



Bucks County Farm Bureau

Volume 7, Issue 1

www.pfb.com

Winter 2023

President's Message

Hello to all Bucks County Farm Bureau members:

Welcome to 2023! As we start another year, we are looking for hope and forward to spring. Spring is the beginning of a new growing season for crops and livestock. The word spring means beginning and that's what will happen as the sun warms the earth and crops begin to grow and trees begin to blossom. We look forward to new happiness.

Farm Bureau is always looking to see that the things we do to promote agriculture is always looking bright. We are farmers and agriculturalists and have the responsibility to serve and educate non-agricultural people about our lifestyle and our business. We need to take the time to do this because there is a lot of false information out there and people seem to be more willing to listen to others instead of those that are in the industry. I personally go to great measures to talk to people about my farm and my industry. I believe all farmers should do this because the more people we educate about our industry and lifestyle the more they will be willing to support what we do. We supply food and fiber for the world. We also need to educate our elected officials about issues that are concerning to agriculture. In the next coming months, we will travel to Harrisburg and to the local offices of our elected officials. I ask all Farm Bureau members to join us when we visit our legislators. The more voices we have, the more they will know that the issues are important. So please be more than just a member. Be an active member and take part in your county Farm Bureau.

Thank you and may you have a blessed spring.

Sincerely,

President
Bucks County Farm Bureau

BUCKS COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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—2023 Book: “From Seed to Plant” \$10.00

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

Please look for our 2023 book coming soon!

Jerry Harris/Paul Hockman Young Ag Professionals Grant-2023

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.

2023 SAFETY CONTESTS

Theme: No Seat, No Ride

More info to come!

Bucks County Farm Bureau is collecting soda & soup can tabs for charities (Farmers Care Day). You can give them to a Board member or drop off at a Board Meeting or bring them to any Farm Bureau event. Thank you!

2023 GRANT RECIPIENT

The Farmer's Daughter is Now a Farmer: Young Ag Professional Madison Mood



Madison Mood, 22, is the new face of Bucks County farming: she's social-media-savvy, multi-talented, and tuned in to today's customers.

Madison is the 2022 winner of the Bucks County Farm Bureau's Jerry Harris and Paul Hockman Young Ag Professionals award, a grant that supports young farmers with a project to advance their career.

Madison lives and works where she grew up, on Windy Springs Farm, 175 preserved acres on Myers Road in Milford Township. The farm is owned and operated by her father and uncle, Matt and Tom Mood. Its products are cereal grains, beef and fresh produce. Altogether the Moods farm 2000 acres.

Madison looks forward to eventually taking over the farm, making her the fifth generation to do so. "It's in the bloodline," she laughs. The oldest of 6 children, she graduated in May from Delaware Valley University as an Ag Business major, minoring in Ag Marketing. She's finished school, but not her education. On the farm, "It's watching how it's done. I take it all in, every moment –and I learn from my dad and uncle every day."

Though she started farmwork as a youngster, in the barn, it's only been 6 years since she decided to pursue a farm career. When she got her license Madison realized, "I love running the heavy equipment!" She gets a kick out of driving a 275-HP tractor down the highway, astonishing motorists who spot a young woman in the driver's seat.

She helps maintain the equipment – trucks, tractors, all the pieces that get pulled, towed and turned on and off. At Windy Springs, if it can be done at home, it is, to reduce costs and to control quality.

The 150 head of Simmental beef cattle were born at Windy Springs; they're fed grasses and grain that are grown on the farm, roasted onsite, and mixed in proprietary proportions. "If you want to have great products you have to be there every step of the way," Madison explains. Roasting the feed makes it more digestible and cuts down gas byproducts, which is healthier for the animals and the planet. (Bovine methane is a large component of greenhouse gas emissions.)

Vegetables are grown on 30 acres, using black plastic to keep down weeds and keep in moisture supplied by drip irrigation. There are 80 acres of sweet corn, too. The Moods raise chickens and grow horse-quality hay and straw. Madison works on all facets of the farm, which means 18-hour days in July and August. "It's back-breaking work and your hands turn black from picking, but it's a blessing to know how to grow your own food," she says. "You gotta love it to do it."

