



Berks County Farm Bureau Berks Newsletter

Elizabeth Peifer, Editor

Spring Edition ♣ 2017

The newsletter is always available online at 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

BerksCoFBnews@aol.com to let us know your preference: paper vs. email/online.

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Spring Banquet & Services Update

Friday, March 31, 2017

6:45 Registration, 7:00 Dinner

Adults \$10 - Children 10 and under FREE

New Members since July 1, 2016 all Free – must register



Banquet Menu: Ribs and Baked Chicken, potato filling, mixed veggies, green beans, salad and bread.
Clover drinks and ice cream sundaes

Berks County Ag Center

1238 County Welfare Road • Leesport, PA

Deadline March 25 – Robin Lincoln 484-925-4132

315 S. Baumstown Rd, Birdsboro, PA 19505

BCFB at the Fightin' Phils

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Free Tickets – up to 6 per membership

More info in next newsletter,

or contact Robert Tercha 610-451-2460

There will be a raffle for members who attend the game, so drop by our table near the entrance and put your ticket in for the drawing.



Legislative Breakfast at Wegman's Restaurant, Leesport Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Visit with our legislators. Hear the latest hot topics.

Contact Robin Lincoln to reserve a space:

484-925-4132

Policies Approved at BCFB Annual Meeting - 9/30/16

Federal

We support legislation that would require all State Primaries for Federal office be held on the same date.

State

Similar to PFB Federal Policy, We support mandatory drug testing for public health and safety reasons in order to qualify for state welfare programs. Individuals failing the test would be put into an appropriate rehab program.

Horse Owners

Please take the time to participate in the Southeastern PA Equine Industry Survey. www.sepaequine.org

The purpose of this study is to provide an objective estimate of the economic contribution that our industry makes to the economy of the ten county Southeastern Pennsylvania and York County region encompassing Chester, Delaware, Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Berks, Schuylkill, Lebanon and Lancaster counties. This impact will be expressed in terms of output, final demand, employment, household income, and tax revenue, and will provide a current census of equine population in the region.

The data and analysis will be used to inform and educate officials and legislators at the local and state levels, industry stakeholders as well as the broad community. The economic impact on the local economy will be driven by data on expenditures by type for the major segments of the industry. The last study of this type was conducted in 2003

and examined the equine industry on a statewide basis. Our intent is to update the analysis and focus on the Southeastern Pennsylvania region.

This study is being conducted by the Agribusiness and Equine Science and Management Departments of Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA. As part of its academic curriculum DelVal has a substantial equestrian and Standardbred breeding program.

You will not be asked to identify yourself or your operation other than by County and Township location. All data will be held in strict confidence and will not be released except in aggregate form. No individual equine business will be identified nor will expenditure data for an individual operation be released to any individual or company.

Safety Contest 2017 "Map it Out"

Coloring Contest ages 4 to 6
Poster Contest ages 7 to 9 and 10 to 12
Photography Contest ages 13 to 15 and 16 to 18

Entries must be submitted to Berks County by May 1st.

Full details and the coloring page can be found online at:

www.pfb.com/safety-contests
Questions and Entries can be submitted to:

Elizabeth Peifer 610-689-4934
149 Blacksmith Road, Oley, PA 19547



MSC Business Services Account Supervisors

Carl Ganster - 610-678-1816
Vance Getz - 717-945-6645

David Mory - 610-419-0250
Jason Seibert - 717-274-0217



Berks County Nationwide Agents

Kathy Barry * Robesonia, PA 610-693-5000	Richard McFeely Reading, PA 610-777-2224	Jeffrey Spotts * Wyomissing, PA 610-374-2911
Michael Davidheiser Boyertown, PA 610-367-6095	Hugh McGinley Birdsboro, PA 610-582-2862	Daniel Williams Kutztown, PA 610-683-6823
Brian Hunsinger Douglassville, PA 610-582-5204	James McIntyre Morgantown, PA 610-286-6170	David Wilson Birdsboro, PA 610-582-9233
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PFB Urges Regulators To Accept Penn State Data

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to accept all of the data collected through a Penn State survey that measured best management practices in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The data has been verified by Penn State University and an independent firm hired by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Both the university and the private company agree the results are accurate.

