

Issue 58

January 2026

A Note from the County President

With age comes perspective. As I grow older and have the chance to travel to other states and countries I have come to appreciate some things about our home. Our county is blessed with fertile soil, a temperate climate, sufficient moisture, and a very delicate balance of population, infrastructure, and open space. Together these attributes allow us to raise a wide diversity of commodities AND be able to market them in a way that allows for both large wholesale operations and small-scale direct-market operations to thrive. This balance is rare in our state, in our country, and in this world. There is no place like home!

With this blessing comes responsibility. Public policy can greatly affect our agricultural balance, and that's why we need Farm Bureau. For example, a few months ago some legislators proposed a state-level board that would effectively be able to override municipal siting decisions regarding solar and energy development. The state board quickly met and determined this was not in our interest and within a matter of days it was made clear that we would oppose the legislation. The proposal quickly went nowhere.

Your support of Farm Bureau protects all of us. If you have friends that benefit from our work, please ask them to join. If you forgot to send in your renewal for 2026, now is a good time! Together, we'll continue to make York County a great place to farm.

Barron Shaw

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Exclusive Fuel Savings for PFB

As a valued member of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, you have access to significant fuel savings through our partnership with Shipley Energy. Whether you're heating your home, running farm equipment, or managing a commercial agricultural operation, these discounts can add up to substantial savings throughout the year.

Residential Heating Discounts

Farm Bureau members receive a **10 cent per gallon discount** on residential heating oil and propane. For the typical Pennsylvania household using 800-1,000 gallons of heating oil annually, this discount translates to \$80-\$100 in savings each year. With propane, families can see similar benefits while keeping their homes comfortable through our region's cold winters.

Visit www.shipleyenergy.com/PFBHome

Commercial Fuel Savings

For your farm or agricultural business, Shipley Energy offers a **2 cent per gallon discount** on **custom quoted** commercial fuels including heating oil, propane, and diesel. The discount makes a real difference when you're fueling tractors, combines, and other equipment throughout planting and harvest seasons. Large operations using thousands of gallons annually can save hundreds of dollars.

Visit www.shipleyenergy.com/PFBFarm

Beyond Fuel: Complete Energy Solutions

Our partnership extends beyond traditional fuels. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members also have access to **competitive rates** on **electricity** and **natural gas**, helping you manage energy costs across your entire operation. Additionally, Shipley Energy provides comprehensive **HVAC services** to keep your home and farm buildings efficiently heated and cooled year-round.

Taking advantage of these member benefits is simple. Contact Shipley Energy's Todd Horner and mention your PFB membership to begin saving immediately (717) 771-0772.

To Till or Not To Till

Driving around York County in November after harvest season, I paid special attention to fields that were filled already with cover crop, many that had tillage, and some that even had cows grazing among the fodder blanketing the ground. I went to two of my local trusted sources and asked them to write me an article of their personal view of why they till or why they no till



and here is what they had to say! Thank you Tim Jordan and Andy Flinchbaugh for sharing your views with the rest of our Farm Bureau Family!
Julie Schrum

Jordan Century Farms Tillage

One thing we learned years ago in farming is what works for one farmer doesn't work as a blanket for all farmers. All farmers are to have conservation plans we must follow for best practices for the acres we farm. These are the parameters we need to stay between so to speak. For us we prefer to do some tillage and that is put into our conservation plans. For us at Jordan Century Farms we see two main things currently in doing tillage on our acres that we see as beneficial for us. The first is we disc down our corn stalks in the fall which helps aid in decomposing of these stalks over winter and then we disc them again lightly in the spring before planting this ground into soybeans. This helps aid in slug damage to our soybeans in the spring by destroying the slug's habitat. We have not had to replant any soybeans due to slug damage since we started this practice probably fifteen years ago. Now one might say well when we have to replant due to slugs our seed company gives us the seed for free so not a big deal right?? Sure, that helps but one thing we see that has made a difference for us with soybeans is planting them early and harvesting them in a timely manner. If you wait until you see that slug damage, then wait another week or so to see if they will grow out of it and then go to replant you're no longer planting early and have given up some bushels is what we've seen. I will also add that if you started this practice, I'd expect it to possibly take a year or two for this to work well. And again, this isn't a sure thing for every farmer I'm just sharing some of what we see that works on our acres. The second benefit we see, which is an even bigger benefit currently with the

continuing high fertilizer costs is this. We spread chicken litter on all our acres going into corn. We are a small enough operation that we can get across all our corn acres spreading in the spring. We'd like to utilize everything we paid for in that litter so we can do that better with the aid of a vertical tillage pass within 8 hours or less of spreading so we don't lose our nitrogen to volatilization. A timely rain of a half inch can do this as well. You can lose 70 percent of your total nitrogen if you don't incorporate it within the first 8 hours of spreading. By incorporating your litter into the soil, you can reduce your nitrogen loss by 90 percent. Farming is all about timing and doing some proper tillage helps our bottom line. There are farmers that would disagree and say doing no till is the best way and I'm sure it is for them. This is just what works for us and that's the beauty of where we farm.... You can do what works best for you on your acres. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord. (Colossians 3:23).

