

From the President's Desk

Dolores Krick, York County Farm Bureau President

Happy Spring! As I write this it's raining. A good thing as this winter has left us wanting for more moisture in the ground.

York County Farm bureau members are working hard on a farm to table event that will debut later this summer. Education is so important. We hope to show a true picture of how food gets to the table! York county raised foods will be served! If you would like to donate to this, please let me know.

Many of us have read books for the Literacy campaign teaching our young students what would happen if there were no farmers. What a fun event.

With planting season right around the corner and many of us driving equipment on the roads. I urge you to be extra cautious. We will run a safety campaign to help protect you as you drive field to field.

Share your story, share the importance of agriculture in your day-to-day life. There is no other occupation that is as important as your job! THANK YOU for feeding the world!

I welcome your suggestions and comments to help us improve the York County Farm Bureau. Do you have any concerns about our policies? Do you have a suggestion for new policies: something for us to work with the legislature to help our local farmers? Please feel free to call or email me at 717-487-4556 sjkrick@gmail.com I am always happy to talk.

Until next time, Happy Farming!

Dolores Krick, President

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Ag Literacy Week a Success!

Ag Literacy Week was held March 13-17, 2023. Six York County Board Members, and 4 regular members visited 10 elementary schools and 2 libraries during this time reading to over 600 students! The book this year was titled "The Day the Farmers Quit". We were able to teach children where their food and fiber comes from and what would happen there were no farmers!



Children up through 3rd grade were interactive, good listeners, had awesome questions, and learned a great deal during this week! Thank you to the schools and teachers for allowing us this opportunity to share our story!

DEP Ag Energy Rebate Program

The DEP Energy Programs Office has extended the deadline until June 30, 2023 for an Agriculture Energy Efficiency Rebate Program for PA farmers and ag producers.

Rebates are being offered for the following technology categories: Energy efficient lighting systems, Energy efficient ventilation equipment, and Energy efficient dairy and refrigeration equipment. The program guidelines detail applicant and equipment eligibility and can be found here: www.dep.pa.gov/agricultureenergy.

Rebates will pay up to 50% of equipment purchase costs, up to \$5,000. Applicants may apply under all 3 technology categories, but the maximum rebate is \$5,000 per applicant. Up to \$500 in installation costs may be included in the total project costs for each technology category, to be reimbursed at up to 50%.

You must submit an application to obtain a rebate voucher prior to installing equipment. Questions may be directed to Michelle Ferguson at 570.327.3783 or email RA-EPAgEnergyProgram@pa.gov

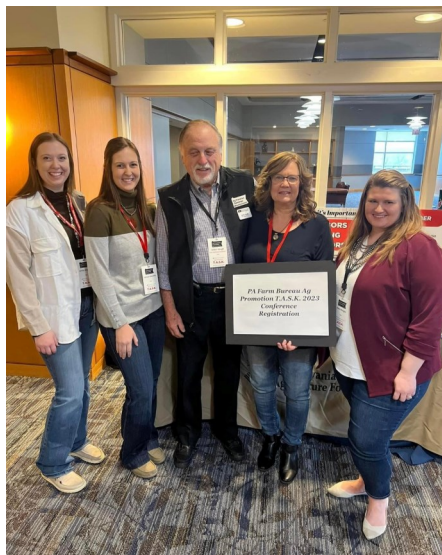
WOTUS Update

On January 18th, EPA published the revised definition of “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) on the federal register. The rule is effective as of March 20, 2023. Farm Bureau is opposed to the new rule due to its ambiguity and invasion of private property rights. Sackett v. EPA should be decided by June. Farm Bureau along with various stakeholders asked for EPA to hold off on publishing the new rule, until Sackett was decided. The agencies will be expected to amend the 2022 WOTUS rule if it contradicts with the Supreme Court’s decision. On January 19th, AFBF filed a legal challenge to the new WOTUS rule alongside 17 other organizations representing Federal Affairs ROD Update March 10, 2023 agriculture, infrastructure, and housing. Read more about the lawsuit [here](#). If members have questions relating to how the rule impacts their operation, please contact Grant at grgulibon@pfb.com. If members would like to know where their U.S. legislator stands on the matter or advocacy questions, please contact Bailey at bmthumm@pfb.com.