Questions still remain as to how much of the agricultural conservation practices documented in the Penn State survey will be given credit in the model used by EPA to measure Pennsylvania's progress in meeting nutrient reduction goals in the Chesapeake Bay. Last year, Penn State surveyed thousands of farmers in the watershed to determine how many voluntary conservation practices are being followed on farms. The survey asked questions on nutrient and manure management plans, stream bank fencing and riparian buffers, along with other conservation planning. What Penn State found was extensive effort by Pennsylvania farmers in the Bay watershed to install voluntary conservation measures that impact downstream water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce nutrients from reaching creeks and streams.

Prior assessments by the EPA only looked at projects paid for by federal cost share dollars. That approach could put more of the blame for water quality on farmers. Penn State presented their survey findings to the Chesapeake Bay Program Agriculture Workgroup. Prior to presenting the data, an independent company regularly used by EPA to perform technical analysis reviewed Penn State's findings and found they were statistically sound.

In December, the Agriculture Workgroup to the Chesapeake Bay Partnership considered the merits of Penn State's survey as an acceptable approach in measuring pollution and progress in the Bay Model. While the Agriculture Workgroup generally approved the method employed in the Penn State survey, the Workgroup did not approve the data produced from the survey.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau President Rick Ebert said that farmers have been telling government officials for years that the EPA's approach to measuring best management practices on farms is inadequate. Numerous farmers have made the decision to adopt conservation practices that prevent soil runoff and nutrients from reaching waterways, he said.

"Pennsylvania farmers have been frustrated by the unwillingness of regulators to count farmers voluntary conservation measures. Penn State's survey and method gives farmers the recognition they deserve," Ebert said. "The time has come for the EPA to accept the survey data."

Penn State received nearly 7,000 surveys from farmers in the Bay watershed. To verify the data, Penn State researchers visited more than 700 farms to make sure that what was reported in the survey was actually being put into practice.

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Call 717.731.3517

Email: FMS@pfb.com

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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
March 10	BCFB Board Training	Berks County Ag Center	7:00 p.m.
March 10	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks County Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
March 21	Legislative Breakfast	Wegman's Restaurant, Leesport	8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
March 31	Spring Banquet	Berks County Ag Center	6:45 Registration; 7:00 Dinner
April 7	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks County Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
May 12	BCFB Board Meeting	To Be Announced	7:30 p.m.
June 9	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks County Ag Center	7:30 p.m.
June 20	BCFB at the Fightin' Phils	First Energy Stadium, Reading	7:05 p.m.

PFB Recognized for Achievement at National Convention

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau won top honors at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 98th Annual Convention in Phoenix. PFB won the Pinnacle Award, in recognition of our program and membership achievement. The award is given out to one state in each of AFBF's membership categories. In addition, farmers in Blair County were honored for their efforts at showcasing the career opportunities in agriculture.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau won "Awards in Excellence" in all six program activity areas: Education and Outreach, Leadership Development, Membership Initiatives, Member Services, Policy Development and Implementation and Public Relations and Communications. In addition, PFB received "President's Awards" in three program areas: Member Services, Membership Initiatives and Leadership Development. PFB President Rick Ebert praised the work of volunteers across the state who contributed to our organization's success.

"Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is successful because of our grassroots leaders who volunteer their time and talent. This type of recognition cannot be achieved by one person. It takes effort from countless volunteers, and I'm Farm Bureau proud of all the work our members put in to help move Pennsylvania Farm Bureau forward," Ebert said.

Meanwhile, Blair County Farm Bureau was one of several county Farm Bureaus from across the country to receive a County Activity of Excellence, given in recognition of local programs that advance our organization. Last year, Blair County hosted an agriculture career day that highlighted the career opportunities in agriculture to middle school students. Winning a County Activity of Excellence gave Blair County Farm Bureau the opportunity to host a display at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 2017 Annual Convention & IDEAg Trade Show. Blair County Farm Bureau, working with the agriculture committee of the Altoona Blair County Development Cooperation, hosted an agriculture career day for 1,200 seventh grade students from all of the county's public schools. Students visited 15 stations where individuals working in agriculture careers discussed their jobs and the paths they took to get to their career.

