



Volume 6, Issue 1

www.pfb.com

Winter 2022

President's Message

Hello to All My Fellow Farm Bureau Members:

Goodbye to 2021 and hello 2022! We end 2021 with reflections on what we have accomplished and how we have changed the way we are doing things on the farm and in our personal lives. We have seen consumers concerned about where their food is coming from and are looking to purchase locally supporting many of local farmers. A new endeavor of direct sales to consumers gives us an opportunity to connect with the consumers and tell them about agriculture. Telling our story is important because there are so many myths that farmers need to disprove such as whole milk is still 98% fat free. In Bucks County, we have the ability to provide a lot of what our consumers wish to purchase. There are many selections to help Farm Bureau members achieve more from grassroots legislation to the benefits of being a Farm Bureau member in many of our partners and supporters.

After long struggles, Farm Bureau has gotten some movement on broadband legislation so that all parts of Pennsylvania can have internet access. The insufficiencies of broadband came to light when covid arrived and students had to work from home, but did not have internet access. We are grateful to our legislators in our government for getting broadband legislation passed.

Thank you and may everyone have a safe spring!

Sincerely,

President
Bucks County Farm Bureau

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The Bucks County Farm Bureau meets the 4th Wednesday of the month @ 7:30 p.m.

Plumsteadville Grange, #1738, Route 611, Plumsteadville

FARM-tastic Book Program—2022 Book: "Barn at Night" \$10.00

Past books are also available. Contact Glenda Wismer 215-766-0675 or pamperedchefglenda@gmail.com

Jerry Harris Young Ag Professionals Grant-2022

Applicants must be between ages 20-30, a Bucks County resident, and be actively involved in production agriculture. Applicant and/or family must be members in good standing of the Bucks County Farm Bureau and be committed to a career in production agriculture. Applicants may receive up to two grants of \$2500.00, but not in succeeding years. Preference will be given to first time applicants. Applicants must be present to receive their grant at the Bucks County Annual Meeting in September. This grant is non-renewable. Please contact Mark Scheetz at 215-723-4904 or fivemfarm@verizon.net or Don Buckman at 267-718-0313 or donbuckman81@yahoo.com to request an application.

**There are many agricultural careers, so I encourage you to go to a website put together by the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Ag Promotion Committee and view all the different careers that are in agriculture.
www.agandfoodcareersinpa.com Thank you. Mark A Scheetz, President**

Ryan Herstine—Jerry Harris Memorial Young Ag Professional Grant Recipient



It seems nothing short of miraculous that food comes from the same ground we walk on, drive on, build on. All that soil, underfoot, is precious. Nearly a century ago when soil turned to dust and blew away, people belatedly discovered that soil is a natural resource worth of protection.

Ryan Herstine knows the value of soil. Ryan, 24, is a young farmer: a 2019 graduate of Delaware Valley University with a Bachelor of Science in agribusiness and a minor in crop science. He is the recipient of a 2021 Jerry Harris Young Ag Professional grant from the Bucks County Farm Bureau. (the other 2021 winner is Molly Scheetz of Sellersville).

Working with his father, mother, sister, and brother-in-law on the family's 120 acre Tohickon Meadows Farm in Bedminster Township, Ryan helps raise beef cattle, hay, straw, corn, soybeans, and wheat. He is responsible for soil fertility, crop protection programs, seed variety and selection.

He'll use the grant funds toward a no-till drill. "This will allow us to improve soil health, reduce erosion, and save time, which will allow for higher yields, more sustainability, and higher profitability." The drill, towed behind a tractor, prepares soil for planting. It is used instead of a conventional plow, which loosens and heaps the soil so it becomes an adequate medium for growing seed crops but lacks the complexity of natural soil, a community of microorganisms in an environment of minerals and organic matter.

The no-till drill simply drills a hole without disturbing the soil. "The idea is to try and eliminate tillage from crop management strategy and improve soil structure. It also makes it easier to get cover crops behind the cash crops-after you harvest you can come right behind with the drill, but without one you have to prepare the tillage so you quickly run out of time in the fall."

Ryan grew up farming and his family is strongly committed to it; his older brother, Scott, was a 2012 recipient of the Farm Bureau grant. Ryan is employed full-time as an agricultural conservation technician for the Bucks County Conservation District, and works after hours and on weekends on the farm-an additional 25 to 30 hours a week.

Why did he choose the farming profession? "Well, I was born into it, so it has always been both in my blood and my passion. It is why I pursued a degree in agriculture, as well as having a career in agriculture in addition to farming. I like getting out what I put in, as well as working toward something."

