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Local News First!

Adams County Activity ▫

Local farmers working together

Welcome New Members: BL Wiles Farm LLC., Alex Bates, Josh Ramsburg, Lee Ramsburg, Michael Sracic, Ryan Widerman, Carolyn Hunt, Joe Kuhns, Angus Kelsall, David Smith, Suzanne Aiello and Daniel Nir

Mark Your Calendar for May 16!!!

The Adams County Farm Bureau will be holding their 3rd Annual Chicken BBQ to support their Scholarship Funds on May 16, 2026. You will get a chicken half, baked potato, applesauce, roll for \$12.00. Baked Goods and drink will be provided for an additional cost. Pick up will be at the Ag Center Pavilion from 11:00 until sold out (usually before 2:00) pre-order tickets to guarantee you don't miss out! To order tickets, contact a board of director member (their names are in the margin) or contact secretary Deb Stock at edstock1005@gmail.com or 717-476-5921. IF you are willing to donate baked goods, contact Deb Stock.

Region 3 Farm Bureau Days

Region 3 Farm Bureau Day Hits Hot Topic Buttons
Data centers, FPRs and wildlife management top agenda
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members from across the seven-county region convened on March 2 to learn first-hand about hot topic issues affecting the commonwealth as well as how they pertain to rural living and agriculture.

With the topic of data centers stealing the headlines in various counties across the state, Tom Beresnyak, energy and emerging

Calendar of Events

April

- 3 – Good Friday
- 5- Easter
- 8 – Monthly Meeting
- 9- Monthly Meeting
- 10 ,11 – Women’s ICE Summit
- 12-17 – Rural Road Week
- 15 – Tax Day

May

- 7 – PSU Trustee Election
- 7 – Monthly Meeting
- 10- Mother’s Day
- 16 – Armed Forces Day
- 16 – Chicken BBQ
- 22 – Ag Institute Reg. deadline
- 25 – Memorial Day

June

- 4 – Monthly Meeting
- 8 – Foundation Golf Outing
- 20 – FOA Brewfest
- 21-26 – Educator’s Ag Institute
- 21 – Father’s Day

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technologies educator with Penn State Extension, took center stage for a portion of Region 3 Farm Bureau Day agenda that drew in a crowd of 70 hailing from Fulton, Franklin, Cumberland, Adams, Juniata, Mifflin and Perry counties. His educational overview of why companies have sought out certain areas of the state as sites for data centers, included details on water and energy usage and local governmental authority on the matter.

It was indicated Beresnyak will be speaking further on the matter as part of a public meeting hosted by the Franklin County Farm Bureau on Friday, March 27. The educational 7 p.m. meeting will be held at the Scotland Community Center located at 3862 Scotland Main Street, Chambersburg.

Wildlife also remains a top priority for the Farm Bureau in 2026. Tyler Strohecker, Pennsylvania Game Commission landowner engagement and hunting access manager, and southcentral region Hunter Access Technician Daniel Mohney III provided an overview of the certified hunter and hunter access programs.

In January, the certified hunter program was given a preliminary nod of approval to expand statewide. The expansion is pending final vote next month, but, if approved, will connect qualified hunters with farmers to help reduce crop damage and manage the deer population. Criteria for interested hunters include passing a shooting proficiency test and written exam, background check and abiding by rules set forth in a program agreement.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Government Affairs Director Bailey Fisher tackled food processing residual (FPR) application and enforcement, which is continuing to make a stink in several counties within Region 3- Fulton, Franklin and Cumberland. Fisher noted House Bill 587 addresses the proposed establishment of a formal certification program for FPR haulers and brokers by the Department of Agriculture. It is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Ag Committee.

A second bill, House Bill 586, focuses on the management of FPRs and has not moved from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee since April 2025. An amendment is being sought that the Farm Bureau and PennAg Industries will support.

Others offering keynote speeches as speakers or sponsors during the event held in Carlisle included agronomist Tosh Mazzone of Penn State Extension; attorney Alexandra Sipe of Sipe Law, LLC; Maureen O’Shea Fitzgerald from Horizon Farm Credit; Bill Chain of Swift AeroSeed; and Nathan Shoemaker of Shoemaker’s Insurance and Financial Services.