Perdue Nominated as USDA Secretary

Former Georgia governor Sonny Perdue has been nominated to serve as the next Secretary of Agriculture. Perdue's nomination must receive Senate confirmation. The USDA supervises a number of programs critical to farmers including Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Services and Rural Development. Along with government experience serving two terms as Georgia's governor, Perdue has practical agriculture experience, having grown up on a farm, worked as a veterinarian and operated a grain and fertilizer business. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau praised the nomination of Perdue.

"Perdue has the reputation of working on issues of vital interest to farm families, including promoting economic opportunities, such as increasing trade of American farm products overseas; recognizing the special needs and concerns of farmers in relation to immigration reform policies; and understanding the impact that burdensome regulations can place on farmers," said Pennsylvania Farm Bureau President Rick Ebert.

Liquor Reform Law Changes Benefit Cider Producers

Recent changes in Pennsylvania's liquor laws that will allow beer distributors to sell six-packs also have additional benefits for the makers of hard cider. Some highlights of Act 166 include allowing limited winery license holders to sell their cider to distributors. Many hard cider producers make their product under Pennsylvania's limited winery license. Such license holders are now also allowed to sell cider made by other limited winery producers on site, so long as sales do not exceed 50 percent of the wineries own on-site sales.

In addition, limited winery licensees may now sell cider purchased from other Pennsylvania limited wineries to distributors, provided that such purchases do not exceed 50 percent of the cider produced by the licensee in the preceding year. The act allows breweries, distilleries and limited distilleries to sell certain Pennsylvania-produced cider on premises, subject to similar percentage conditions. In addition, hard cider manufactures can raise carbonation limits to 6.4 grams per liter, matching the recently effective federal limits.

Farmers Need to Advocate for Extension

Thanks to the foresight of Congress more than 100 years ago, the nation's Land Grant and Cooperative Extension System has stable funding from the federal government. But across the country, Cooperative Extension services are facing budget cuts from state legislatures. That's where Farm Bureau members can step in to help lobby for adequate support for Cooperative Extension services in their community.

That was the message of Dr. Richard Bonanno, associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at North Carolina University, who spoke during a seminar held at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 2017 Annual Convention & IDEAg Trade Show. While the federal government provides yearly funding for Extension services, those dollars must be matched by state governments, Bonanno, said. That's why cuts in state funding can hamper Extension's ability to offer programs.

"We need to do a better job of engaging our state politicians about the need for stable funding. Level funding, or small decreases in Extension budgets can impact our ability to interact with the public, provide youth development programs like 4-H and offer food and nutrition programs," Bonanno said.

Situations like that one that arose in Pennsylvania, where Extension faced the total elimination of funding, can grab headlines, but there is still a danger of small programmatic cuts, Bonanno said. Both types of cuts—either dramatically or over time—can yield the same result, he said.

"If your state funding goes away, you lose your federal match," he said. "That is something we can't ignore."

Report Shows Offset Costs Needed to Eliminate Property Taxes

A report by Pennsylvania's Independent Fiscal Office shows that it will take more than \$14 billion to offset the taxes collected through property taxes. The fiscal office, acting on a request from a member of the General Assembly, highlighted the cost it will take to shift school district funding from property taxes to other means. Looking at property taxes across the state, the Independent Fiscal Office estimated that total property tax collections for the 2017-2018 school year will be \$14.2 billion. By the 2021-2022 school year, the estimated property tax collection increases to \$16.4 billion.

The Independent Fiscal Office report does not examine specific proposals for eliminating property taxes, but simply projects the revenue need to cover expected future levies. Previous legislative proposals have looked at replacing property taxes with a mixture of increases in sales and earned income taxes. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau supports the elimination of school property taxes.

Farm Bureau Considers Dairy Insurance Program

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and American Farm Bureau Insurance Services (AFBIS) have been working in a collaborative effort to develop a new dairy insurance product called "Dairy - Revenue Protection". Similar to crop revenue protection policies this product would protect regional revenue (milk price x state-level milk yield per cow) rather than just milk price or the income-over-feed-cost margin. By protecting revenue this product that would offer regional risk management against both milk price and/or production declines. In an effort to support the market research efforts AFBIS is hosting an online survey for dairy producers. The survey can be found online at: <http://bit.ly/2lr0LSb>

We are positioning this as a livestock insurance product alongside LGM-Dairy and it will not replace Title I Farm Bill products provided to dairy producers. AFBF/AFBIS are preparing a concept proposal to submit to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in April of 2017. If approved this product could be available to dairy producers in late 2018 or early 2019. Individual dairy farmer information provided in the survey will remain 100 percent confidential.