The Herstine farm stands as a counter-example to a long term trend toward Big Ag. As reported in the January 7, 2022 *Washington Post*, "Since 1948, total agricultural output in the United States has more than doubled, while the numbers of self-employed and family farmworkers has dropped by roughly 75 percent." In fact, "two-thirds of the nation's farm output comes from operations with sales above \$1 million per year."

In Bucks County, farmland continues to be converted to residential and commercial use. The soil is gone forever. And loss of farmland makes the remaining land more expensive for new farmers. One way to help keep farming viable is to preserve farmland so it won't be developed. Ryan's grandparents, Leroy and Kathleen Herstine granted conservation easements to the county and state to preserve the family farm in 1998.

Farmers are known for being doers, not talkers. Ryan believes that communicating about farming is key to the future of agriculture. "It is up to the industry, Farm Bureau, and myself to educate the public, conserve our farmland and help solve the many challenges that lie ahead in the agricultural industry." He has reason for optimism. "The number of young people getting into ag, willing to take up that mantle, and not just in Bucks County, bodes well for the future."

Agriculture is not going away; people need to eat. But it is small-holders who preserve the rural character of the countryside, who sustain local food networks: dedicated farmers like Ryan Herstine who care, deeply, about what most people treat like dirt.

Article by: Susan Charkes, Herald

Bruce Weikel Open House-Sunday, May 1, 2022

**718 Callowhill Rd., Perkasie 18944
1:00-4:00 p.m. (rain or shine)**

There will be a variety of farm animals to see and activities for the whole family to participate in. Come out and join us for a fantastic time!



Bucks County Farm Bureau is collecting soda & soup can tabs for charities (Farmers Care Day March 21, 2022). Please give them to a Board member or drop off at a Board meeting or bring them to any Farm Bureau event. We greatly appreciate it. Thank you!

Distinguished Service to Ag board member, Dr. James County Commissioners for and international agriculture.



Award winner and past county Diamond, recognized by Bucks his lifetime work in Pennsylvania

January 27, 2022

A pair of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) supported bills related to tax deductions on small business machinery purchases, as well as tax tools for landowners used to calculate depreciation of natural resources, passed in the state House on Tuesday afternoon and were referred to the Senate's finance committee for consideration.

House Bill 333 would increase the amount that business owners would be able to deduct when purchasing machinery and equipment under Section 179. The federal government recently increased the deduction limit to \$1 million, while the state currently only allows deductions up to \$25,000, which restricts the growth of small businesses.

House Bill 199 would provide two different tax strategies for landowners to use when calculating the depreciation of natural resources on their land, such as oil, gas and timber. Federal tax law currently allows two methods to calculate depreciation – the percent depletion method and the cost depletion method.

Many landowners lack the documentation needed to use the cost depletion method, as a landowner must have established the value of the asset at the time their property was purchased. The IRS gives flexibility to landowners to use either method to calculate depletion. The passage of House Bill 199 would require the state to provide those same tax tools. Both bills are of key importance in terms of farm and small business tax reform within Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) Delegates Approve New Policies on Solar Energy, Farm Conservation Data

CAMP HILL, Pa. – Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members serving as delegates to the [71st Annual Meeting](#) approved a slate of new policies as part of the grassroots process which guides the organization and addresses emerging challenges in the agriculture industry, including solar energy development on farms, improving farmers access to meat processing, finding ways to deal with damage caused by wildlife and better data collection of on-farm conservation efforts.

Included in the slate of solar energy policies was support for programs that encourage the development of solar energy projects to occur on marginal farm ground and a strong recommendation to avoid the placement of solar facilities on the state's most productive farmland. Delegates from the organization's 54 [county Farm Bureaus](#) also supported policy resolutions that will help additional meat processing facilities to open, or expand existing facilities, using state grants and incentives. Farmers also addressed ways to better address wildlife damages, including the creation of a management assistance program for the state's elk herd.

In order to better facilitate conservation efforts, delegates also approved policy that recommends that state and federal agencies coordinate when collecting data and reporting on agricultural conservation practices to better capture the efforts that farmers are already implementing in meeting the water quality goals in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

"These policies will guide our efforts in the year ahead, as we begin to navigate new efforts to expand solar energy production in the state and continue to push for recognition of those conservation practices farmers are already implementing on their farms," said PFB [President Rick Ebert](#). "Our grassroots process is Farm Bureau's greatest strength and it shows how engaged our members are on conservation efforts and responsibly growing new renewable energy sources." Hundreds of farmers from across the state attended Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's 71st Annual Meeting at the [Hershey Lodge](#) from November 15-17, to set policy for the statewide organization on issues affecting farm and rural families.