**Reminder: Farm Bureau
Knoebel's Picnic July 9**

TASK Conference Attended

Three members of the York County Board attended the recent TASK Conference in State College March 10-11. Les Vough, Kate Menges, and Debbie Macklin along with her 2 daughters who are farm bureau members, enjoyed the weekend of education, networking, and growing as Farm Bureau members! TASK stands for Together Advocacy Stimulates Knowledge. This session is put on by the Ag Promotion committee of PA Farm Bureau and had close to 90 members in attendance from across the state. The Keynote speaker this year was Michele Payn, who spoke about the importance of educating the public in order to create more informed consumers. If you are interested in being part of the Ag Promotion Committee, reach out to Les Vough at vough@umd.edu



Region 2 Day Review

Folks from all around Region 2 gathered at the Sheraton Hotel in Harrisburg on March 14th for the region’s annual Farm Bureau Day event. Farmers and friends of farmers from York County (and it’s neighboring counties along the Susquehanna River) met for a day long celebration of farmers and their work as well as Farm Bureau and its work on their behalf. The day was filled with unique, informative, interactive workshops and seminars as well as important legislative updates, good food, fellowship, and fun!

Speakers from Nationwide Insurance, Penn State Extension, and Central PA Food Bank gave great presentations to attendees. Many attendees have said that they left the day far more educated and informed than they could have ever imagined and the biggest challenge has been determining which presentation was their favorite!

Additionally, Farm Bureau’s government affairs staff gave excellent updates on where Farm Bureau currently is in terms of promoting and passing policy and changing PA agriculture for the better. Needless to say, the future is bright for PA agriculture thanks to Farm Bureau and its continued efforts!

Special thanks to all who attended and all who did the behind-the-scenes work to make it happen. Make sure you DON’T MISS next year’s event!

Neil Dembeck, Region 2 ROD

Annual Strawberry Social

Mark your calendars for the return of the annual Strawberry Social held at Lake Redman

Bass Pavilion again this year!

Join us Sunday, June 4, 2023 from 2-4 PM for fellowship with other Farm Bureau members as we enjoy fresh local strawberries donated by Shaw Orchards with hand dipped ice cream! We will also have corn hole boards setup for teams to play as well as some special guests to speak to our group!

RSVP to Deb at (717) 891-4963 or email dmackfarms@aol.com. This event is free to all Farm Bureau members and their families!



York County Farm Bureau Board of Directors

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Dolores Krick (717) 487-4556
sjkrick@gmail.com

Vice President

Kate Menges (717) 339-9959
kml5484@gmail.com

2nd Vice President/Director

Barron Shaw (717) 571-2368
barron@shaworchards.com

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Lester Vough (240) 678-0274

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Lynn Godfrey (717) 324-0137
ldqfarmer@gmail.com

Information Director

Kate Menges

Newsletter Editor/Director

Julie Yahnke-Schrum (717) 324-3410
leogal34@msn.com

Additional Directors

Wayne Hoffman (717) 324-3663
ehoffman717@aol.com

Matt Kessler (717) 587-4043
matt.kessler@nutrien.com

Heather Grove (717) 324-8284
secretary45firefighter@hotmail.com

Ed Livingston (717) 873-2810
edwinlivingston292@gmail.com

Mike Ritz (717) 465-7089
mrcvf@ymail.com

Mike Druck (717) 309-4980
druck.mike@gmail.com

Ag Labor Reform

Congress needs to pass responsible immigration reform that addresses agriculture's current experienced workforce and creates a new flexible guest worker program. Instability in the agricultural workforce places domestic food production at risk--increasing immigration enforcement without also reforming our worker visa program could cost America \$70 billion in agricultural production.

In times of labor shortages farmers have re-

lied on these foreign workers, who are admitted under a government sponsored temporary worker program known as H-2A, and on workers who appear to have legal status to be working in the United States. The demand for foreign workers is heightened due to not only a lack of a domestic workforce, but also the reverse migration of workers from the U.S. to Mexico, historic levels of immigration enforcement and bipartisan congressional commitment to a credible work authorization system through mandatory E-Verify. Those factors, combined with an increasingly rigid and burdensome H- 2A program, demonstrate the need for a new approach.

Agriculture needs a program that functions as efficiently as the current free market movement of migrant farm workers while providing the security of a contractual relationship in areas where there is little migration. Having lost confidence in the H-2A structure as a framework for future success, Farm Bureau is seeking the new approach outlined above to ensure a legal, reliable, long-term workforce for all sectors of the industry.

Farm Bureau supports proposals that provide access to a legal and stable workforce for agriculture's needs now and in the future. First, agriculture needs a new flexible visa program administered by USDA that provides flexibility for employers and workers by allowing contract and at-will employment options to address both seasonal and year-round needs. This ensures future stability and can be used to fill shortages when domestic workers are not available. Second, for short-term stability, the proposal must include an earned legal status for experienced, but unauthorized, agricultural workers.