Products are sold at farm markets, at wholesale and at a farmstand on John Fries Highway, which was established decades ago by Madison's grandfather. The Moods are building a new enclosed roadstand for year-round sales. Madison will use the Farm Bureau grant toward creating the store's "esthetic," to make it feel like, well, a farm, because "display sells products."

Madison virtually displays farm products on the Windy Springs website, which she runs. She also shares the joy of farming via her Instagram account, The Farmer's Daughter 275. There you'll find videos that feature mouth-watering closeups of fresh-picked vegetables and footage of the hard work required to grow and harvest them.

Madison relates that the Mood family saying is, "The farm is offered to you, not demanded of you." No doubt her father and uncle are delighted that this farmer's daughter has chosen the farm.

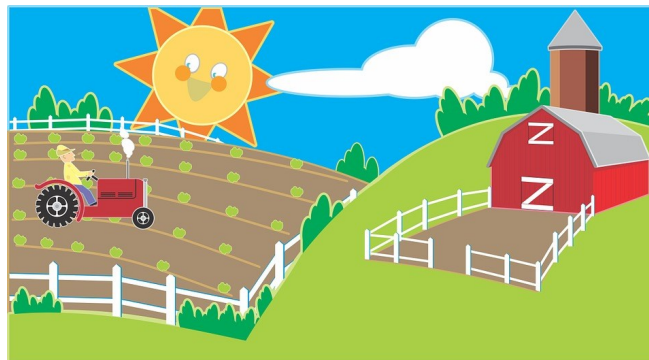
Article/Photo by Susan Charkes, Herald

Bruce Weikel Open House-Sunday, May 7, 2023

1:00-4:00 p.m. (rain or shine)

718 Callowhill Rd. Perkasi 18944

**Come out and see the amazing farm animals and enjoy the activities.
This will truly be an educational experience and a fun time for all!**



**** Congratulations to our Wawa Sweepstake Winners ****

Phillip Getty-New Hope

Joseph Hand-Holicong

Cynthia Harvey-Doylestown

Brian Luff-Pipersville

Connie Lynn Olimpo-Bedminster

*** Remember everyone when you get your 2024 membership renewal in September, remit quickly and you could be one of our next winners ***

Sandy Herstine, Membership Chair

Plumsteadville Grange Scholarship

Plumsteadville Grange is providing two yearly scholarships of \$500.00 (now named the Ellen Elaine Crooke Memorial Scholarship) for Bucks County 4-H members and Plumsteadville Grange members' children. One for agriculture based studies and one for any study of choice. Students can reapply for study year 2 if they have maintained a grade point average of 2.5, but they will also compete with new students applying for year 1.

Agriculture related students may apply in year 2 for a study of their choice. Students should apply to Plumsteadville Grange on a standard application form from the Bucks County Extension Office. Applications should be accompanied by a transcript of grades from school, an essay, and two letters of recommendation.

Address applications to: Meg Lomax, 6246 Stump Rd, Pipersville PA 18947. Deadline for scholarship application entries is May 1, 2023.

Contact Meg Lomax with queries at 215-766-9801 or meglomax@verizon.net. The Plumsteadville Grange Executive Committee will be involved in the selection of students for the scholarships.

For Immediate Release:

Contact: William Whisler, Member Communications Director
[717-724-9425](tel:717-724-9425) | wrrwhisler@pfb.com

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) extended its thanks to former President Rick Ebert for his years of service following its 72nd Annual Meeting in Hershey. Ebert served as PFB's eighth President from 2014-2022.

"I would like to take a moment to thank Rick for his leadership over the past eight years," Pennsylvania Farm Bureau President Chris Hoffman said. "Rick played an important role in guiding Farm Bureau at both the state and federal level. As an organization, we're looked to be the leader in agriculture, and I am excited about what the future has for all of us."

Ebert has given years of service to Farm Bureau at the state and local level. Prior to his election as President, he served as Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Vice President for 10 years and represented District 16 on PFB's State Board of Directors from 1996 to 2004. He was also president of Westmoreland County Farm Bureau and vice chair of PFB's Young Farmer and Rancher Committee (now Young Ag Professionals). Ebert also led PFB's Dairy State Committee and presented testimony before the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board on behalf of dairy farmers across the state. In 2009, Ebert received the Mid-Atlantic "Master Farmer" Award, in recognition of his farm success and civic engagement.