U.S. Withdraws from Trans-Pacific Partnership

President Donald Trump, in his first days in office, signed an executive order to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership—a 12-nation accord that was agreed upon in principal last year. The trade deal would have been a boost for U.S. agriculture exports. With more than a quarter of the nation's agriculture production going to overseas markets, trade is vital for America's farmers, said Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. While AFBF viewed the Trans-Pacific Partnership as good news for agriculture, the organization is hopeful the administration will look to new deals that open markets for farmers.

"With this decision, it is critical that the new administration begin work immediately to do all it can to develop new markets for U.S. agricultural goods and to protect and advance U.S. agricultural interests in the critical Asia-Pacific region," Duvall said.

AFBF will work with the new administration on trade deals that allow America's farmers to have a level playing field and not lose ground to other nations, Duvall said. AFBF believes it's crucial to re-emphasize provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement that have proven beneficial to farmers.

"AFBF will work with the administration to remove remaining barriers that hamstring the ability of America's farmers and ranchers to benefit from trading relationships with our important North American trading partners," Duvall said.

AFBF Sets Policy Direction



Voting delegates from across the country set the American Farm Bureau Federation's policy direction for 2017 to tackle the issues facing agriculture and rural America. Resolutions adopted by delegates at the 98th Annual Convention include setting direction for the 2018 Farm Bill, regulatory reform, crop insurance, biotechnology and data privacy.

“The actions taken by our farmer and rancher delegates from across the nation represent the culmination of our year-long grassroots policy process,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “It also provides us a roadmap for actions AFBF will take to implement our policies throughout this year, and I am optimistic about those prospects.”

Risk Management

Delegates reaffirmed Farm Bureau's support for strong risk-management and safety net tools that can help farmers in times of poor commodity prices or acts of Mother Nature.

Immigration

Delegates continue to support the need for farmers to have access to foreign workers and called for increased flexibility in the nation's H-2A program—including the ability of workers to seek employment from more than one farmer.

Regulatory Reform

Farmers supported policy positions calling on federal regulatory reform, including legislation to eliminate “judicial deference,” which has all but nullified the power of the court system to stand as a check on agency overreach. In addition, delegates approved policy to oppose agency advocacy campaigns that support their own proposed regulations. Farmers also adopted policy that supports requiring federal agencies like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or the U.S. Forest Service, to coordinate with state and local governments when making land management plans and decisions.

Farm Bill

Delegates reaffirmed their support for approving a new Farm Bill that covers both farm policies and hunger and nutrition services. Farmers also are calling on Congress to support using all types of domestic fruits and vegetables for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, including the use of fresh and locally grown when available.

Big Data

Delegates reaffirmed support for the protection of proprietary data collected from farmers, including that farmers should be compensated when their data is used by a third party.

Farmers Reminded of DMAP Enrollment Deadline

Winter is a good time for farmers to look at their plans for coping with wildlife damage and to consider enrolling in a program that assists with deer damage. Farmers can use the Deer Management Assistance Program, known as DMAP,



to help keep deer populations in check on their land. Unchecked deer populations can cause serious damage to crops. An average deer eats about 2,100 pounds of forage annually. If those deer are feeding on farm crops, it can take a large chunk out of farm income. Hunting is a great way to keep deer populations under control.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is again setting a late spring enrollment date for DMAP. To participate in DMAP, you must enroll by May 1, so now is an excellent time to consider your wildlife management plans. During the hunting season, hunters can obtain a permit to take a doe on land identified as suffering from deer damage. In order for farmers to qualify, they must be the owner or lessee of private lands, and must be able to demonstrate that he or she is suffering crop or tree damage on the property. That property may be posted or un-posted. DMAP coupons are then given to the property owner or lessee at a rate of one per five acres of cultivated lands, or one per 50 acres of forest. Property owners are then allowed to distribute those coupons to licensed hunters, who can then redeem the coupon for a DMAP antlerless deer harvest permit. Hunters have to pay the Game Commission the set fee of \$10.70 for a resident DMAP permit. The non-resident permit is \$35.70.

