



Berks County Farm Bureau Berks Newsletter

Robin Lincoln, Editor

Spring Edition ♣ 2018

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.

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Spring Banquet & Services Update

Friday, March 16, 2018

6:45 p.m. Registration,

7:00 p.m. Dinner

Adults \$10

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Entertainment by Days of Old

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Kathryn's Katering: Salad, Baked Chicken and Ribs, Potato Filling, Mixed Vegetables and Corn
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*Make reservations by March 9, 2018
Mail your check to Robin Lincoln to reserve your spot.*

*Robin Lincoln 484-925-4132
315 S Baumstown Rd, Birdsboro, PA 19508*

BCFB at the Fightin' Phils Tuesday, June 26, 2018



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Contact Robin Lincoln to make your reservation: 484-925-4132
Make reservations by March 9, 2018

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*May not be available in all areas

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

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Tell EPA That If You Can't #FloatUs, It's Not a #WOTUS

Farm Bureau has launched a new social media campaign encouraging farmers to tell Washington that federal water rules should make sense.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed repealing and rewriting its controversial Waters of the U.S. rule. As currently written, the 2015 rule would give the federal government broad authority to regulate as “water” nearly every acre of farmland in Pennsylvania. So as EPA begins the process of redefining what is—and what isn't—a “water of the U.S.,” Farm Bureau is asking members to send a clear message that we need a common-sense rule.

Take a photo of a rubber duck in an area of your farm that would have been regulated as a navigable water under the WOTUS rule, and share that photo on social media using the hashtags #FloatUs and #CleanWaterRules. The duck should be in an area where it will not float but that the 2015 WOTUS regulation considered to be navigable water, such as a ditch, low land or farm field. The goal is to show EPA, using the rubber ducks, that if you can't #FloatUs, it's not a #WOTUS.

Make sure to tag Pennsylvania Farm Bureau on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and your post will be entered to win a \$100 gift card to your favorite restaurant. Every time you post and tag PFB before June 30, 2018, you are entered to win. For more information and for suggested messages for your social media posts, please visit www.pfb.com/FloatUs.

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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
February 24-25	YF&R Conference	State College, PA	
March 9	BCFB Board Training	Berks Co Ag Center	7:00 pm
March 9	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks Co Ag Center	7:30 pm
March 15	Legislative Breakfast	Wegman's Restaurant (Route 61)	8:00 am
March 16	BCFB Spring Banquet	Berks Co Ag Center	6:45 pm
March 19 – 23	Ag Literacy Week		
April 13	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks Co Ag Center	7:30 pm
April 17	PFB State Legislative Conference	Harrisburg, PA	
May 11	BCFB Board Meeting	TBD	TBD
June 8	BCFB Board Meeting	Berks Co Ag Center	7:30 pm
June 26	BCFB at Fightin' Phils	Reading, PA	6:05 pm



PFB Sweeps National Awards at Farm Bureau Convention

The hard work and dedication of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's grassroots members and volunteer leaders was on display at the American Farm Bureau Federation's

2018 Annual Convention in Nashville, where the organization won all awards available to state Farm Bureaus of its membership size.

PFB was recognized with the prestigious Pinnacle Award, the highest recognition a state Farm Bureau can earn for overall program and membership achievement, and the New Horizon Award, which recognized the creation and implementation of "Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week."

PFB also received "Awards for Excellence" in all four program activity areas: Advocacy; Engagement and Outreach; Leadership and Business Development; and Membership Value. In addition, PFB received the Scholar Award, for its support of the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture.

"It takes a tremendous team effort to attain the level of success we were able to achieve in 2017," said PFB President Rick Ebert. "The awards put a spotlight on the hard work and dedication of our grassroots farmer volunteers and organization staff to generate success stories and address pressing issues affecting Pennsylvania's agriculture industry and its farm families."

At the convention, delegates from all 50 state Farm Bureaus and Puerto Rico voted on national policy resolutions that originated at the county level. Pennsylvania winners of Young Farmer and Rancher contests competed with winners from other states in national competitions. And PFB members learned about emerging issues in agriculture at the IDEAg Trade Show and educational seminars.

PFB Vice President Chris Hoffman also played a role in welcoming important visitors to the event. As chair of AFBF's Promotion and Education Committee, he had the opportunity to show U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue through the trade show and discuss the work farmers are doing to produce food for a growing world population and serve as good stewards of the land.

"It was really good to get to know him and explain to him all the things that we're doing to make agriculture better," Hoffman said. "He's really interested in what we're doing and a great friend of the farmer."

Farmers Hear from President Trump at National Convention

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members who attended American Farm Bureau Federation's Annual Convention were among the more than 7,400 farmers and ranchers who heard from President Donald Trump on key issues in agriculture.

Trump's speech at the Nashville, Tenn. convention marked the first time a sitting president has addressed a Farm Bureau convention since George H.W. Bush did so in 1992. The president spoke about efforts to cut back restrictive regulations, draft the 2018 Farm Bill and renegotiate trade agreements. He also signed two executive orders that aim to benefit farms and other businesses by streamlining and expanding broadband access to rural communities.

Among the crowd of attendees were members of PFB's State Board of Directors, Young Farmer and Rancher Committee and Women's Leadership Committee as well as other PFB members who attended the convention.