In 2008, Ebert was honored with the Charles E. Cowan Memorial Award, from the Professional Dairy Manager of Pennsylvania. The award is given in recognition to a farmer who has shown superior management on their farm, and outstanding leadership within the dairy industry.

Ebert was named 2007 Country Folks Keystone Farm Show "Farmer of the Year." He was recognized for his involvement and accomplishments in the dairy industry and his involvement in social and agricultural organizations, such as Farm Bureau.

The farm's conservation work was recognized with the Westmoreland County Conservation Award in 1983. In his community, Ebert serves as a 4-H leader, superintendent for the Westmoreland County Fair Association and on the St. James Catholic Church Pastoral Council.

Hundreds of farmers from across the state attended Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's 72nd Annual Meeting at the Hershey Lodge from Nov. 14-16 to set policy for the statewide organization on issues affecting farm and rural families.



Rick Ebert



l-r James Diamond, Glenn Wismer, Mark Scheetz, Ken Herstine (Bucks County)

Published by the Government Affairs and Communications Division

EPA Wrong about New WOTUS Rule

The EPA's new Waters of the U.S. rule is a giant step in the wrong direction. Instead of making federal regulations more clear, the rule reinstates confusing standards that have already caused decades of uncertainty and pond in litigation. Most importantly, the rule gives the government sweeping authority over private lands and will require teams of lawyers and consultants for common and necessary farming activities. We worked with the EPA's staff and leaders while they were drafting the rule, hoping our input would make these regulations clear and fair, but I'm deeply disappointed in the outcome.

Farmers and ranchers share the goal of protecting our nation's waterways, but we deserve rules that don't require hiring experts to tell us if we can farm our land. The Clean Water Act gives the government authority to regulate navigable waters – but the new rule reaches beyond. The EPA doubled down by expanding the significant nexus test, which comes down to a subjective determination of whether the federal government can regulate large areas of farmland miles from the nearest "navigable" water.

Farmers and ranchers share the goal of protecting our nation's waterways, but we deserve rules that don't require hiring experts to tell us if we can farm our land.

Unfortunately, government overreach and confusing water regulations on our farms aren't new. In 2016, Eric Kelsey, an Illinois corn, soybean, and wheat farmer, bought a farm next to the one his great-grandfather had purchased generations earlier. Eric used some of the land to build a home for his family and later wanted to make some improvements to land that wasn't farmable - a section that sat low and didn't drain well. Eric thought he'd just make it official and put a pond in that spot.

He wanted to make sure he did everything right, so he reached out to the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Army Corps of Engineers. He was bounced back and forth between them for two years, talking about what was allowed and what permits he would need. One day, he called a supervisor he knew in one of the offices who told him, "You don't even need a permit for that." Two people, same office, two different answers. The government's own employees couldn't even understand the regulations. So how can they expect the public to understand them? The new rule puts us right back into regulatory confusion.

Farmers across the country are taking proactive steps to protect water on and around our farms. The 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule clarified what lands and waters were regulated and what was not. The definitions were easy to understand and allowed farmers, ranchers, and other landowners to determine if they needed a federal permit to improve their land. But this new rule takes us backward.

This overreach could subject farming activities like moving dirt, plowing, or building fences to require a federal permit. That means more paperwork, more delays, and more lawyers. Instead of being treated as partners in our nation's water supply, the federal government wants to dictate what we can and can't do on our farms.

On farms across America, we've increased practices that reduce soil erosion and keep nutrients in our fields. We've increased the use of cover crops and placed over 140 million acres of land into voluntary conservation programs. We've installed buffer strips to filter water coming off our fields and installed protective zones and terraces – all to protect water quality for our families and yours.

EPA held a slew of listening sessions about the rule, but then disregarded what they heard. Now we will use every tool in our toolbox to arrive at a rule with clear and commonsense parameters that allows Americans to manage their land without an army of lawyers. Farmers – and all landowners – deserve better.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Works with PDA to Amend Hayride Variance Order

Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding recently issued an amended variance order regarding “hayride attractions.” An original variance order exempting hayride attraction owners from the requirement of an engineer seal was issued in February 2022.