Farm Bureau believes that long-term workforce stability will come through the creation of a new streamlined, flexible visa program that follows how the domestic market operates. This program would replace the cumbersome H-2A program. Our proposal would shift management of the program from the Labor Department to the Agriculture Department, putting it where agriculture's needs are more likely to be understood. Farmers would be permitted to offer workers either contract or at-will employment. All workers would be allowed to continue with an employer for as long as the employer has a need – up to three years. This allows farmers who have year-round labor needs to use the program and avoid disrupting their essential business operations. This program recognizes real-life workforce challenges and provides the flexibility and stability that most domestic workers enjoy.

The reality is that a majority of farm workers are in the U.S. illegally, largely because Congress has ignored the shortcomings of the existing agricultural worker program. It's time to deal with reality. But farmers must be able to keep their experienced workers – their trustworthy, right-hand men and women who have worked with them for years and can get the work of the farm done. Our proposal offers a tough but fair solution for these workers and their employers. Enforcement is an important part of the solution, but not the whole solution.

Source: AFBF

Combating HPAI

Farm Bureau urges members to communicate peer-to-peer with bird owners in their communities, be they commercial producers or neighbors with backyard flocks, about the need for robust biosecurity in the face of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). HPAI is a serious threat to Pennsylvania's poultry industry, and indeed to the Commonwealth's agricultural economy.

As avian influenza cases continue to increase across Pennsylvania, such outreach is especially important, particularly in communities which have historically been more difficult to reach with information of this type. More information will be forthcoming shortly to county Farm Bureaus about this issue.

Farm Bureau continues to participate with PA Department of Agriculture (PDA) officials, industry professionals, and other stakeholders regarding the state's response to recent outbreaks of HPAI across Pennsylvania. Farm Bureau also provides updated information on the status of Pennsylvania's HPAI response via its website at <https://pfb.com/biosecurity-is-key-in-preventing-avian-influenza-spread/>, and on Twitter (@PFBRegAffairs). Farm Bureau continues to distribute information to producers and the public on the importance of biosecurity, sample drop-off locations, and state laboratory hours and procedures. For more information, contact Grant Gulibon, Farm Bureau Regulatory Affairs Specialist, at rgulibon@pfb.com.



Kid's Safety Contest

The annual Safety Contest put on by the Women's Leadership Committee is open now! The theme this year is No Seat, No Rider, promoting the safety of riding along on equipment. Age categories are Coloring contest ages 4-6 years old, Poster contest ages 7-12 years old, and video contest for Ages 13-18 years old. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes will be awarded in each category.

Go to the PFB website Safety Contests <https://pfb.com/be-involved/womens-leadership-committee/safety-contests> in order to print applications for each age group. Submit your project to a York County Farm Bureau Board of Director or online at www.pfb.com/safetycontests by June 1 for entry.

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PA Ag Facts!

- PA is the only state with their own individual Farm Bill
- PA is the #1 state in land preservation
- 60% of all mushrooms produced in the US are grown in Kennett Square, PA and the surrounding areas
- Agriculture supports 1 out of every 10 jobs in PA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FARMER Dinner

April 3, 2023, Harrisburg, PA

PFB Legislative Day

April 4, 2023, Harrisburg, PA

Rural Roads Safety Week

April 15-22, 2023

Kid's Safety Contest Deadline

June 1, 2023

Annual York County Strawberry Social

June 4, 2023, Lake Redman Bass Pavilion

Ag Progress Days

August 8-10, 2023, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA

York County Farm to Table Gala

August 10, 2023, Stewartstown, PA

Peer to Peer Fundraising Campaign

The fundraising campaign that has been going on has come to an end with incredible success! This annual fundraiser is to raise funds for Friends of Ag Foundation which is the non-profit division of Farm Bureau which educates students across PA!

The total raised was \$61,240! This amount equals supporting more than 12,000 students gaining access to a foundation program such as the ag lab. That is an amazing impact!

The Friends of Ag sponsors events such as the Mobile Ag Labs, Ag Literacy Week, Educator's Ag Institute, and other educational events throughout the state. You will see the mobile ag lab at schools across the state. This 40-foot mobile classroom in an interactive field trip experience for students in grades K-8.



The next fundraising event being held is the Richard Prether Golf Classic on June 12.

Legislative Update

The legislative staff at PFB in Camp Hill has been working hard for you. Here is a brief recap of the accomplishments that occurred in 2022!

- Successfully advocated for the creation of the PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) to fund farm conservation projects in every PA county.
- Successfully advocated for bipartisan reform to maritime transportation to reduce bottlenecks and restore a strong supply chain for agriculture producers.
- Advocated for scientific, peer-reviewed research when proposing changes to safe and effective herbicides such as atrazine and dicamba.
- AFBF gained the support of the U.S. Solicitor General in the California Proposition 12 Supreme Court case.
- Advocated for movement on the Senate version of the Farm Workforce Modernization Act.
- Advocated for mental health resources to be more readily available to our rural and agriculture communities.
- Successfully advocated for the PA "Fertilizer Law," establishing standards for fertilizer application to turf and modernizing the state's existing program to ensure proper testing and labeling of fertilizer products.
- Successfully advocated for legislation providing greater transparency for leaseholders by creating uniform standards for natural gas companies to follow when reporting deductions on royalty payments.
- Tax credits for eligible dairy processing facility projects

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This show Together we Can!