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**Farming is a profession
of hope.**

Brian Brett



Congratulations!!!

As of March 31, 2026 the Adams County Farm Bureau made goal on membership! Thank you for sending in your membership forms and renewing your memberships. With your help we can do great things!!!

Farms Care

Donations Collected for Ronald McDonald House, Hershey
Almost \$16,000 donated through Farmers Care event
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

If one measures farmers by their willingness to help their neighbors, then the bar was certainly raised even higher on Friday.

During a special ceremony as part of the annual Farmers Care project, it was announced that \$15,756 was raised through the efforts of seven county Farm Bureaus and one business, Plainville Farms, to benefit Ronald McDonald House (RMH), Hershey. Additional counties are still gathering donations, which is expected to bring the total to more than \$17,000.

The ceremony included several keynote speakers, including Pennsylvania Farm Bureau President Chris Hoffman and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary Lisa Graybeal, who noted agriculture is as much as about people as it is about crops and livestock.

With RMH offering both comfort and stability to its residents due to its close proximity to medical facilities in Hershey, the pantry and household cleaning items as well as financial contributions gathered by the county Farm Bureaus will help raise that level of comfort and stability.

In 2025, approximately \$57,000 was raised statewide through

"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain!"

Dolly Parton

The greatest mistake you can make is to be continually fearing that you'll make one

Elbert Hubbard

"Many of us have been running all our lives. Practice stopping."

Thich Nhat Hanh

Kindness is one thing you can't give away. It always comes back

George Skolsky

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

Nelson Mandela

Living is the art of getting used to what we didn't expect

Eleanor Wood

Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day

Sally Koch

In the face of

Farmers Care. The total this year is over \$73,000 with donations for two RMH houses still being gathered.

In addition to words shared by Farm Bureau and RMH officials, the most poignant testimony was perhaps offered by Amanda Hicks from Centre County, who along with her family had been staying at RMH Hershey for over two weeks.

A mother of six, Hicks shared what a blessing RMH has been to her family following the birth of their newborn daughter Ashleigh Aurora. The assistance the family received with lodging, travel and food allowed them to take pause from traveling to and from their Berkshire home to focus on being close to Ashleigh and meeting her needs.

Farmers Converge On Capitol For Annual State Conference

John and Brayden Park enjoyed a day off school Tuesday. However, the 12 and 11-year-old brothers hailing from Jefferson County certainly didn't miss out an educational opportunity. The duo, along with their parents Daniel and Lorie, were among the 200 Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members who converged on the Capitol for the opportunity to have their voice heard on the Hill.

The Park brothers joined Farm Bureau President Chris Hoffman on the Rotunda for a press conference and went door to door speaking with their legislators. This year's hot button issues for the grassroots organization included state budget priorities such as bolstering the state's monitoring and response to livestock health concerns and support of the land scrip fund with Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences; reform of the over-order premium; fixing the eminent domain code by bringing Senate Bill 225 to the floor; and raising awareness to concerns pertinent to energy, water and land usage by data centers.

In addition to the 45 county Farm Bureaus that were represented at annual state conference, almost 100 legislators as well as staffers took time to participate in the day's activities and luncheon that saw Department of Ag Secretary Russell Redding serve as the keynote speaker. Redding was joined at the podium by Sen. Judy Schwank; Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski, Rep. Dan Moul, PFB President Hoffman and Vice President Tommy Nagle.

Participating from Region 3 at the conference were members from Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata and Perry counties. Representing Adams County at annual conference were Brian Davis, Brock Widerman, Mark Widerman, Mark Clowney, John Clowney, Dean Lobaugh, Dave Wenk and Carl Wilkinson.

uncertainty, there is nothing wrong with hope.

Bernie Siegel

"Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy."

Thomas Merton

"Reflect on your present blessings, of which every man has plenty, not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some."

Charles Dickens

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."

Helen Keller

"Three things in human life are important: The first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind."

Henry James

"The tests of life are not to break you but to make you."