The amended variance order further clarifies the definition of “hayride attraction” as a ride meant for the purpose of providing amusement, pleasure, thrills or excitement to passengers. Thus, the amended variance order specifically excludes from regulation tow vehicles, pulling wagons, or trailers simply used for the purpose of transporting passengers to and from locations for convenience, ease of access or for safety, such as transporting passengers from parking areas and transporting passengers over long or difficult terrain. Operators and owners of regulated hayride attractions must submit and comply with the requirements listed in PDA's [hayride application checklist](#).

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau played a significant role in the creation of this updated variance, thanks to the continued input of our members. As a result, agritourism in Pennsylvania will continue to thrive while keeping public safety at the forefront of the discussion. A special thanks goes to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, particularly particularly Secretary Russell Redding and Mr. Walter Remmert, for their continued partnership regarding this change.

PFB Hosts Farm Show Press Conference

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) brought together Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding, U.S. House Agriculture Chairman Glenn “GT” Thompson, and State Representative Justin Fleming to recap the 107th PA Farm Show and the future of agriculture in Pennsylvania.

The event centered around PFB's mission to continue efforts to educate consumers about agriculture, Farm Bureau's commitment to working with state and federal legislators and the 2023 Farm Bill, among other topics.

Chris Hoffman, President of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau discussed some of his goals moving forward as the new face of PFB.

“One of our primary goals at Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is to educate the public about agriculture. We recognize the significance of our farmers, ranchers, and foresters’ and we need to pass that on to the consumers.” Hoffman said, as PFB looks to bring more awareness to what farmers go through daily and what it takes to put meals on tables.

Russell Redding was honored to aid in the continuation of the Farm Show and like many, he understands the importance and impact the Farm show has.

“We could not do what we do without the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. I'm always proud to stand with them,” Redding said. The secretary knows the impact Farm Bureau has on its members when representing them at the local, state, and federal level.

Newly appointed U.S. House Agriculture Chairman Glenn “GT” Thompson talked about the importance of people reconnecting with agriculture.

“Every one of the (Farm Show attendees) are reconnecting with agriculture. If you look around, you would probably guess most of the people coming in off the street are not coming from the farm,” Thompson said. Thompson talked about how the Farm Show helps non-agriculturists engage in the many professions there are to offer.

State Representative Justin Fleming joined the press conference to share his background and stance on how important agriculture is.

“We ended up growing our own food for a time, in the community garden right up here on Emerton Avenue,” Fleming stated. The congressman wants to bridge the gap between urban communities and agriculture since he knew the importance it held for him growing up.

Tommy Nagle, Vice President of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau served as the host of the event. Nagle is from Patton, in Cambria County, where he raises beef cattle and grows crops on his family farm.

“We are proud to represent farms and ranches of all different sizes and commodities,” said Nagle, to highlight Pennsylvania’s diversity in agriculture.

All who attended the press conference spoke on the importance of working together to advance agriculture at the state and federal level. There are many avenues that agriculture can do down, but the unifying statement was awareness and education.

AFBF Signs Right to Repair Memorandum of Understanding with John Deere

The American Farm Bureau Federation and John Deere signed a memorandum of understanding today that ensures farmers’ and ranchers’ right to repair their own farm equipment. The MOU, signed at the 2023 AFBF Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, is the culmination of several years of discussions between AFBF and John Deere.

“AFBF is pleased to announce this agreement with John Deere. It addresses a long-running issue for farmers and ranchers when it comes to accessing tools, information and resources, while protecting John Deere’s intellectual property rights and ensuring equipment safety,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “A piece of equipment is a major investment. Farmers must have the freedom to choose where equipment is repaired, or to repair it themselves, to help control costs. The MOU commits John Deere to ensuring farmers and independent repair facilities have access to many of the tools and software needed to grow the food, fuel and fiber America’s families rely on.”

David Gilmore, John Deere Senior Vice President, Ag & Turf Sales & Marketing said, “This agreement reaffirms the longstanding commitment Deere has made to ensure our customers have the diagnostic tools and information they need to make many repairs to their machines. We look forward to working alongside the American Farm Bureau and our customers in the months and years ahead to ensure farmers continue to have the tools and resources to diagnose, maintain and repair their equipment.”