May you all have a prosperous and safe 2026 from all of us at Jordan Century Farms.

Flinchbaugh Farms No Till

I was recently asked to talk about why we choose to use no-till practices in our cropping systems. This is an excellent question! I think it is important to note that the context of everyone's farm is different. No two farms are the same and no two farms do things the exact same way. This is how we choose to farm.

No-tilling is an integral part of our farming system and is how we plant all of our crops. However, it is only one piece of a more dynamic puzzle we strive to solve. That being soil health. Soil health is what we focus on improving on the land we farm. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), there are four guiding principles of soil

Cont'd on page 3

health. Each principle has value in and of itself, but we find the greatest benefit to our farm when we implement the entire system.

1. Maximize the presence of Living roots in the soil. This is cover crops. Living roots feed soil biology – the living organisms in the soil. Earth worms, protozoa, bacteria, fungi, and so on. There is more life below the soil surface than there is above. This biology needs to have food to eat year round, no different than you and I. When we get hungry....especially very hungry, we become very unproductive. Living roots provide root exudates for the microbiome to feed on. These root exudates are primarily liquid sugars (carbon). Having roots in the soil as many days of the year as possible, whether they are our cash crop or a cover crop, provides the microbiome what they need to thrive. The greater the population of biology in our soil the more nutrients they are going to cycle out of the soil mineral profile as well as stored organic matter. These cycled nutrients are plant available and lead to decreased levels of fertilizer inputs needed for our cash crops. When planting covers, the greatest value is what is happening with the roots below ground. We don't get caught up in thinking we need to have a lot of above ground biomass to achieve success.

2. Minimize Disturbance. This is no-tilling. Tillage inherently loosens soil particles and breaks them into pieces. It breaks the soil aggregation and decreases soil structure. No-tilling is likely the longest adopted practice of the four soil health principles. It was adopted initially as a very successful means of limiting soil erosion. I think we all are aware of how powerful a tool no-tilling has been over the past half century in helping keep soil on our fields and not washing away. Our long term no-tilled and cover cropped fields are more resilient with more soil structure and are able to handle equipment traffic much better than if we were using tillage. Cutting ruts is a rare occurrence. As a result of tilling the soil and breaking soil aggregation, the home of the biology that is so helpful and important to us is compromised and many times destroyed. It becomes very hard for populations of earthworms and the other beneficial microbiome to thrive when we destroy the house with which they live. Beneficial insect populations tend to thrive in no-tilled and cover cropped fields. These insects are responsible or

feeding on slugs and other pests. We have seen huge increases in the levels of ground beetles on our farm fields. The ground beetles love to eat slugs. Beneficial insect levels in our fields have continued to rise as we have stayed committed to cover cropping, no-till and all four of the soil health principles.

3. Maximize Soil cover. This is the combination of no-tilling, cover crops, being mindful of not removing too much straw or corn fodder, etc. Residue is the armor of the soil. It helps keep the soil temperature moderated. Night time temperatures do not crash when the sun goes down, and daytime temperatures do not spike. Plant roots and the soil microbiome are much happier when they are not exposed to polar ends of temperature. Evaporation rates are lower during the hot growing season, leading to crops that can withstand longer periods of stress due to lack of rainfall. Another benefit is the happier the soil microbiome is, the more nutrients they will cycle to our crops. Air temperature is also affected by soil residue cover as well. As an example, we have documented in our own fields in the past the air temperature halfway up a corn plant at tasseling. Both no-till fields side by side, one with excellent soil cover from a high residue cover crop and another with no cover planted into old soybean stubble. The field with good residue coverage averaged 30 degrees lower than the one with practically no soil residue. You could feel the difference on your skin as you walked from one field to the other. Corn silk pollination was much better in the field with the lower air temperature.

4. Maximize Diversity. This is focusing on attempting to broaden the crops we grow in our crop rotation as well as focusing on using multiple species of cover crops in our cover crop plantings. A diverse crop rotation is critical in helping us break disease and pest cycles. Crop rotation is the cheapest fungicide and insecticide we use. It decreases our reliance on costly applications to protect our plants. Soil biology – the living organisms in our soil are no different from you and I. We like to eat a variety of foods and most days we like to eat something different than the day before. If we feed our microbiome properly with diverse crops with diverse root exudates (sugars) it will make more of the things our cash crop needs available.

