



Bucks County Farm Bureau

Volume 8, Issue 4

www.pfb.com

Fall 2023

President's Message

Happy Holidays to all Bucks County Farm Bureau Members:

I am hoping that all of you had a wonderful year and are looking forward to a prosperous new year! Bucks County Farm Bureau has been busy this year. We just returned from the state annual meeting in November. We discussed and voted on resolutions that will govern Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and Bucks County Farm Bureau for years to come. Please see our ROD, Joseph Poppiti's PFB Annual Meeting report.

I would like to take this time to remember Elizabeth Crooke who passed away at age 97 on September 28th. Elizabeth was an active Farm Bureau member and was Bucks County's Membership Processor for many years. Farm Bureau would like to extend condolences to Elizabeth's family. She will be missed.

I want to thank all Farm Bureau members that came out and helped with the PFB Annual Meeting. I hope you all had a chance to attend our County Annual Meeting In September and that you enjoyed good food and fellowship with your fellow Bucks County Farm Bureau members.

Thank you and I wish everyone the Best of Holidays and a Happy & Healthy New Year!

Sincerely,

Mark A. Scheetz

TASK CONFERENCE February 9-10, 2024

Wyndham Gettysburg – PA Registration Deadline January 12, 2023

New this year, starting at noon on February 9, Farm Bureau members will be able to experience the Gettysburg Civil War Battlefield with an agricultural focus. Tom Vossler, Colonel, U.S. Army (retired) will lead members on a battlefield bus tour focusing on the agricultural impacts of the Civil War on the region.

Colonel Tom Vossler, U.S. Army (Ret.) served in the U.S. Army from 1968 through 1998. He commanded an infantry platoon in the Vietnam War and a Mechanized Infantry Battalion Task Force in Germany prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall/Soviet regime. His military education includes graduation from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. Tom taught military history, strategy, and leadership at the U.S. Army War College and he is a former director of the U.S. Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA. This is a not-miss tour to experience.

BUCKS COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Dolly Rutherford, Newsletter Editor	267-566-2123	orruth91@yahoo.com

**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—2024 Book: “Polly and the Birth Day” **\$11.00**

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

HarrisJerry /Paul Hockman Young Ag Professionals Grant-2024

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.

2024 YAP Leadership Conference

Harrisburg, PA at the Harrisburg Hilton on February 16-18th

The registration deadline is January 19th. You can register at: www.pfb.com/yapcon24.

Bucks County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting



Joseph Dise



Mason Scheetz



Aaron Worthington

Bucks County Farm Bureau held their Annual Meeting on Friday, September 29th, at Pennridge Community Center. Members enjoyed a delicious meal and everyone went home with a terrific door prize. Shelby Labs, State Representative, and Robert J. Harvie Jr., Bucks County Commissioner, were in attendance. Shelby Labs and Ruth Ann Moyer addressed the audience.

Bucks County Farm Bureau gave out 3 Harris/Hockman Memorial YF & R Grants at \$2500.00 each. Recipients are Joseph Dise, Mason Scheetz, and Aaron Worthington. Look for their bios in the Herald and the winter newsletter.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S WAWA GIFT CARD WINNERS FOR OUR EARLY PAYMENT PROGRAM

Lynne Bowen, Upper Makefield

Gerald Forest, Buckingham

John Hockman, Hilltown

Randy Martin, Riegelsville

John Shannon, Bedminster

Bucks County Farm Bureau would like to extend our gratitude for everyone's support and loyalty.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS WHO DONATED DOOR PRIZES FOR 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

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REINDEER FACTS

- Reindeer live in the Arctic tundra and damp forests of Greenland, Scandinavia, Russia, Alaska, and Canada in North America. They are called caribou.
- Reindeer are a species of deer and the only deer species in which both males and females can grow antlers. They grow new sets of antlers annually.
- Reindeer can migrate long distances between tundra and forest. There are two varieties: tundra reindeer and forest reindeer.
- Reindeer have red noses and hooves. They eat certain types of lichen that help to keep their blood warm in the cold winters.
- Reindeer have a poor sense of sight and hearing, but a good sense of smell. They make a clicking sound when they walk.



Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!

PFB 73rd Annual Meeting-Hershey Lodge

November 13-15, 2023

Delegates for Bucks County were: Don Buckman, Jim Diamond, Ken Herstine, Sandy Herstine, Ryan Herstine, Scott Herstine, Joseph Poppiti, Mark Scheetz, Glenn Wismer, Glenda Wismer.