The MOU sets parameters and creates a mechanism to address farmers’ concerns. John Deere commits to engaging with farmers and dealers to resolve issues when they arise and agrees to meet with AFBF at least twice per year to evaluate progress.

The agreement formalizes farmers’ access to diagnostic and repair codes, as well as manuals (operator, parts, service) and product guides. It also ensures farmers will be able to purchase diagnostic tools directly from John Deere and receive assistance from the manufacturer when ordering parts and products.

The MOU has the potential to serve as a model for other manufacturers and AFBF has already begun those discussions.

Pennsylvania's CHEMSWEEP to Provide Safe Pesticide Disposal in 18 Counties in 2023

HARRISBURG – Agricultural businesses and pesticide applicators in 18 counties can dispose of unwanted pesticides safely and easily in 2023 through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's CHEMSWEEP program.

New for 2023- inventory forms will be submitted digitally through on the PDA website at www.agriculture.pa.gov/chemsweep. Paper forms will still be available for those without internet access by calling (717) 772-5210.

The program is offered in different counties each year. In 2023 it will be available in Bucks, Crawford, Dauphin, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lycoming, Mercer, Mifflin, Montgomery, Perry, Philadelphia, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, and Westmoreland counties.

"Pesticides can be a problem when they outlive their usefulness, sitting in barns and sheds and becoming hazardous to the environment and to your safety," said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. "Thanks to CHEMSWEEP, it's easier for our agriculture industry to safeguard our environment and properly dispose of pesticides."

Over 3.0 million pounds of unwanted or unusable pesticides have been properly destroyed through the program since it was established in 1993.

Every year, many pesticide products are discontinued, phased out or become unusable, leaving growers, commercial establishments and applicators with potentially dangerous and toxic materials that cannot be placed in landfills. The unwanted pesticides often become a safety hazard and an environmental concern through long-term storage in garages, barns, or other areas.

Farmers, licensed pesticide applicators, pesticide dealers and commercial pesticide application businesses from the designated counties are eligible to participate by completing the CHEMSWEEP registration/inventory form online through our website. The registration period ends March 31.

An independent contractor hired by the state agriculture department collects and packages all waste pesticides at each participating location, primarily for incineration at facilities approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. CHEMSWEEP covers the disposal cost for the first 2,000 pounds per participant. Above that level, participants are billed at the agriculture department's contracted price.

The program is funded through annual registration fees paid by pesticide manufacturers and applicators.

PA Game Commission Applauds Change in Law for Antlerless License Sales

The way hunters apply for Pennsylvania antlerless deer licenses is about to change for the first time in decades.

Senate Bill 431, which would allow hunters to buy antlerless licenses through the HuntFishPA automated licensing service, was signed into law in November. When it takes effect with the 2023-24 license year, antlerless licenses will be available for purchase online or in person at any license issuing agent.

PFB is in favor of the legislation aimed at making it easier to purchase an antlerless license when you purchase an antlered license.

The Game Commission, hunting organizations including the National Deer Association, Pennsylvania Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen and Conservationists, the United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania and others, and everyday hunters supported the bill, championing it as the final step to fully modernizing license sales.

Until now, hunters applied for antlerless licenses via mail, sending those familiar pink envelopes to county treasurers, the only entity permitted to sell them. They had to do so according to a set schedule, with various deadlines based on state residency and rounds of sales, using a self-addressed stamped envelope and paper checks, something increasingly foreign to some hunters. There were, in short, a lot of variables in play, and that occasionally led to problems with hunters getting licenses or not.

Given all that, the pink envelope system was seen by many as a barrier to hunting participation, especially when it comes to recruiting new hunters. Allowing for antlerless license sales through HuntFishPA will address those issues.

Prior to the start of next license year, the Game Commission will notify hunters on the process for applying for an antlerless license under the new system.

Three PA Women Graduate From AFBF Women's Communication Boot Camp in Washington D.C.

WASHINGTON — Fifteen farm and ranch women leaders have graduated from the fall session of Women's Communications Boot Camp hosted by the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The intensive four-day course completed by the agricultural leaders featured hands-on sessions related to public speaking, working with the media and messaging. Graduates will use their training in a variety of ways such as participating in local media opportunities to strategically support Farm Bureau's policy work, sharing information with elected officials and joining social media campaigns that spotlight modern agriculture.