As the health of the soil increases, water infiltration rates also increase. Water, nutrient, and pesticide runoff is minimized. The soil begins to function as a sponge capturing more water during every rain event, all the while maintaining structure and aggregation so

that air moves freely through the soil. This allows the soil to hold more water, slowly release it to our crop and not become saturated. The more water we infiltrate allows more water for our crops to use later in the growing season when we experience dry periods and also helps maintain and strengthen wells and other water sources. Soil is an amazing filter. The minerals and microbes in soil are responsible for filtering and buffering our soil amendments (fertilizer, manure, pesticides, etc.) we use so they do not end up on our underground water sources. Soil carbon and organic matter levels increase. Every percent of soil organic matter has the ability to hold 16-20,000 gallons of water. Water is a prized asset in the peak of summer and crop demand. Our long-term focus and commitment to all four of the principles of soil health has allowed us to slowly decrease fertility inputs because the soil is cycling more and more nutrients every year.

This is but a brief discussion on why we use the soil health principles to guide us in managing our field crops. If you or anyone you know is interested in hearing more about our experiences I'd be happy to talk in further detail. Soil health is a long-term commitment. It doesn't happen overnight and requires purposeful thought year after year. Most importantly, it is a system. Each principle is just as important as the other in achieving long-term healthy soil.

Andy Flinchbaugh



Having the safety talk with your kids isn't just important—it's essential.

In 2023, 19% of deaths in off-highway vehicle (OHV) accidents were children under 16, with only 2% wearing helmets.¹ The **Let's Champion Rider Safety**® campaign, provides tips and resources for effective safety discussions and protection for young riders.



Learn more at
Nationwide.com/ATVsafety



Scan code to get
safety tips for your
young riders.

¹ U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

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PFB New Website

Have you been on the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau website lately? It has a new face! PFB contracted with a website developer and upgraded the pages making it more user friendly and easy to find what you are looking for. There is still a member only section where you can log in to renew your membership, as well as see your discounts for various businesses. Make sure to go check it out if you haven't already!

www.pfb.com



New Members We Welcome You!

We welcome our newest members since 10/1/25! We value your membership and hope you enjoy the publications you receive, follow our social media, engage in events, and share your story with us and others!

Joshua Wilson	Aaron Burkindine
Nicole Shultz	Hallie Guiseppa
Tom Clayton	Linda Edwards
Holden McGregor	

Powerlines in Southern York County

Southern York County residents may have noticed work commencing on the electrical transmission line running from Airville to the MD line south of Stewartstown. This 230kv line was rebuilt in 2018, replacing a lattice structure that was nearing 100 years old. The 2018 line is scheduled to be wrecked and replaced by a new 500kv line that will carry current to a proposed new line in MD called the MPRP which is planned to carry power to data centers in Northern Virginia. The MPRP has met with heavy opposition in Maryland, both from MD Farm Bureau and others who would lose their land to the new project.

The MPRP has not been approved by the MD Public Service Commission; however the PA side of the line in York County was approved this year by the PA Public Utility Commission. So despite the risk of this being a "road to nowhere", work has begun here.

Electricity demand and supply issues (including data centers, solar, and rate effects) are a top priority for Farm Bureau this year. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to us.

Photo credit: Sharon Shue

Accidental Death Insurance

The group AD&D policy covers each qualified member of the family. The value of the policy increases \$300 annually to a maximum of \$3,100 for consecutive renewals before 1/1 each year. This is why it is so important to renew your membership by 12/31 each year! Did you renew yours yet?



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Keystone Farm Show, York, PA

January 6-8, 2026

AFBF Annual Meeting, Anaheim, CA

January 9-14, 2026

Pennsylvania Farm Show, Harrisburg, PA

January 10-17, 2026

Fruit & Vegetable Growers Convention

January 27-29, 2026

PFB Amplify Convention, State College

February 14-15, 2026

York County Ag Recognition Banquet

February 18, 2026

Region 2 Farm Bureau Days

March 4, 2026

Ag Literacy Week

March 16-20, 2026

FARMER Dinner, Harrisburg, PA

March 30, 2026

PFB State Legislative Conference

March 31, 2026



Pennsylvania Farm Show

The annual Pennsylvania Farm Show is here! The show runs January 10-17, 2026 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. This year's theme, "Growing a Nation" is focused around us celebrating 250 years of our great Nation! Admission is free while parking is \$15 credit only.

Hours are as follows:

1/9 food court only 12-9 PM.

1/10 8 AM—9 PM

1/11 8 AM—8 PM

1/12-16 8 AM—9 PM

1/17 8 AM—5 PM

2nd Annual Gun Raffle!

The Gun Raffle produced a York County winner again this year! Thank you to everyone who bought tickets and a special thank you to Lynette Harrison for being our largest seller in York County! The profit this year was \$19,000! Make sure to look for the Farm Bureau Wildlife Booth at the Great Outdoors Show February 7-15, 2026 at the Farm Show Complex.