January 26, 2022

WASHINGTON D.C. – The U.S. Supreme Court announced its decision to hear *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, which challenges the EPA’s overreach of its Clean Water Act jurisdiction. American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) president Zippy Duvall voiced his support of the announcement on Tuesday.

“AFBF is pleased that the Supreme Court has agreed to take up the important issue of what constitutes ‘Waters of the U.S.’ under the Clean Water Act,” Duvall said in a statement. “Farmers and ranchers share the goal of protecting the resources they’re entrusted with, but they shouldn’t need a team of lawyers to farm their land. We hope this case will bring more clarity to water regulations.

“In light of today’s decision, we call on EPA to push pause on its plan to write a new WOTUS rule until it has more guidance on which waters fall under federal jurisdiction. For the past 10 years, Farm Bureau has led the charge on elevating the issue of government overreach in water regulations. The goal is simple, clean water and clear rules.”

The rule proposed back in November by the EPA and Department of the Army would repeal the Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR) and return “waters of the United States” to its pre-2015 definition, which would reinstate the complicated and time-consuming nexus test.

The test determines whether the water in question, either alone or in combination with other similarly situated waters in the region significantly affects the chemical, physical or biological integrity of traditional navigable waters, interstate waters or the territorial seas.

Public hearings on the proposed rule wrapped up last week and a public comment period is now open and will close on Feb. 7. Those interested in submitting comments can do so through the [EPA’s website](#).

Read more on the EPA’s revision of the definition of [WOTUS](#).

The American Farm Bureau Federation will host the 2022 AFBF [YF&R Leadership Conference](#) in Louisville, Kentucky, Feb. 25-28, at the [Omni Louisville Hotel](#).

Highlights of the conference include inspiring speakers, hands-on learning sessions, local tours and the [Collegiate Discussion Meet](#).

“This conference is a great opportunity for young farmers and ranchers to meet and help take their leadership and advocacy to the next level,” said [AFBF President Zippy Duvall](#). “New ideas and energy are so important to the future of farming and Farm Bureau.”

Pennsylvania 2022 Ag Literacy Week focuses on connecting volunteers from the agricultural community to local classrooms to share the story of agriculture. Readers who participate in Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week will have the opportunity to talk about farming and agriculture through the book they read as well as sharing their own story about farming, agriculture programs they are involved with or their connections to agriculture.

[Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation](#) invites all members of Pennsylvania’s agriculture industry to join with us to celebrate 2022 Ag Literacy Week in Pennsylvania. By becoming a reader, you can help us share the story of agriculture and teach students about the importance of agriculture in their daily lives.

This year’s featured book: *My Family’s Soybean Farm*

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Registration Deadline: February 28, 2022

January 6, 2022

Two vacancies on the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners, for District 4 and District 5, were filled recently. Haley J. Sankey, of Tyrone, Blair County, and Allen J. Di Marco, of Allenwood, Lycoming County were appointed to serve.

Sankey was selected to represent District 4, which includes Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset counties.

Di Marco was selected to represent District 5, which includes Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan, Tioga and Union counties.

Commissioners are selected from eight geographic areas to provide representation throughout Pennsylvania. Sankey and Di Marco were appointed on Dec. 15. Each will serve four-year terms.

With the new appointments, seven of the eight seats on the Board of Commissioners are filled. But the initial four-year terms of District 6 Commissioner Mitrick and District 7 Commissioner Knick have already expired, and both commissioners are remaining on the board through six-month extensions that are set to expire prior to the board's next scheduled meeting on Jan. 28 and 29. Further action must take place for the board to have a quorum to conduct official business in January.

December 22, 2021

[Kentucky Farm Bureau](#) has launched its [KFB for Kentucky Relief Fund](#) to aid the families and communities beginning the long process of rebuilding after devastation from the recent tornado outbreak.

To make a tax-deductible contribution online, please [follow this link](#)

Additionally, tax-deductible contributions can be made by mailing a check to:

Drew Graham, Executive Vice President
Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation
9201 Bunsen Parkway
Louisville, KY 40220

Checks should be made payable to "Kentucky Farm Bureau Education Foundation" and denoted "KFB for Kentucky Relief Fund" on the memo line. In the event any of these funds go unused, KFB may also work with the Red Cross to ensure your donations continue to support worthy causes.

Note: Bucks County Farm Bureau donated \$500.00 in January 2022 to Kentucky Relief Fund.

January 20, 2022

USDA announced that Heidi Secord has been appointed as Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director for Pennsylvania. The news came as part of an announcement that introduced a total of eight new appointees to regional USDA positions around the country.