"Consumer interest in food and how it is produced and grown remains high, which means communicating effectively about agriculture is more important than ever," said Isabella Chism, an Indiana row crop farmer and chair of the AFBF Women's Leadership Committee. "The women leaders who completed this training will use their skills in their communities and for Farm Bureau on local, state and national levels."

Boot Camp graduates are Amy Hale, Louisiana; Stasha Baldwin, Maine; Jeannette Kreher-Heberling, New York; Carrie Barnhardt, North Carolina; Cindy Stroup, North Carolina; Karin Bright, Ohio; Stacy Irwin, Ohio; Karen Dodson, Oklahoma; Jacque Duyck-Jones, Oregon; Amanda Balon, Pennsylvania; Monet Bottenfield, Pennsylvania; Julie Yahnke-Schrum, Pennsylvania; Renea Jones, Tennessee; Madalynn Kainer, Texas; and Kat Peper, Wisconsin.

"Women farmers and ranchers are passionate advocates for agriculture," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "I applaud our graduates as they increase their engagement with both consumers and elected officials and take the next step in their leadership journey in agriculture."

This is the 17th Boot Camp. The program has 254 graduates and is open to all women involved in Farm Bureau. "This training has been extremely beneficial," said Peper. "It provided the opportunity to improve my advocacy skills in a number of areas and gain greater confidence as a voice for agriculture. It was also valuable to connect with amazing women involved in farming and ranching from across the country."

The American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, in partnership with AFBF staff, hosts and provides training for Women's Communications Boot Camp. A spring session of Boot Camp will be held April 3-6, 2023, with applications opening in December.

Editor's notes (Kimberly Flegal, PFB Government Affairs & Communications Division: *As a reminder, the PFB online newsroom enables us to report news about Farm Bureau, our advocacy and agriculture in general as it happens. Since the latest news will always be posted there, please feel free to use stories that appear in the PFB Newsroom if you'd like additional content or want to get the latest updates on a story between issues of Companion. You can access the newsroom at www.pfb.com/newsroom.*

If you need or would like any photos to accompany these stories, please email Will Whisler at wrrwhisler@pfb.com.

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Growing Your Expectations

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.

Mark Scheetz, BCFB President

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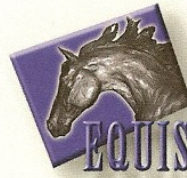
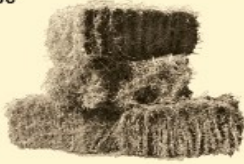
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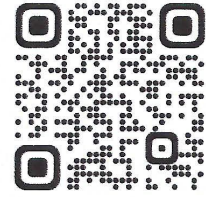
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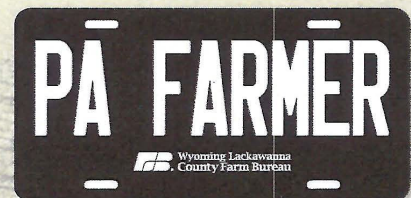
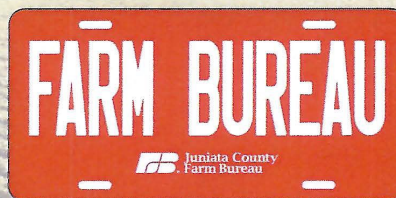
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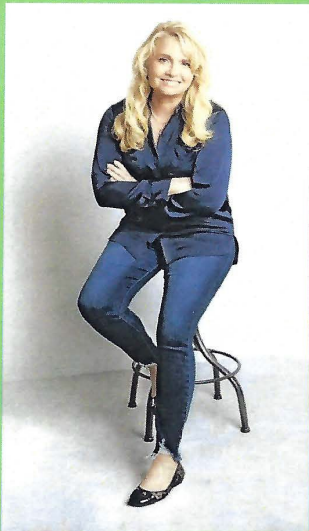
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Keynote Speaker: Michele Payn

Michele Payn personifies passion. Known as one of North America's leading experts in connecting farm and food, she serves as a resource for people around the plate.

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