Norman Vincent Peale

"May my dreams be bigger than my fears, my actions louder than my words, and my faith stronger than



BREAKFAST WITH THE COMMISSIONERS

The Adams County Farm Bureau Board met with the Adams County Commissioners on April 1, 2026 at the Heartland Diner to discuss topics that stretched from DATA centers to water concerns. It is always a pleasure to have these one-on-one discussions with them.

Spring Meeting

The Spring Meeting, which was held at the Farmhouse Restaurant in Gettysburg, was very well attended with an attendance of 66 members and guest. Guest Speaker was Marley Ishler and Kevin Brubaker from Plainville Farms in New Oxford. Also in attendance was Catherine Wallen, the new Representative for the 193rd district, Kelly Kuhn, Ag teacher and FFA Advisor for New Oxford High School and a Golden Owl Award recipient, Dan Moul, Representative of the 91st district, Alexis Landsford, 4-H Extension Leader and some members of the 4-H Senate, Elizabeth Farley, a representative for Congressman John Joyce, and Commissioners Jim Martin and Marty Qually.



Soil Health: The Soil Food Web

Keeping the soil surface covered, disturbing the soil as little as possible, and diversity of crops are all important soil health principles that are routinely discussed. Another very important soil health system or ecosystem that is not discussed as often is the Soil Food Web or the underground ecosystem. This system influences almost all soil functions like nutrient cycling, nutrient retention, improved structure, infiltration, water-holding capacity, and residue decomposition, which are vital for crop production. To improve these functions first let's examine the levels of organisms that create the Soil Food Web.

The first and lowest level of the Soil Food Web contains plants. Also known as photosynthesizers or nature's solar panels. Plants are responsible for capturing the sun's energy and converting it into energy that feeds the "underground livestock". This first level is responsible for capturing the energy used by all other levels of the Soil Food Web. If plants are missing, there is no energy being added to the soil and the soil food web will experience a time of stress and famine.

The second level includes organisms that are decomposers, mutualists, pathogens, parasites, and root feeders. Of these the decomposers and mutualists are the most important for crop production. Decomposers break down plant residues, which is important for: retaining nutrients, creating energy and/or food for other organisms, producing compounds that improve soil structure, and cycle nitrogen along with other nutrients. Mutualists enhance plant growth by protecting roots from disease-causing organisms, fix nitrogen, and form mycorrhizal associations with roots to obtain nutrients and water for the plants.

The third level includes shredders and grazers. This is the first level of carnivores. Shredders are responsible for the breakdown of residue and enhance soil structure. These earthworms and macro-arthropods shred plant litter while feeding on bacteria and fungi and improve soil structure as they move through the soil. Shredding plant litter is a very important first step in the decomposition process, which allows smaller organisms to continue this process. The grazers feed on bacteria and fungi to cycle nutrients (nitrogen) and control detrimental organisms.

The fourth and higher levels are higher level predators, for example larger insects, mice, voles, which control populations in lower levels. These larger organisms improve soil structure and move smaller organisms long distances.

All the levels of the Soil Food Web create a very dynamic and complex system. Each level of this living system contributes to the soil's ability to cycle nutrients, maintain soil structure, infiltrate water, hold water, and decompose residue. The higher the diversity and more levels of organisms in the soil will result in a healthier functioning soil resulting in more resilient crop

production. With time, this increased functioning of the soil can increase profit by decreasing the amount of commercial fertilizer and pesticides needed to grow crops.

Lindsey Bream

District Conservationist

USD-NRCS-Gettysburg Field Office

Renew Your Membership Now!

Reminder: July starts the new membership drive! Farm Bureau affects so many areas besides crop and livestock farmers. The policies that are passed and brought to the attention of the Pennsylvania legislators affect so many people from wineries, horse owners, to produce owners and sellers to commodity companies. If you know someone that isn't but should be a member, ask them to join, the Farm Bureau is there to help all the agricultural community. You can renew your membership by mail or online at PFB.com

There is an opening for a Board Member. If you are interested in sitting on the Board, contact President Brian Davis at 717-528-4485.

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¹U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

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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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