.pfb.com/adams**](http://www.pfb.com/adams)  **Newsletter Editor**  **Deb Stock**  **359 Brickcrafter Rd**  **New Oxford, PA. 7350**  **717-624-2592**  [**edstock1005@gmail.com**](mailto:edstock1005@gmail.com)    **BE SAFE!**  **Farming is a profession of hope.**  **Brian Brett**  **The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.**    **The greatest mistake you can make is to be continually fearing that you’ll make one**  **Elbert Hubbard**  **Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow; it only sap today of its strength**  **A.J. Cronin**    **Kindness is one thing you can’t give away. It always comes back**  **George Skolsky**  **“You’ll have true happiness when you live to give, not to get.**  **Noa Shaw**  **Living is the art of getting used to what we didn’t expect**  **Eleanor Wood**  **Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day**  **Sally Koch**  **In the face of uncertainty, there is nothing wrong with hope.**  **Bernie Siegel**  **No day in which you learn something is a complete loss**  **David Eddings**  **Love doesn’t make the world go round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile.**  **Franklin Jones**  **The most sincere compliment we can pay is…Attention .**  **Walter Anderson** | Local News First!  Adams County Activity  Adams County’s  SAFEMARK DEALER  John J. Hess  200 Tall Oaks Road  Gettysburg, PA. 17325  717-334-8553  Local farmers working together  Welcome New Members: Elijah Shearer, Wendy Staub, Becca Swope, Joseph Mariano, Dylan Mills, Kathleen Reilly  *Congratulations!*  Congratulation to Samantha Schulteis for winning the Timothy Brown Scholarship. We had three applicants, and sent them to another county to be veiwed. Samantha is the daughter of Winn and Winifred Schulteis in Biglerville. She has studied environmental science as an undergratuate and pursued a Masters of Environmental Management to build upon her commitment. She has worked internships to learn how farmers can seek outside assistance to make their operations more ressilient. She has served as a team project lead on an award-winning NASA Develop project to identify agriculture land vulnerable urban development. She has also worked for Pasa Sustainable Agriculture on a Foodshed Mapping Project to provide Pennsylvania Farmers with new marketing opporttunities. She would like to use her knowledge to help small-scale farmers through a career as an extension agent. She plans to graduate the spring of 2025.  ***State Annual Meeting***  The PFB Annual meeting will be held November 17 through November 19. Adams County sent five policy resolutions to be considered. They are;   1. We recommend funding voluntary energy audits for farmers to help reduce farm energy costs. 2. We recommend offering the pesticide applicator licensing test in Sspanish. 3. We recommend hunters obtain, and carry with them while hunting, written permission from landowners. 4. We recommend owners of EV (electric vehicles) pay an annnual fee based on milelage rather than a flat rate. 5. We recommend accelerating the DEP permitting process for farmers.   The delegates will vote policies submitted by all counties . If you ever have a situation that Farm Bureau may help with, please contact Sally Scholle at 717-359-9472 or another board member to write a possible policy.  The monthly Board Meetings will be held October 3, November 7, and December 5, 2024, at the Ag Center, 670 Old Harrisburg Rd., Gettysburg, PA. 17325, starting at 7:30 pm.  WE are looking for a few good policies  One of Farm Bureau’s most important activities is policy development. Members of each county Farm Bureau submit ideas and suggestions regarding issues that affect the farming community. These ideas are written as resolutions and voted on at the county annual meeting in November. Topics cover a wide range of ag issues including wetland management, wild game, commodities, animal health, vehicles, health and safety, taxes and water quality. If an issue involves ag in any way, it can be developed for policy.  After the county meeting, voting delegates from each county attend the state annual meeting and decide by majority vote which resolutions will be adopted as Pennsylvania Farm Bureau policy. While policies are not laws, they’re supported legislatively by Farm Bureau at either the state or national level.  Ideas, issues and topics can be submitted at any time of the year via anyone on the county Farm Bureau board of directors or to policy chair Sally Scholle at 717-359-9472.  ***Renew Your Membership Now!***  **Reminder:** If you have not renewed your membership already, now is the time to do it! Farm Bureau affects so many areas besides crop and livestock farmers. The policies that are passed and brought to the attention of the Pennsylvania legislators affect so many people from wineries, horse owners, to produce owners and sellers to commodity companies. If you know someone that isn’t but should be a member, ask them to join, the Farm Bureau is there to help all the agricultural community. You can renew your membership by mail or online at PFB.com  **The Hunterstown Ruratins will be hosting their monthly breakfast at the Great Conewago Presbyterian Church at 174 Red Bridge Rd. The dates are November 9 and December 14. Breakfast runs from 7 – 10:30 a.m. and the cost is $9.00 for adults, $4.00 ages 5-12, under 5 is free. This helps support their scholarship program.