Winners are listed below:

11/29 Mike Cubler
11/30 Christopher Welshans
12/1 Kelby Hochreither
12/3 Christian Hoffman
12/4 Sam Ferster
12/5 Austin Brosius
12/6 Joshua Zerby
12/7 Brad Overdorff
12/8 Matt Shiflett
12/9 Gene Berfield
12/10 Joe Sees
12/11 Kathi Saller
12/12 Matt Houser

Amplify Convention

Join your fellow Farm Bureau members from Pennsylvania as well as neighboring states when we come together February 14-15, 2026 at the Penn Stater Hotel in State College. What a fun way to spend Valentine's Day weekend with fierce and fabulous like minded agricultural individuals networking, engaging, and learning together to create a better tomorrow here in PA!

The Keynote speaker will be Cody & Erika Archie from Bar 7 Ranch, first generation ranchers from Central Texas who have 3 million followers on social media! The rest of the weekend will be full of tours, breakout sessions, meals and entertainment! You don't want to regret missing out on this, so make sure to register today to be part of this amazing Convention here in PA!

York County Ag Recognition Banquet

Make sure to RSVP for the annual banquet held at the York Expo Center 2/18/26. Join us to celebrate the strength, dedication, and impact of our agricultural community! RSVPs due by January 24 to ngroff@yorkstatefair.org

PFB Annual Meeting

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's held it's 75th Year Anniversary this year at the annual meeting in Hershey, PA November 16-18, 2025. Present from York County were: Barron & Jana Shaw, President; Mike & Julie Schrum, District 8 State Board; Nathan Filak, Charles Brown, Dave Orwick, and Mark Gingrich. AFBF President Zippy Duvall was present as speaker Sunday evening for Open Session. Monday evening speakers included: Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi, Governor Josh Shapiro, and Dept. of Ag Secretary Russell Redding.

The YAP Auction brought in \$8,500 in donations and thanks to Shaw Orchards for donating a basket to auction off which brought in \$100!

We look forward to the next 75 years of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau with you and your future generations to carry on the torch.



Amplify Convention
Building Your Foundation

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
Cody & Erika Archie

Central Texas ranchers and entrepreneurs Cody and Erika Archie of Bar 7 Ranch share their family's journey with over 3 million followers, highlighting how grit, faith, and strong family values form the foundation of every successful operation.

The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center

FEBRUARY 14 & 15, 2026

1-day and 2-day registrations available!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Mel Lee Baker

39TH ANNUAL YORK COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RECOGNITION BANQUET
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026

SAXTON & STUMP **PLATINUM SPONSORS** **Glatfelter Insurance Group**
LAWYERS AND CONSULTANTS
York Expo Center
All Trans Memorial Hall East

Social Hour - 5:30 P.M. Dinner - 6:30 P.M. Program - 7:30 P.M.
RSVP's Due by January 24th to ngroff@yorkstatefair.org



Member Benefits

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau knows you work hard for your money and your membership should too. Visit www.pfb.com/services or scan the QR code to see how to get your share of **\$2.7 million** in **annual savings**.



To redeem discounts, use the required codes, websites, and/or phone numbers found by logging into the Members Only website at www.pfbmembers.org.

Member Benefits are subject to change without notice. Membership Dues Are Non-Refundable.

Home and Auto



www.pfb.com/ford
to download certificate
Must be a member for 30+ days,
rebate not always stackable,
some exclusions may apply

**\$500.00 off exclusive
Ford trucks**



Code: 11361045
National Fleet Discount



Must show membership card
Exceptions may apply



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Farm and Business



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Membership number required
10% off



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30 day waiting period



www.johndeere.com/farm-bureau
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855.626.4088
www.pfb.com/shipley-energy
Membership number required

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Code: Group 946
www.scriptsave.com



800.974.7036
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PFB Member Service



800.522.2375
www.pfb.com/healthservices

Financial and Insurance



Nationwide® offers a variety of insurance and financial services to Farm Bureau members including farm*, auto*, home*, pet*, travel*, powersports, commercial and life insurance.
*Select discounts may apply.

To learn more, contact your local Nationwide agent or visit Nationwide.com/pfb.

Additional Benefits

Save even more with County Farm Bureau Local Discounts!

For a complete list of discounts offered by +375 locally-owned businesses in nearly 50 counties visit pfb.com/localdiscounts.
Local discounts not offered in all counties.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Member | Deals Plus



pfb.enjoymydeals.com

Publication

PFB adds value to membership and keeps members informed through a variety of print and digital publications. Members receive 5% off advertising rates in our print publications. Contact advertising coordinator for details.

A total \$6 portion of annual member dues covers subscriptions to Positively Pennsylvania. Members receive 5 issues of Positively Pennsylvania per year. Publication frequency and details are subject to change.



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