



# Berks County Farm Bureau Berks Newsletter

Robin Lincoln, Editor

September Edition 2019

The newsletter is always available online at [www.pfb.com/berks](http://www.pfb.com/berks)

*Thanks to those of you who have opted to receive your newsletter electronically. So far, 2% of our members have agreed to stop their paper/snail-mail newsletters. We encourage you to help us move into the 21st century by letting us know that you want electronic only, or that you'd still prefer the paper version.*

**Please e-mail [robinl@ptd.net](mailto:robinl@ptd.net) to let us know your preference: paper vs. email/online.**

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### State Director District 3

Howard Robinson \_\_\_\_\_ 717-529-2508



**Have you ever met the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau President Mr. Rick Ebert? Now is your chance!**

**He will be speaking at our Fall Banquet on Friday, October 4, 2019!**

**Check in time is 6:45 p.m.  
\$11 a person kids 10 and under free**

This amazing event held at the Berks County Ag Center: 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport PA 19533 will also include a **Pig Roast!** Salad, baked potato, mixed vegetables, with rolls, sheet cake and pulled pork of course.

Also on this evening you will be able to check out one of the brand new voting machines to be used in the next election! The machine will be available from 6-7:15pm so you may want to come early. Doors will be open. Safety poster winners will be awarded prizes!

Mail your check to:  
Robin Lincoln

315 South Baumstown Rd  
Birdsboro PA 19508

*This will reserve your spot on the list (no tickets distributed).*

Deadline: Friday, September 20, Friday.



## BCFB @ Fightin Phils

A fun evening was held by all at the Fightin Phils game! Hope you had a chance to come out and say hello to us using your free tickets! See you next year!

## Policy Development Meeting Times

August 27: 7:30 pm - Sam Forry, Bethel - 717-933-4938

August 28: 7:00 pm - Dorothy Wagner, Oley - 610-689-5496

August 29: 7:00 pm - Dwight's Barn S Northkill Rd., Bernville - 610-587-3788

## CROP INSURANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH FARM BUREAU



Over the past two years American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and American Farm Bureau Insurance Services (AFBIS) proudly worked in collaboration to bring the Dairy Revenue Protection (Dairy RP) insurance product to

market. I have been following the creation of Dairy RP and it is now part of the USDA-RMA crop insurance program. As a result of this, AFBIS is now offering crop insurance in Pennsylvania (PA). I am one of the initial agents in AFBIS appointed to offer crop insurance in PA through my crop insurance agency, The Salem Company, LLC.

AFBIS offers a variety of federal and private crop insurance products. AFBIS is committed to supporting Farm Bureau's nationwide, including the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

I have been a CAPP certified crop insurance adjuster for seven years and I am now a licensed crop insurance sales agent selling for the past seven years. In addition I have been a farm accountant and a commodities accountant and I am familiar with the financial instruments used in hedging agricultural commodities. These are all the components important in risk management.

I started my agency in 2015 and I insure corn, soybeans, wheat, barley, tobacco, apples, peaches, grapes, and now the milk price. You can insure all these crops and any other insurable crop through AFBIS. I am licensed to sell crop insurance in PA, MD, DE, and NJ. If you are interested in crop insurance through The Salem Company, LLC you may contact me at 717-926-4355 or [info@salemcropins.com](mailto:info@salemcropins.com).

If you have any questions, you may contact me for more information.

Thank you  
Dwayne Salem  
The Salem Company LLC

## Gene Editing May Provide Key to Avian Influenza Resistance in Chickens

Researchers in Scotland have discovered a possible way to prevent infection from avian influenza in chickens by using gene editing techniques that removed DNA that is needed by the virus to replicate.

Avian influenza is a global threat to poultry broiler and layer operations leading to very high mortality rates. The goal of the research is to use gene editing techniques to produce commercial flocks that will demonstrate resistance to this devastating disease.

## MSC Business Services Account Supervisors

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## Reminder: Your Voice Can Help Dairy Farmers

Your voice and less than five minutes of your time could help put whole milk back in schools and stop non-dairy beverages from being labeled as “milk.”

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members have an opportunity to encourage their representatives in Congress to support Pennsylvania’s dairy industry. Please respond to PFB’s Action Request to contact your representative about cosponsoring the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, School Milk Nutrition Act and Dairy Pride Act. If your representative is already a cosponsor, please make sure to thank them via the Action Request.

