

Newsletter of the Mercer County Farm Bureau

September 2020

A quarterly publication

## DATES TO REMEMBER

# MCFB Annual Meeting

w/ dessert 6:30 p.m. Oct. 1 Jefferson Twp. Picnic Shelter D

# PFB 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

Virtual Event
Participate from
home
Nov. 16 – 19
Register ahead
of time



## **Modified County Annual Meeting Planned**

The 2020 snnual meeting of the Mercer County Farm Bureau will be at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 1. Due to the restrictions of COVID-19, the event will take place in the Zahniser Pavilion located across from the Jefferson Township Fairgrounds, 7409 Lamor Road, Mercer, Pa. 16137. This is an open facility. Social distancing will be encouraged, and face masks recommended.

The meeting will consist of adopting policy positions to be sent on to the state annual meeting as well as election of officers. The women's leadership committee will provide dessert.

Please come to enjoy fellowship with other farmers and have your voice heard in these decisions being made for our organization.

RSVP to Sandy Craft at 814-715-4244 or craft5@windstream.net.

Sandy still has a few of the children's books available and will bring them to the meeting.

### **State Convention to be Virtual**

#### **Register Now for PFB's Virtual Annual Meeting**

Mark your calendar for **Nov. 16 through 19** to join Farm Bureau members from across the Keystone State for a virtual celebration of Pennsylvania agriculture!

Perhaps the most significant days on our yearly calendar, PFB's Annual Meeting brings farmers across the state together to set our organization's direction, recognize the achievements of the past year, learn and network.

While it's disappointing that we won't all be able to see one another face-to-face this year due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual format offers new and exciting opportunities that we expect will make our 70th anniversary one of the most exciting to date.

If you've always wanted to participate in PFB's signature event but have not been able to commit to the time and expense of traveling to Hershey, **this is your chance to join the celebration!** The virtual meeting is free to all PFB members and you can participate as much or as little as your schedule allows.

And remember to mark your calendar for **Nov. 10**, when the excitement begins with a kick-off event. You'll have an opportunity to compete for prizes and get familiar with the virtual convention before it begins.

**How do I register?** Registration is open now! Attendees, except for voting delegates, are asked to register online by filling out and submitting the form available at **www.pfb.com/register**. Your registration may take up to a few days to process so be sure to register as early as possible.

#### MCFB DIRECTORS

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REGIONAL ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR AL WEBER 412-897-6991 aweber@pfb.com

## MCFB Legislative Tour Features Dairy Pricing

A tough topic to understand



Rick Koller speaks at the annual Legislative Tour. George Gregg and Bob Craft are seated at the table.

Rick Koller, president of Fairview Swiss Cheese, explains the intricacies of how farmers are paid for their milk. The trials and tribulations among dairy farmers, processors and consumers this spring made Koller's message was an important one for not only those who are milking cows but for everyone. Dairy is the largest segment of Pennsylvania's agriculture industry. When dairy is hurting, all of agriculture feels the impact.

Members of the MCFB legislative committees presented the hot topics currently before the state and federal legislatures.

Representatives Mark Longietti and Tim Bonner talked about activities in Harrisburg. Diane Helbig, legislative aide to State Senator Michele Brooks discussed some of the agricultural legislation that the Senator has worked on. State Rep. Parke Wentling and Jill Burke, an aide to Congressman Mike Kelly also attended.

The county Women's Leadership Committee prepared individual sack lunches for everyone attending.

"By being flexible during these unusual times, I believe we were able to have a very successful event," said. George Gregg, county governmental relations coordinator.

## Help Tell USDA How To Improve the Farmer's Experience

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Wants to know how its agencies can better serve farmers. The department will conduct an annual survey of farmers to understand what the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Risk Management Agency are doing well and where they can improve.

The survey includes 20 qustions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Respnses are confidential and individual responses will be aggregated. Learn more and take the survey at <a href="https://www.farmers.gov/survey">www.farmers.gov/survey</a>

Please support the companies listed in our business directory.

## Reminder: Apply Now for REAP Credits

Applications are now open for one of Pennsylvania's signature conservation programs, which offers tax credits to agricultural producers who implement on-farm conservation practices.

The Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (better known as REAP) is funded at \$10 million dollars this year. Farmers can apply for REAP tax credits to cover 50 to 75 percent of the costs of implementing conservation practices or purchasing related equipment. In high-priority areas, such as the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, credits covering up to 90 percent of costs are available for certain targeted practices, such as 50-foot, forested riparian buffers and measures to exclude livestock from streams.

Common REAP projects include no-till planting and precision ag equipment, waste storage facilities, conservation plans, Nutrient Management Plans, cover crops, riparian buffers and barnyards runoff controls. Credits can be used in conjunction with other funding sources and applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Learn more about the program and how to apply at <a href="https://bit.ly/30hYrEc">https://bit.ly/30hYrEc</a>.