Photo: Sandy Herstine, Jim Diamond, Ryan Herstine, Scott Herstine, Mark Scheetz.



The following report was written by Joseph Poppiti, ROD:

This year, the Annual Meeting at the Hershey Lodge started Sunday night with an opening reception. It was a relaxing evening for 270 Farm Bureau members and guests to meet old friends and make new friends. Almost all the Farm Bureau county's delegates attended.

The Policy Development session started Monday morning. All the 164 policy Resolutions presented were read, debated, and voted on during this first day. After the second reading on Tuesday morning, there were thirty-one recommendations to the PFB Board of Directors, one PFB by-law change, twenty-five policy recommendations to the American Farm Bureau Federation, and fifty-six state resolutions adopted (unofficial results by my count).

Monday evening saw the delegates in Board District 3 hold a caucus to elect a new Board Member replacing Howard Robinson who termed out after eight years of service. Paul Hartman from Berks County was elected to the PFB Board. Also re-elected from District 3 was State Women's Leadership Committee member, Sue Myers. Sue was also elected to the State Women's Leadership Committee Chair by her peers on the Committee.

The Caucus also elected Melissa Harrop to another term on the Agriculture Promotion Committee and approved YAP Committee member, Paul Harrop, to another term.

Tuesday's business session saw the election of the PFB Vice-President Tommy Nagle, Cambria County, being elected to a two-year term on the first ballot. Tuesday's Annual Meeting Banquet was highlighted by the Distinguished Service to Agriculture award to Ernie Mattiuz and the PFB Barnraiser Award to past PFB President, Rick Ebert.

The PFB's Women's Leadership Committee selected Bonnie LaTourette as the recipient of the 2023 Outstanding Woman In Agriculture award for her leadership and contributions to the agricultural community.

Cliff Wallace was presented the 2023 Distinguished Local Affairs Leader award for his efforts following the East Palestine train derailment on the Pennsylvania and Ohio border. Wallace, with the Beaver/Lawrence County Farm Bureau and several state and national officials to ensure the community of the assurance in the safety of the local food system.

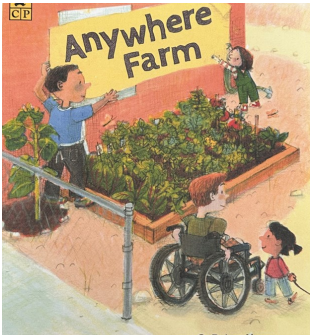
Wednesday morning's program highlighted the Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation's accomplishments this year including the new second generation Mobile Ag Lab. PFB Counties were recognized for their efforts this year and PFB members were honored for their outstanding contributions in signing new members to our organization.

The 2024 Ag Literacy Week will take place

March 18-22, 2024

Register by December 15, 2023!

Anywhere Farm



Written by Phyllis Root, and Illustrated by G. Brian Karas

The Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation's 2024 Ag Literacy Week book, *Anywhere Farm* allows children to explore the different options one can plant a farm. From a box or bucket to a pan, almost anything can be turned into a home for green, growing things. Windows, balconies, and front steps all make wonderful spots to start. After all, anywhere can be a farm, all it takes is one small seed and someone to plant it.

Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week focuses on connecting volunteers from the agricultural community to local classrooms to share the story of agriculture.

Volunteers throughout the state will read a book with an accurate and engaging theme about agriculture with a focus on kindergarten through second grade classrooms. It is an opportunity for Pennsylvania agriculturalists (farmers, industry representatives, FFA teachers and students, and others supportive of agriculture) to be the face of agriculture in kindergarten-2nd grade classrooms across the commonwealth.

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 share their own story about farming, agriculture programs they are involved with or their connections to agriculture. After the book is read volunteers can engage further with students, if they choose, with an activity developed by the foundation that re-enforces the concepts they learned from the book. The book is then donated to the classroom teacher along with educational activities and resources to use throughout the school year.

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Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation invites all members of Pennsylvania's agriculture industry to join with us to celebrate 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.