Permits to hunt under DMAP are only valid for the property for which they are issued. Hunters may use DMAP permits during any established deer-hunting season, but must also comply with the hunter harvest report and survey return requirements.

A landowner may request additional coupons above the standard rate of issuance, or obtain coupons for additional properties as separate DMAP areas, by submitting a deer management plan. Landowners must supply each hunter on their property with a map of their property showing the boundaries. A hunter must be able to locate and stay within the property based on the provided map. Landowners may not charge or accept any contribution from a hunter for a DMAP coupon. To enroll in DMAP you must contact the PA Game Commission regional office that serves your area.

Find out more about these and other Member Benefits and Services at www.pfb.com



AFBF Delegates Call For Congressional Action on Regulatory Reform

As a new Congress convenes, voting delegates at the American Farm Bureau Federation called on lawmakers to support regulatory reform.



AFBF voting delegates approved a special resolution during delegate session that comes as Congress considers a series of bills that would scale back a rapid growth in regulations and government overreach. Specifically, delegates supported the use of sound science, transparency in federal agencies, reduction in the abuse of court settlement process and greater Congressional oversight of agencies as part of the regulatory reform process. The House has passed H.R. 5, an omnibus regulatory reform bill. Farm Bureau supports the bill, which now heads to the Senate.

"We want to make sure that our voices are heard. We want to make sure members of the House know where the American Farm Bureau stands, where farmers stand, and the importance of what regulatory reform means going forward," said Cody Lyon, AFBF director of advocacy and political affairs.

Auditor General To Address FARMER Dinner

Pennsylvania Auditor General Eugene DePasquale will speak at the annual FARMER Dinner. The event, a major fundraiser for FARMER, our political action committee, will be held April 3, the day before our State Legislative Conference. DePasquale, a Democrat, was re-elected last year to his second term as Auditor General. The office performs independent audits on state and local governments and recommends changes in procedures to better serve taxpayers. DePasquale, previously served as a member of the House of Representatives from York County.

Since its inception 35 years ago, our FARMER, which stands for Farmers Allied for Responsive More Effective Representation, has recognized lawmakers who are friendly to agriculture. Each election cycle, the bi-partisan FARMER Committee reviews the records of involvement of members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly on important agriculture and rural issues, including input from county Farm Bureaus. Those lawmakers identified by FARMER as "Friends of Agriculture" are publicly recognized and receive a modest campaign contribution.

The FARMER Banquet will take place Monday, April 3 at the Hilton Harrisburg, beginning with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$150 per person or \$250 with spouse. Reservation deadline is March 29. Contact Ginny Keever at 717.761.2740 or vkkeever@pfb.com for reservations.

Penn State Develops Education Resources for Food Safety Act

Penn State has developed educational resource tools to help growers and food processors understand the new federal Food Safety Modernization Act. Along with developing a new information website, Penn State is hosting several education workshops throughout 2017.

FSMA regulations, developed by the Food and Drug Administration, will require farmers to follow certain food safety standards and record keeping. The act includes seven categories under food safety, including Produce Safety, Preventative Controls for Human Food Rule and the Preventive Controls for Animal Feed Rule.

"These rules represent a new approach toward preventing foodborne illnesses," said Luke LaBorde, associate professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Food and feed businesses are charged to take a preventative, instead of a reactive, approach. This means that growers and processors will be responsible for understanding potential risks in their operations and developing science-based measures to control those risks before a problem actually occurs."

Penn State has developed education videos to help farmers and food processors understand the new regulations, and if their farm falls under specific portions of the rules.

In addition, Penn State is hosting several workshops this year to help farmers with issues like grower certification training and food-safety writing plans: January 30, during the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, Hershey; Feb. 9, Lebanon County; March, 7 in Butler County and March 31 in Bedford County. For more information visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/fsma>.