**  **There is an opening for a Board Member. If you are interested in sitting on the Board, contact President Brian Davis at 717-528-4485.**  **ACAP – Funding Continues**  By now most of you have probably heard about the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program or ACAP. This is state funding for the installation of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP’s). The funding was established in 2022 and appropriated through the Pennsylvania Clean Stream Fund. The Fund received its initial appropriation of $220 million from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Governor Shapiro has extended the program with his 2024-2025 budget by committing $43 million. Through this funding, the State Conservation Commission was able to distribute funds to the County Conservation Districts to be granted to farm operations for conservation practices that minimize erosion and/or nutrient runoff. Think of practices like grass waterways, diversions, terraces, manure storages, barnyard runoff controls and the like. I use the term “granted” because the program runs like other state grant programs. The applicant, in this case a farm operation or landowner, submits to the Conservation District their proposal. This includes a description of the project and a cost estimate. The Conservation District would then review the proposal, rank it, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval or denial of the application. This is a bit different than the traditional way Ag BMP’s have been funded. Depending on the type of project being considered, farmers may find themselves having to work with private sector engineering firms to put together applications. This will be the case for large projects like manure storage systems and barnyard runoff control projects. Engineering assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is not available for projects funded strictly by ACAP.  This funding has some additional differences to other funding sources we use for Ag BMP’s. If the project’s estimated cost exceeds $25,000, prevailing wage rules apply. These rules require a minimum hourly rate be paid to the employees as determined by the type of work they are doing. Prevailing wage projects can often add 40 – 50% to the cost of a project. Projects estimated over $10,000 but less than $250,000 are required to obtain 3 bids. Projects over $250,000 are required to use a sealed bid process. Additional rules and requirements exist depending on the practices being proposed. These rules and requirements make it a challenge for the Conservation District as well as for those seeking financial assistance. We will continue to work closely with NRCS in evaluating potential projects and help navigate the best funding options for operators/landowners. If you are looking for financial assistance for erosion and/or nutrient runoff controls, reach out the Conservation District or NRCS to discuss.  Brian Sneeringer  Agricultural Conservation Technician  Adams County Conservation District  From the State  **Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Applauds Agriculture’s Inclusion in 2024-25 State Budget**   |  | | --- | | On July 11, Governor Shapiro signed the 2024 budget, totaling $47.6 billion. There were substantial investments in agriculture, with the Department of Agriculture’s budget growing nearly 10 percent to $228 million. Overall, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau was supportive of this year's budget and feels there were plenty of victories for the agricultural community.  For more information, read PFB’s press release on the 2024-2025 budget: <https://pfb.com/pennsylvania-farm-bureau-applauds-agricultures-inclusion-in-2024-25-state-budget-several-pfb-priorities-signed-into-law/>  Link to legislative update zoom recording - <https://vimeo.com/990759769?share=copy>  **Highlights**   * **$10 million** for the Agricultural Innovation Grant program, aimed at supporting new technologies and attracting agricultural businesses to maintain Pennsylvania’s leadership in the industry. * **$31 million** to assist poultry farmers affected by the avian influenza crisis, covering testing costs and compensating for flock losses. * More than **$33 million** in combined funding for Penn’s School of Veterinary Medicine (Penn Vet) and Penn Medicine’s Division of Infectious Disease in 2024-25. * **$58 million** for Penn State Ag Research and Extension.   Additionally, there was a significant **$50 million** investment in the Clean Streams Fund to enhance water quality initiatives, including:   * **$35.75 million** (71.5 percent) for the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) * **$6 million** for the Clean Water Procurement Program * **$5 million** for the Nutrient Management Fund * **$2 million** for Stormwater grants and reimbursements * **$1 million** to the Acid Mine Drainage Abatement and Treatment Fund * **$250,000** to the Keystone Tree Restricted Account   **Penn Vet and Penn State Funding**  Penn Vet and Penn State received funding in this year’s budget, but there was no increase for Penn State to account for inflation, and Penn Vet did not receive funding last year. As a result, both institutions may face hard financial decisions in the future. Funding for Penn Vet is crucial for agriculture, as it is the only state-funded veterinary school in Pennsylvania. Similarly, Penn State's lack of increased funding to match inflation may impact their operations and support for agricultural programs.  