**For more information/registration go to Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation
friendsofag@pfb.com**

Published by the Government Affairs and Communications

State Legislative Update From State and Local Government Affairs Specialist Lily Guthrie

2023-2024 Budget

Keeping with tradition, the 23-24 budget process has been an interesting one. Now surpassing the deadline of June 30th by 125 days, tensions remain high between Senate Republicans, House Democrats and Governor Shapiro. The code bills, which are omnibus proposals that direct how funds in the general appropriations bill are spent, have yet to be passed.

The fiscal code, House Bill 1300, is currently in the Senate Rules and Executive Nominations Committee. The fiscal code, among a plethora of other things, includes increased funding for first responders, and allocations to hospitals and courts.

The tax code, House Bill 1219, is in the Senate Finance Committee. Notably, the bill includes mandated combined reporting as well as a reduced corporate income tax plan. The school code, House Bill 29, is in the Senate Rules and Executive Nominations Committee. Both the House and Senate are in session November 13-15 and will hopefully move to complete the budget process.

Legislative Victories

House Bill 157, sponsored by Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski, passed out of both chambers, and hit the Governor's desk on October 23rd. HB 157 permanently establishes the PA Preferred® Organic Program.

Senate Bill 152, sponsored by Senator Judy Ward, received final legislative approval on October 31st. SB 152 repeals Act 215, a duplicative law that provides for the licensing and regulation of the manufacture and sale of frozen desserts. Since the adoption of Act 215 in 1965 many more state and federal food sanitation laws have come into effect rendering it obsolete.

Senate Bill 746, sponsored by Senator Elder Vogel, was signed by the Governor on October 23rd. SB 746 returns the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement (BDLE) to solvency and makes other important changes to Dog Law including establishing an online licensing website for counties that do not currently offer one; creating a statewide licensing database; increasing licensing and kennel fees; creating clarifying "dangerous dog" determinations; requiring kennels to notify the Department of Agriculture of updates to their type or classification; updating rescue network kennel licensing and related documentation of foreign dogs; revoking kennel licenses when the kennel is charged with animal cruelty; requiring transparency of both the source of a dog and the identifying seller's license information in advertisements; ensuring proof of licensure is provided when requested by the appropriate authorities; and increasing criminal penalties for law violators.

PA House of Representatives

Notable Legislation

Rep. Perry Stambaugh (R) introduced HB 1713 that amends the Agricultural Area Security Law to allow for the construction of additional residences on preserved farmland for the landowner, immediate family members or employees.

Rep. Barry Jozwiak (R) introduced HB 1780 to allow holders of PA Elk Hunting Licenses to transfer their licenses to other eligible hunters.

The House is scheduled to return Monday, November 13th.

PA Senate

Notable Legislation

Sen. Cris Dush (R) introduced SB 800 that provides for farm owners whose properties are seized through eminent domain to be compensated for loss of goodwill.

Sen. Lynda Culver (R) introduced a cosponsor memo for legislation which provides the Department of Agriculture the authority to specifically require the posting of transmittable disease information at domestic animal and feed locations where animals and feed are offered for public sale.

Crop Damage Hearing

On Monday, October 23rd the Senate Game & Fisheries Committee held a joint hearing alongside the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. The topic of the hearing was crop damage caused by wildlife. Among the testifiers were Andy Bater, Chairman of PFB's Wildlife & Fisheries Committee, and Bryan Burhans from the PA Game Commission. It was a productive discussion, and we look forward to continued collaboration with the Game Commission.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

House Agriculture Committee's Ag Labor Working Group Stakeholder Survey: On June 21st, Chairman "GT" Thompson and Ranking Member David Scott announced the Committee's bi-partisan Agricultural Labor Working Group. The working group's purpose is to collect input from the agricultural workforce on problems with the current H-2A program, then submit a report to the full committee with their findings on a possible legislative solution based on recommendations from stakeholders by December 2023. Please encourage your counties to complete this stakeholder survey:

<https://agriculture.house.gov/policy/agricultural-labor-working-group.htm>. The working group has not published a deadline for the survey.

HIRE Act Introduced: Representatives Tony Gonzales (R-TX) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX) introduced H.R.4708, the H-2 Improvements to Relieve Employers (HIRE) Act. This bill would codify visa interview waiver authority for H-2 workers and extend the validity of a company's visa petitions and labor certifications. PFB is in support and asking for co-sponsors.