The bills would allow flavored and unflavored whole milk to be offered in schools, expand milk options in schools by reaffirming a recent USDA regulation offering schools the option of serving low-fat flavored milk, and prevent non-dairy products from being labeled with dairy terms such as “milk,” “yogurt,” and “cheese.”

Please visit [www.pfb.com/ActNow](http://www.pfb.com/ActNow) to contact your representative today.

## Overhaul of Agricultural Guest Worker Program Proposed

The U.S. Department of Labor has proposed an overhaul of the H-2A Agricultural Guest Worker Program that aims to streamline the application process and modernize other aspects of the program.

Farm Bureau applauded President Donald Trump’s administration for recognizing the need to reform the program and said it will review and evaluate the proposal before taking a position.

Among the changes proposed are revising the definition of agricultural labor, overhauling worker-protection measures, and seeking to streamline the application process by shifting

more processes online.

Agricultural labor reform has been among Farm Bureau’s chief priorities. Many farmers have found the current H-2A program does not work for them. In addition, the H-2A program is seasonal and many farms require labor throughout the year, especially in Pennsylvania where there are many year-round dairy and mushroom operations. The proposed changes do not address the need for year-round labor.

"Currently, farmers with year-round worker needs, such as dairy and livestock, are unable to use the program and that’s not right," American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall said. "An adequate workforce is needed to address issues ranging from food waste to farm sustainability. America disagrees on many things, but surely we can agree we need to keep putting healthy food on the table."

Duvall also noted that reforming the guest worker program is especially critical as the administration expands deportation of undocumented workers.

## Predatory Wasps are Identified as an Effective Control of Stink Bugs

Research in Georgia has identified small predatory wasps that can provide a natural control of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, which is now found in 44 states. Stink bugs can cause severe economic damage to many horticultural and field crops.

About ten species of wasps are known to parasitize and kill the eggs of stink bugs. The wasps are attracted to buckwheat and other nectar-producing plants in the spring and will migrate into crop fields during the summer months, where they destroy the eggs of the stink bugs.

Homeowners who plant nectar-producing plants on their properties to attract the wasps may also experience a reduction in stink bug populations that will benefit home gardens.



### Berks County Nationwide Agents

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Robesonia, PA  
610-693-5000

**James McIntyre\***  
Morgantown, PA  
610-286-6170

**The Deangelo Company**  
Wyomissing, PA  
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# IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
October 3	Measure The Candidate Night	Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
October 4	Fall Banquet with Mr. Ebert	Ag Center	6:45 p.m.
October 11	BCFB Board Meeting	Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
November 8	BCFB Board Meeting	Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
December 13	BCFB Board Meeting	Ag Center	7:30 p.m.



## Interested in receiving the online version of our Newsletter?

So far, 2% of our members have agreed to stop their paper/snail-mail newsletters. We encourage you to help us move into the 21st century by letting us know that you want electronic only!

Please e-mail [robinl@ptd.net](mailto:robinl@ptd.net) to let us know!

## Enrollment for New Trade Relief Package Now Open

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced details of its \$16 billion aid package that aims to soften the blow dealt to farmers by a prolonged trade war with China.

Farm Bureau is reviewing the package. American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall said farmers are grateful for the assistance as they contend with a trade war on top of a challenging farm economy, severe weather events, low commodity prices and a labor shortage. But he added, "while we are grateful for the continuing support for American agriculture from President Trump and Secretary Perdue, America's farmers ultimately want trade more than aid. It is critically important to restore agricultural markets and mutually beneficial relationships with our trading partners around the world."

Farmers can apply now through Dec. 6 for direct payments to be made in up to three waves. The first round of payments, which will be made in August, will cover the higher of either 50 percent of the producer's calculated total payment or \$15 per acre. The other rounds will be made in November and January if deemed necessary by USDA. Payments for many grain crops will be made based on total 2019 acres planted by Aug. 1 based on a rate that varies by county. Payment rates for Pennsylvania range from \$15 per acre in Susquehanna County to \$71 per acre in Pike County, with a statewide median of \$36 per acre.