These investments demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting Pennsylvania’s agricultural industry and ensuring its continued growth and sustainability. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau looks forward to working with state leaders to build on these achievements and further support our farmers and rural communities.  **PA House of Representatives**  Two notable bills received strong bipartisan support and were passed in the House, which we supported. They will now proceed to the Senate for the next phase of the legislative process.  **HB 2357: Pennsylvania Food Bucks Program**   * Establishes the Pennsylvania Food Bucks Program to incentivize Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients to purchase eligible fruits and vegetables. * Creates a restricted account in the General Fund exclusively for this program. * Outlines program administration, including the selection of a grantee to manage the program for a minimum of two years. * Specifies that funding will come from appropriations, donations, and federal revenues.   **HB 2420: Keystone Fresh Act**   * Establishes the Keystone Fresh Program within the Department of Education (PDE) in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (PDA). * Creates the Fresh Schools Grant Program to reimburse school food authorities for purchasing local food for school meals. * Introduces the Keystone Producer Grant Program and the Keystone Assistance Grant Program to support local producers and assist with various agricultural initiatives. * Sets up the Keystone Fresh Fund as a restricted revenue account for program funding from various sources.   **HB 2414**  **Focus**: This bill has been introduced in the House, and a companion bill may be introduced in the Senate. The amendment introduces a new tax credit system for beginning farmers, shifting the emphasis from rentals to sales and ownership of agricultural assets.   * Removal of “or rent”: The amendment now focuses on the sale and ownership of agricultural assets. * Both asset owners and beginning farmers are eligible for a credit of 5% of the lesser of the sale price or fair market value, up to $50,000 per asset or farm. * Application: Requires specific forms from the Department of Agriculture (PDA) and proof of beginning farmer status and agricultural experience. * Includes provisions for use, carryover, carryback, refund, and assignment of the tax credit.   *House Returns September 23rd*  **PA Senate**  **Over-Order Premium (SB 1297)** On July 17, Senator Vogel and Senator Schwank introduced SB 1297 to reform the over-order premium (OOP) process. The bill aims to shift decision-making power from the Milk Board to the House and Senate Ag Committees. This change would allow the Committees to hold hearings, receive stakeholder testimony, and vote on the OOP rate and expiration. If the Committees do not hold a hearing within 30 days of the Milk Board’s decision, the legislature will lose the opportunity to act on the matter.  **PFB’s official statement:**  **Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) sincerely appreciates Senator Vogel and Senator Schwank’s leadership and introduction of legislation to reform the over-order premium. After years of advocating on the issue, we now have specific legislative text to work toward achieving a more effective and equitable over-order premium. While critical questions remain, such as the premium’s specific distribution, the introduction of the bill is an important initial step, and we look forward to working with the General Assembly and the industry collectively on accomplishing meaningful over-order premium reform.**  **Wildlife** - Wildlife damage presents significant challenges, including substantial crop losses and harm to livestock. Rising input costs and decreasing hunter numbers compound these issues. USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) reported Pennsylvania among the top states for wildlife-related crop losses, with over $20 million in corn losses and $15 million in soybean losses in 2017. APHIS estimates annual livestock losses of $232 million due to predators and over $150 million in crop losses from bird damage.  **Legislation:**   * **HB 2106 – HB 2108** by Representative Steele:   + Increases penalties for hunting trespass.   + Streamlines crop damage mitigation programs.   + Requires at least one PA Game Commission member to be a farmer.   + Establishes a system for farmers to contact licensed hunters.   + Repeals the Sunday hunting prohibition.   + Passed the House in June and now awaits Senate Game and Fisheries Committee action. * (**SB 67 (Which now includes SB 1086 – SB 1089))** by Senators Rothman and Laughlin:   + Increases penalties for hunting trespass.   + Streamlines crop damage mitigation programs.   + Governor shall ensure that at least one member of the commission represents the interest of agricultural commodities.   + Establishes a system for farmers to contact licensed hunters.   + Repeals the Sunday hunting prohibition.   + Passed the Senate on July 3 and now awaits action by the House Game and Fisheries Committee.   *Senate Returns September 16th*  **FARMER Committee**  On July 10th, the FARMER Committee met to finalize endorsements for both House and Senate members. The total endorsements include 157 House members and 19 Senate members. | |
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