Pennsylvania Leads the Nation in Number of Farmers Selling to Consumers

More Pennsylvania farmers are selling their products directly to consumers than any other state in the nation, according a nationwide survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. While the state was fourth in the total dollar value of sales, it led in the total number of farmers involved in direct farm sales. Farm to consumer sales, including selling to wholesalers who distribute through food hubs, resulted in \$8.7 billion in revenue for farmers nationwide in 2015. The USDA survey found that 115,000 farmers were involved in direct-to-consumer sales at stores and farmers markets. California leads the nation with \$2.8 billion in direct marketing sales; while Pennsylvania farmers have \$439 million in direct farm sales. The Keystone State has more than 6,000 farmers engaged in direct to consumer sales.

USDA Measuring Northeast Farmer Financial Health

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has sent out surveys to farmers in the Northeast, including Pennsylvania, to gauge the health of farm economies. The USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service will spend the next several months compiling and sifting through data on farm economies and production practices. The data is being used as part of an Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

“ARMS is the only survey program that allows anyone to clearly see the current financial well-being of agricultural producers and their households as a whole,” said King Whetstone, Director of the NASS Northeast Office. “The results of this survey will serve as a primary source of information for numerous local and federal policies and programs that affect Northeast farms and farm families.”

USDA agencies are expected to reach out to more than 30,000 farmers nationwide, and around 2,200 in the Northeast region between now and April. The survey will ask farmers to provide data on their operating expenses, production costs and household makeup. In February, USDA researchers will be reaching out to farmers who have not responded to the survey to answer questions and help fill out the questionnaires. Data received by NASS from farmers is kept confidential and only published in aggregate form. Survey results are expected to be released in early August. For more information about NASS visit www.nass.usda.gov.

Pennsylvania School Of Excellence Accepting Applications

The Pennsylvania School for Excellence in the Agricultural Sciences is accepting applications from students who want to explore agriculture careers. The program, operated through Penn State, was known as the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences. The school runs this year July 9 through August 14. Students selected for the school will receive a full scholarship to cover costs. The school for excellence will operate as a four-week residential program at Penn State's University Park campus. Eligible students must have completed 11th grade during the 2016-17 school year and expected to attend 12th grade in the fall. During the school, students will attend courses related to agriculture and environmental science. In addition, they will be able to participate in hands-on laboratory course, participate in field trips and attend events and lectures. Forty students will be selected through a competitive application process, which will also take into account merit and student location. Participants will be living in college dorms on the Penn State campus. Students can apply through February 17. For more information visit: <http://agsci.psu.edu/school-for-excellence>.

AFBF and 4-H Council Reach Partnership Agreement



The American Farm Bureau Federation and the National 4-H Council have established a formal partnership. Both organizations signed a memorandum of understanding in late December that will lead to partnership on issues like leadership development and agriculture literacy. Both organizations hope that by joining together, more young people can see the career opportunities in agriculture.

“Farm Bureau has a long history of investing in young people with a demonstrated interest in not only farming and ranching but also agri-business and food-related careers,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “We’re pleased to build on our tradition of supporting youth in agriculture through this formal collaboration with National 4-H Council.”

The partnership between AFBF and the National 4-H Council—a private sector partner of the Cooperative Extension System—will start this month.

“For more than a century, 4-H has provided young people with opportunities to spark and grow their interests in agriculture, giving them the courage, confidence and resilience to lead,” said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO, National 4-H Council. “National 4-H Council is proud and excited to join forces with the American Farm Bureau Federation to help empower and develop young people with the workforce skills necessary to pursue careers in the agriculture industry.”

Oklahoma Attorney General Selected To Lead EPA

President-elect Donald Trump selected Scott Pruitt to lead



the Environmental Protection Agency. His appointment must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Pruitt is currently the Attorney General in Oklahoma, where he led a legal challenge against the “Waters of the U. S.” rule. The rule, commonly referred to as WOTUS, was pushed by the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and would give both

federal agencies the ability to regulate dry land under the guise of clean water. He is also one of 28 attorneys general suing the federal government over proposed EPA rules aimed at cutting carbon emissions. American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall said Pruitt will have farmers’ best interest at heart.

“We anticipate that as EPA administrator, Pruitt will listen to our concerns and those of others who work with the nation’s natural resources on a daily basis. Agriculture is a profession based on a solid ethic of conservation,” Duvall said. “It helps guide everything we do, and we expect that Pruitt will understand that in regulatory matters dealing with agriculture and the environment.”