Source: Lily Guthrie, PFB

Nationwide Pet Insurance

Adding to your list of benefits as a Farm Bureau member is a discount on Pet Insurance through Nationwide Insurance! Call 877-738-7874 and mention group code N788 or visit benefits.petinsurance.com/pfb-npr to get your quote today! You do not have to be a Nationwide customer in order to receive this product and discount.

Member Spotlight: Orchard Valley Farm

In June 2021, Mary Brown of Brown's Orchard was pleased to announce that their Yellow Church Road Farm, also referred to by so many local families as Brown's Pick-Your-Own

Farm, had been sold to another well-respected York County family with a long history of farming, the Strathmeyer Family (you may know them from Strathmeyer Christmas Trees). "We are honored to be continuing the legacy of Stan Brown and the Brown family, and growing our roots here in York County."

The farm was renamed, Orchard Valley Farm. The Farm continues as a Pick-Your-Own with fruits including strawberries, cherries, raspberries, peaches, 22 varieties of apples, and 12 types of pumpkins. Do you love flowers? They also grow sunflowers, zinnias and many other varieties for cutting your own or pre-cut. There is also an onsite Farm Market for your convenience to pickup fruit on your way home! You can also visit their stand at Central Market! To keep up to date on what is ready to pick call the picking hotline at 717-850-0079!

This 98 acre farm is run onsite by Tim Strathmeyer and his friend Dave Hopkins. Robin, his sister runs the stand and the festivals. Orchard Valley Farm has over 25 workers out in the fields taking care of the plants and trees as well as picking the fruit. This is the same crew that is used for the ever-green operations that bring you those beautiful Strathmeyer Christmas trees you take home each year. In addition to the people staff, you will most likely see the 4 legged doggie mascots of the farm, Holly, Bella and Mocha wondering around!

As the year is about to burst into full bloom, look for strawberries beginning the end of May.



There are two ponds on location with a picnic area, so feel free to bring a picnic lunch and hang out or even fish in the ponds! This is also a great location to get your family photos, Prom photos, or pet photos! Watch their Facebook page for Pop Up Events with special vendors on location at the farm!

Check out their Facebook page, Orchard Valley Farm for all their upcoming events. They also have an Instagram page and website www.pickorchardvalley.com where you can see information on their upcoming events such as the Fishing Derby May 20, Strawberry Festival June 3, Peach Festival August 12, and Harvest Festival September 30. Make sure to stop out and visit Orchard Valley Farm located at 8773 Yellow Church Rd, Seven Valleys, PA 17360 this summer!

Source: Gerrit Strathmeyer

Fusion Conference In Jacksonville, FL

The Fusion Conference in Jacksonville, FL was well attended by PA Farm Bureau members across the state! This event was held on March 3-6, 2023 which fused together members from Young Ag Professionals, Women's Leadership, and Ag Promotions! During these three days, attendees heard from keynote speakers, AFBF President Zippy Duvall, learned valuable information in breakout sessions, participated in Collegiate Discussion Meets, ran or walked a 5K, toured farms in the Jacksonville area, and bonded together in fun activities together!

President Duvall left us with these words: "Everybody needs to be at the table, from the small farmer, to large farmer, to rooftop farmer. People



will buy in when you reach out and invite them in. So get outside your fencerows and be part of something larger!

This AFBF conference is held every other year and open to all Farm Bureau members, so plan to attend the next one in January 2025 in Texas!



From the left, Orchard Valley Farm partners Tim Strathmeyer, Robin Strathmeyer, Gerry Strathmeyer, Gerrit Strathmeyer and Dave Hopkins gather in a field of fruit trees overlooking 100 acres, formerly owned by Brown's in Springfield Township. Brown's Orchards and Farm Market continues to be run separately in Loganville. PAUL KUEHNEL/YORK DAILY RECORD

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

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A total \$6 portion of annual member dues covers subscriptions to these publications, \$3 for Positively Pennsylvania and \$3 for Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Grassroots Advocate (formerly Country Focus). Members receive 4 issues of each publication per year on a quarterly basis. Publication frequency and details are subject to change.

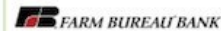


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Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
510 S. 31st Street P.O. Box 8736
Camp Hill, PA 17001-8736
717.761.2740
www.pfb.com

York County Farm Bureau
Newsletter Editor
710 Main St.
Fawn Grove, PA 17321

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