### Contact information for our national and state legislators:

#### **U.S. Senator Bob Casey**

17 South Park Row, Suite B-150 Erie, PA 16501 Phone: 814-874-5080

#### **U.S. Senator Pat Toomey**

United States Federal Building 17 South Park Row, Suite B-120 Erie, PA 16501

Phone: 814-453-3010

#### Congressman Mike Kelly

33 Chestnut Avenue Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 342-7170 www.Kelly.house.gov

#### **State Senator Michele Brooks**

100 Hadley Road Suite 9 Greenville, PA 16125 (724) 588-8911 mbrooks@pasen.gov

## State Representative Mark Longietti

2213 Shenango Valley Freeway, Unit 2-E Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: 724-981-4655 mlongiet@pahouse.net

## **State Representative Timothy Bonner**

234 West Pine St. Grove City, PA 16127 724-458-4911 tbonner@pahousegop.com

## State Representative Parke Wentling

395 High St. P.O. Box 17 Conneaut Lake, PA 16316 Phone: 814-382-7200 pwentling@pahousegop.com



### **HELP WANTED**

MCFB is looking for people who enjoy writing and communicating with farmers and consumers.

Our organization is searching for a newsletter editor and a media coordinator to share our story with members and the public.

To learn more contact Carol Ann Gregg at: 724-372-9792 or cagregg2003@yahoo.com



## The Mercer County Farm Bureau Business Directory



Hanling

Phone: 724-528-3398 Fax: 724-528-1357

JERRY BARRIS General Manager

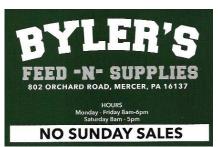
VIRGINIA BARRIS

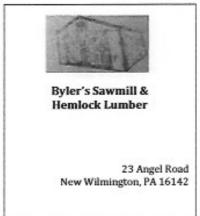
Gravel Cub Cadet # Barris SUPPLY co.

Behind Dairy Queen West Middlesex, PA

Rubby Barris (724) 528-2650





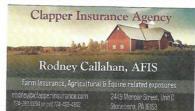




Matt Fenton T. 330 402 4815 0. 724 533 8004 mlfenton@CenterraCoop.com









Because we have a clear view of what Christ has done for us

## Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

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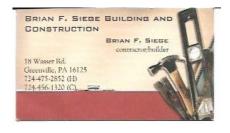
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If you would like your business card here. Please email a clear copy of your business card to:
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cagregg2003@yahoo.com

724-856-2770 www.webbwinery





#### Stress is Real

Learn how to cope and where to get help

### **New Stress-Management Training Program for Agriculture**

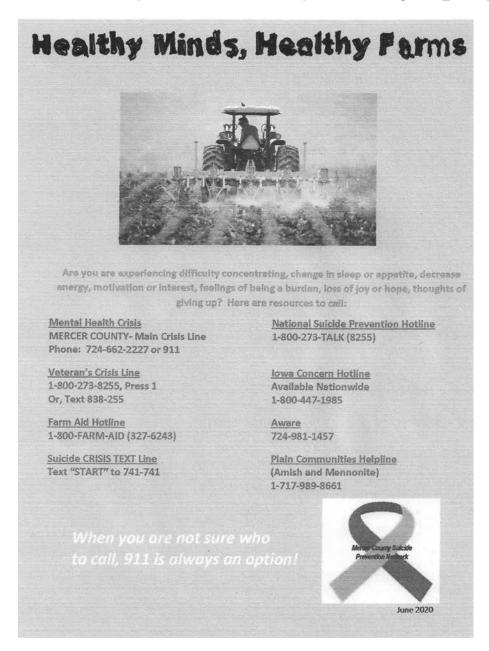
Farm Bureau and other organizations have launched a free, online course that aims to help farmers, their families and neighbors identify and cope with stress.

The course, developed by Michigan State University Extension and University of Illinois Extension, gives participants the skills to understand the sources of stress, manage their own stress, learn the warning signs of stress and suicide, identify effective communication strategies, and connect farmers with appropriate mental health and other resources.

Farm Bureau is partnering with Farm Credit and the National Farmers Union to offer the course to the general public.

"We have to break through with a message of hope and help," said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall. "Families don't have to face today's stresses and heavy burdens alone. This free online resource is a first step toward recognizing the signs and knowing what to do. We hope anyone who knows someone struggling will take advantage of this potential lifeline."

Learn more or register for the course at opencoursesstore.d2l.com/product?catalog=msu\_urmfs\_2020.



Mercer County Farm Bureau Robert Craft, president 27 Cassidy Drive Mercer, PA 16137 stamp

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Be sure to read the next **Country Focus** to learn how you can participate in the PFB 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting from your home.