Dairy producers will be paid 20 cents per hundredweight based on production history. Hog producers will be paid \$11 per head based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019. Some eligible cover crops planted by producers who

experienced natural disasters will be paid at \$15 per acre. Several specialty crops are also eligible for payments including nuts, cranberries, ginseng, sweet cherries and table grapes.

In addition to direct payments, the aid package includes \$1.4 billion in food purchase to distribute to schools and food banks and \$100 million to help farmers identify and access new export markets. To learn more about the aid package, visit [www.farmers.gov/manage/mfp](http://www.farmers.gov/manage/mfp).

## Restrictions Relaxed on the Importation of Hemp Seeds

The USDA is providing guidance for importing hemp seeds into the United States by authority issued under the 2018 Farm Bill. After the Farm Bill was signed into law in December of 2018, hemp seed was no longer listed on the schedule of controlled substances making it legal to import the seeds into the U.S.



Imported hemp seed will need to include a phytosanitary certificate issued by the exporting country verifying the origin of the seed and declaring that no plant pests have been detected. Additionally, imports of Canadian hemp seed will need to be accompanied by a Federal Seed Analysis Certificate.

## CWD Management Areas Expand After More Deer Test Positive



The Pennsylvania Game Commission has expanded its disease management areas by more than 2,300 square miles as it attempts to stop the spread of chronic wasting disease.

The commission's testing of free-ranging deer during 2018 uncovered 123 new confirmed cases of the disease, bringing the total cases of CWD discovered in Pennsylvania free ranging deer since 2012 to 250. Nearly half of the new cases were in Bedford County and close to a quarter were in Fulton County. Blair County has the third most new CWD cases and the remaining handful were found in Huntingdon, Franklin, Somerset, Cambria, Jefferson, Juniata and Perry counties.

While the Game Commission has tested free-ranging elk for CWD, none have tested positive for the disease to date.

A type of prion disease, CWD affects all cervids, including deer and elk, and is spread by deer-to-deer contact. It is always fatal. The disease has been identified in both captive and free-ranging deer in Pennsylvania.

Game Commission rules prohibit hunters from moving high-risk parts of animals harvested within a disease management area outside of the DMA boundaries. There are also additional Deer Management Assistance Program permits available within DMAs to encourage assistance from hunters with managing the deer population within those areas and harvesting animals to be tested for CWD.

With the expansion, DMA 2 has been extended 2,101 square miles and includes all or parts of Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, Somerset and Westmoreland counties.

DMA 3 was expanded by 203 square miles and now includes all or parts of Armstrong, Clarion, Clearfield, Jefferson and Indiana counties. The Game Commission had initially warned that DMA would need to be expanded into the elk range; however, it was determined that doing so could increase the chance of CWD being introduced to that area.

DMA 4, which was established to include parts of Berks, Lebanon and Lancaster counties after the discovery of CWD in a captive deer facility, was not expanded.

The updated DMA maps and boundaries are available at [www.pgc.pa.gov](http://www.pgc.pa.gov).

## Enrollment Open for New Dairy Safety Net, Refunds for Past Premiums Available

Dairy producers are now able to enroll in the revamped safety net program created by the 2018 Farm Bill.

The Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program replaces the former Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) and makes payments when the national average income-over-feed-cost margin falls below a selected coverage level. DMC includes several improvements over MPP to make the program more effective, reduce costs for producers and give more flexibility. See a Farm Bureau analysis of the program at [www.fb.org/market-intel/reviewing-dairy-margin-coverage](http://www.fb.org/market-intel/reviewing-dairy-margin-coverage). Producers who lock in their coverage levels through 2023 will receive a 25 percent discount on premiums.

In addition, producers who participated in MPP are eligible for a refund on premiums paid above the amount of any indemnity received from 2014 through 2017. Producers can receive a 75 percent refund if they use it to pay for DMC premiums or a 50 percent cash refund. The cash refund option is also available to former dairy farmers who participated in MPP but since exited the business.

Contact your local Farm Service Agency office to sign up for DMC or request a refund from MPP.

## Gene Editing May Provide Key to Avian Influenza Resistance in Chickens

Researchers in Scotland have discovered a possible way to prevent infection from avian influenza in chickens by using gene editing techniques that removed DNA that is needed by the virus to replicate.

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