APPROPRIATIONS

On September 23rd, House Rules Committee passed four of the twelve appropriation bills out of committee with a vote of 9-2. The following bills will be voted on by the House on Wednesday, September 27. Debates have been contentious as House Republicans remain split, and Speaker McCarthy continues negotiations within his conference as a government shutdown looms. Secretary Vilsack spoke at a White House press conference on September 25th about how agriculture would be impacted, if the government were to shut down. He said the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program would not be funded, farm loans would not be processed, and USDA's technical support would not be working.

[H.R.4365](#), the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2024

[H.R.4367](#), the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2024

[H.R.4368](#), the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2024

[H.R.4665](#), the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2024.

DAIRY

GIVE MILK Act Introduced: On September 8th, Representatives "GT" Thompson and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) introduced [H.R.5383](#), the Giving Increased Variety to Ensure Milk Into the Lives of Kids (GIVE MILK) Act. This bill would allow participants in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program over the age of two to receive 2% reduced fat or whole milk. Farm Bureau is in support. Currently, Representative Reschenthaler (R-PA) is a co-sponsor.

FARM BILL

Farm bill timeline prediction: There will be an extension of farm bill. Farm Bureau has been told that floor time for farm bill will be scheduled, once FY24 spending bills are complete. This does place us in a risky position because so far appropriation debates are contentious, and a government shutdown is likely. We are hopeful that Congress will come to an agreement, pass the FY24 budget, and pass an effective farm bill in December. Our farmers, especially the dairy industry, need a farm bill passed this year.

Meeting with your legislator about farm bill: For those counties who have hosted events and talked with their Congress Member about the 2023 Farm Bill, please email Bailey with any insights you learned from the meeting. This includes their concerns, what they plan to try and include in farm bill, and/or how they plan to vote.

On October 23rd, Representative Mike Johnson forwarded a [Dear Colleague letter](#) to fellow House Members addressing his plans if he were elected Speaker. The letter stated that the Speaker plans to have farm bill on the floor in December. Chairman Thompson has said if Speaker Johnson's timeline stays on track and appropriation bills are passed, then we could see a full committee markup of farm bill before Thanksgiving.

LIVESTOCK

Proposition 12: In 2018, California's (CA) voters passed a law called Proposition 12 that requires veal, pork, and egg raised in confined areas to have a certain space minimum. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of CA (5-4), when AFBF and National Pork sued CA claiming a violation of the Interstate Commerce Clause. In June, Senators Marshall (R-KS) and Ernst (R-IA) along with Representatives Ashley Hinson (R-IA) and Zach Nunn (R-IA) introduced [S.2019/H.R.4417](#), the Ending Agricultural Trade Suppression (EATS) Act. S.2019/H.R.4417 would be the legislative solution to Prop 12 by prohibiting other states and local units of government from regulating the preharvest production of agricultural products in other jurisdictions. Farm Bureau is in support. On August 21st, over 160 Members signed onto a letter opposing the EATS Act. The letter was addressed to Chairman "GT" Thompson (R-PA) and Ranking Member David Scott (D-GA). The main takeaways in the letter are don't include it in farm bill and there are concerns that the EATS Act prevents states from making their own laws. Farm Bureau agrees that until the EATS Act becomes bipartisan it should NOT be included in farm bill. We do not want to risk votes in farm bill over this matter, so we are okay with it being a stand-alone bill.

TAXES

Main Street Tax Certainty Act Introduced: Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) and John Barrasso (R-WY) introduced [S.1706](#), the Main Street Tax Certainty Act. S.1706 would make permanent the 20 percent tax deduction (199A) for qualified business income, which is set to expire in 2025. [H.R.4721](#) led by Representatives Lloyd Smucker (R-PA) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX) is the companion bill in the House. Current PA co-sponsors are Representatives Kelly, Fitzpatrick, Meuser, Reschenthaler, Perry, and Joyce.

WOTUS

On September 8th, EPA and the Corps published the "[Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States': Conforming](#)," rule to adapt key aspects of the regulatory text to the Supreme Court's May 25, 2023 decision in Sackett v. EPA. AFBF still remains opposed to the conforming version of the 2023 WOTUS rule because the Agencies did not take the opportunity they had to clarify significant terms which remain vague. For example, "relatively permanent" remains in effect. Additionally, it is our impression that ephemeral features would still be under the Agencies' jurisdiction with the conforming rule. When it was published on the Federal Register, it became immediately effective.