“As we work to build a better America, we need talented and experienced staff working in our state offices,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “We are thrilled to welcome these dedicated individuals to USDA at such an important time in the Biden-Harris administration.”

Heidi Secord has over 26 years of farming and regenerative agriculture experience as the owner of the Josie Porter Farm in northeastern Pennsylvania. She currently serves as a farmer member on the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission, which she was appointed to by Governor Tom Wolf. Secord previously served as the State President for the Pennsylvania Farmers Union and sat on the National Farmers Union Board of Directors. She has engaged in agricultural policy committee work with multiple organizations, including PASA Sustainable Agriculture Board, Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations (PSCFO), All Together Now Pennsylvania, and the Monroe County Conservation District. Earlier in her career, Secord served as a Peace Corps volunteer for three years in Mali and Lesotho. She graduated with a degree in Business Management from the University of Rhode Island.

FSA State Executive Directors oversee Farm Service Agency operations and agricultural policy implementation in the state. Each State Executive Director works with the State Committee to administer FSA programs and County office operations, develops and maintains stakeholder relationships with customers and other agencies and governments.

January 11, 2022

Farmers from around the country gathered on Jan. 10 in Atlanta for the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention. During the closing general session, members heard from President Biden and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

Appearing via a prerecorded message, President Biden told farmers that they deserved affordable seed and other inputs, fair prices in livestock and other markets, timely exports of products around the world, the right to repair equipment. He also talked about his administration’s plan to expand meat processing capacity.

Secretary Vilsack appeared live and gave remarks that focused on trade, including increased trade deal enforcement, rural broadband, and investments in livestock processing.

Vilsack also said that, as part of a number of new climate initiative partnerships and investments the USDA announced recently, the agency has a goal of doubling the number of corn and soybean acres using cover crops to 30 million acres by 2030.

“Listening to Farm Bureau and listening to those in agriculture, we know that it’s important to establish a partnership in this effort [to create climate-smart commodities],” Secretary Vilsack said. “This is not something that’s top-down, this is really a bottom-up

Safety Contests—2022 Categories

Theme: Animal Safety – Please ask before you touch or pet

Sample coloring page

View on line www.pfb.com



Coloring Page:

Ages Ages 4-6 years old. **Prizes:** **First Place:** Winner will receive a \$25 Visa gift card and an invitation for the winner and a parent to attend PFB's Annual Meeting award banquet free on Monday **Second Place:** Winner will receive a \$15 Visa gift card mailed to their home.

3D:

Ages Ages 7-12 years old. **Prizes:** *Counties will select one winner for 7-9 & 10-12 age category.*

First Place: Winner will receive a \$50 Visa gift card and an invitation for the winner and a parent to attend the PFB's Annual Meeting award banquet free on Monday. **Second Place:** Winner will receive a \$25 Visa gift card mailed to their home.

Video:

Ages Ages 13-18 years old. **Prizes:** *Counties will select one winner for the 13-15 age & 16-18 age category.*

First Place: Winner will receive a \$100 Visa gift card and an invitation for the winner and a parent to attend the PF's Annual Meeting award banquet free on Monday. **Second Place:** Winner will receive a \$50 Visa gift card mailed to their home.

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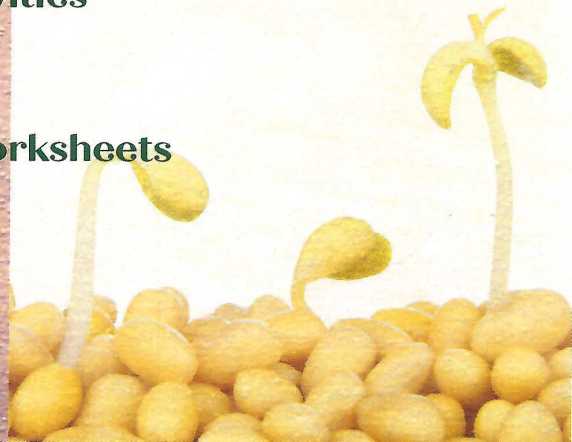


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A *3 portion of annual dues covers a one-year subscription to a PFB publication. Farmer members receive 11 issues of the Country Focus newspaper and "Friend of Farm Bureau" members receive 4 issues of the quarterly Positively Pennsylvania magazine. Applicants selecting "farmer", "part-time farmer" or "agribusiness" on the membership application are classified as "farmer" members. Should no box be checked and a farm name not be listed, member will be classified as "friend of farmer". Please contact your county Farm Bureau with questions regarding membership classification.