2024 FEDERAL AFFAIRS TRIP APPLICATIONS OPEN

On November 1, PFB launched the application for the 2024 Federal Affairs Trips. The Spring trip will be Tuesday, February 6 through Thursday, February 8. The Fall trip will be Tuesday, September 10 through Thursday, September 12. If interested, please read the Terms of Agreement and complete the application. Applicants have the option to complete the [online form](#) or complete the [fillable Word document](#) and send it to Ginny Keever (vkkeever@pfb.com). No handwritten or paper copies will be accepted. Please email Bailey Thumm (bmthumm@pfb.com) with any questions. **Application deadline is Wednesday, December 20.**

Regulatory Affairs Update From Regulatory Affairs Specialist Grant Gulibon

DEP Secretary Resigns Effective Dec. 9; Interim Acting Secretary Named

Pennsylvania DEP Secretary Rich Negrin announced his resignation Oct. 26, after less than a year in that position and only four months after being confirmed 48-1 by the Pennsylvania Senate. The resignation officially takes effect Dec. 9, after a six-week medical leave. Executive deputy secretary Jessica Shirley will serve as interim acting secretary while the search for a nominee is conducted.

Shirley has been with DEP since 2016 and served as deputy secretary for policy under former Gov. Tom Wolf. Her responsibilities have included overseeing the expenditure of federal dollars from the “Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act” and the so-called “Inflation Reduction Act,” as well as helping develop executive orders related to PFAS and “climate change,” establishing a “greenhouse gas” reduction goal, energy conservation and sustainability in commonwealth operations, and “environmental justice.”

Farm Bureau looks forward to working with the Interim Acting Secretary during her tenure and will keep members informed on developments leading to a permanent replacement for former Sec. Negrin.

Farm Bureau Meets with PA Secretary of Education

As a follow-up on a request to Farm Bureau by Gov. Josh Shapiro from our Sept. 27 meeting, Farm Bureau staff met Nov. 2 with Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Dr. Kalid Mumin to discuss future opportunities for collaboration, including enhancing ag career and technical education, linking students with transferrable skills from non-ag disciplines with ag career opportunities, integrating agriculture into the Commonwealth’s forthcoming update to its science curriculum standards, and better coordinate interagency efforts to promote agriculture education and workforce development. Farm Bureau appreciates the Secretary’s interest in working with our members to the benefit of students throughout Pennsylvania, and we will be following up with his staff to advance those efforts.

Pennsylvania Remains Currently HPAI-Free as Detections Increase in Western, Midwestern States; Producers Urged to Continue Robust Biosecurity Improvements

As wild bird migration season intensifies, Pennsylvania currently remains free of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), but other areas of the United States, primarily in western and midwestern states, have not been as fortunate. Since October 1, the following states have reported HPAI detections:

Alabama, Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington

Farm Bureau continues to urge all producers and bird owners, be they commercial operators or individuals with backyard flocks, to remain vigilant in scrupulously updating their biosecurity plans. The PA Department of Agriculture has recently noted that its inspectors have encountered several instances of lax biosecurity, including:

Tyvek coveralls not zipped up completely.

Baseball caps worn in a house with no bouffant cap over top and worn on multiple premises.

Reusing N95 mask between premises.

Wearing disposable boots from the vehicle into the poultry house without adding a second layer at the line of separation into the bird area.

Cell phones being taken out in the poultry housing and sometimes holes ripped in the coveralls to access phones in pants pockets.

Farm Bureau members will continue outreach to their neighbors to stress the importance of protecting Pennsylvania’s multi-billion-dollar poultry industry.

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Bucks County Farm Bureau is collecting soda & soup can tabs for charities (Farmer Care Day). Please help us out. You can give them to a Board member, drop off at a Board Meeting, or bring them to any Farm Bureau event.

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There are many agricultural careers, so I encourage you to go to Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Ag Promotion Committee website to view all the different careers in agriculture. www.agandfoodcareersinpa

Mark Scheetz, BCFB President

ADVERTISING CORNER-continued

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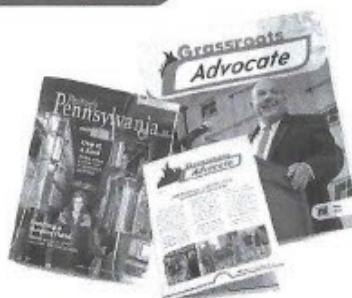


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