"I'm proud to be part of an organization that has the clout and respect to attract the attention and participation of the President of the United States to our annual gathering," said PFB President Rick Ebert. "I was specifically encouraged by the President's comments in support of adequately funding the Farm Bill and the importance of foreign trade to the future of agriculture. We look forward to working with the Trump Administration and members of Congress to address some of these pressing issues in 2018."

Pennsylvania Expands the Industrial Hemp Program for 2018

The industrial hemp research project in Pennsylvania will increase the acreage for agricultural producers and institutions of higher learning to grow up to 100 acres of the crop in 2018. Up to 50 growers have contracted with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and applied for permits to grow industrial hemp this season.

The industrial hemp research projects will be conducted from one to three years. The industrial hemp research pilot project focuses on growth, cultivation and marketing of industrial hemp for research purposes which determines fertility requirements, yield, pest management and harvesting techniques.

USDA Secretary Talks Farm Bill in PA

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members were first to learn the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recently announced priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill. That's because USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue unveiled the agency's goals for the legislation during an event organized by PFB at Reinford Farms in Juniata County.

Perdue toured the dairy farm—owned and operated by the Reinford family, who are Farm Bureau members—and then spoke to a group of more than 80 Farm Bureau members. He outlined the agency's Farm Bill goals and gave attendees a chance to ask questions and offer their input.

"These principles will be used as a road map," Perdue said. "They are our way of letting Congress know what we've heard from the hard-working men and women of American agriculture."

Perdue said that improving the safety net for dairy producers will be a major focus of the legislation. He said he expects the next farm bill will be "evolutionary, rather than revolutionary," by continuing the shift to crop insurance rather than direct payments. He also said USDA would like to see a farm bill that gives farmers flexibility to make decisions based on markets, instead of having to tailor their production to fit farm bill programs. For a full list of USDA's farm bill priorities, visit <http://bit.ly/2DINn8F>.

PFB President Rick Ebert said it was an honor to have Perdue visit the Keystone State for the announcement. He added that the meeting gave farmers a chance to help shape federal agriculture policy.

"It was great to have the secretary come out to Pennsylvania to see the lay of the land and hear about our concerns and challenges," Ebert said. "Hopefully, he'll take our input back to Washington and incorporate it into USDA's policies. It's important that USDA, as a service organization, is responsive to farmers and their needs."

Supreme Court Decides Technical Issue Related to WOTUS

Farm Bureau supports a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision related to which court has initial jurisdiction to review a lawsuit over the controversial Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule.

The court did not consider the merits of the case against the 2015 regulation—which Farm Bureau opposes and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the process of repealing and rewriting—but rather addressed a technical issue. The court decided that cases challenging WOTUS must start in one of 94 federal district courts—which normally handle and decide cases first—rather than one of the 13 federal appellate courts.

"This Supreme Court decision brings greater clarity to an important issue that has bogged down the litigation over this and other Clean Water Act regulations for years," said Ellen Steen, general counsel for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

While the decision is a positive for Farm Bureau, it also complicated matters by effectively undoing a federal appellate court's order that blocked the rule from taking effect nationwide.

But to stop that from causing the rule to go into effect, EPA is formally delaying its implementation of WOTUS as it works to rewrite the regulation.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall applauded EPA's move saying that without it, "countless farmers and ranchers, as well as other landowners and businesses, would risk lawsuits and huge penalties for activities as common and harmless as plowing a field."

Farm Bureau opposes the 2015 WOTUS rule and believes attempts to expand federal authority far beyond what's allowed by law and would cause nearly every acre of farmland to be regulated.



Duvall to Speak at FARMER Dinner

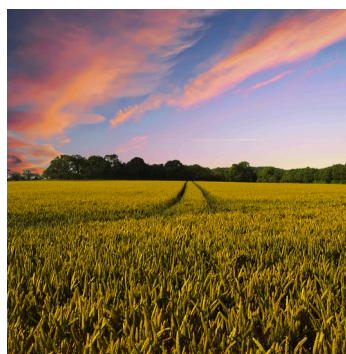
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members have a chance to hear from Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, at the annual FARMER Dinner. The dinner is a major fundraiser for our political action committee, FARMER, which stands for Farmers Allied for Responsive More Effective Representation.

Duvall was recently reelected to another two-year term as president of the nation's largest agriculture organization. A Georgia farmer, Duvall has forged significant relationships with the current administration, including Sonny Perdue, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary.

Since its inception more than 35 years ago, FARMER, has recognized members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly 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. Those lawmakers identified by FARMER as "Friends of Agriculture" are publicly recognized and receive a campaign contribution.

The FARMER Dinner will take place Monday, April 16 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 for two.

Please help Farm Bureau keep agriculture-friendly lawmakers in the General Assembly by attending the FARMER dinner. The deadline for reservations is April 2. Reservations can be made by contacting Ginny Keever at 717.761.2740 or vkkeever@pfb.com.



Humane Society Officer Training Bill Clears State House

A bill supported by Pennsylvania Farm Bureau that would require humane society police officers to go through additional training and learn about farm safety and biosecurity protocols has passed the state House.

House Bill 1917, sponsored by Rep. Frank Ryan of Lebanon County, now heads to the state Senate for consideration. The measure would increase the number of training hours humane society police officers go through initially as well every two years. Officers would also be required to learn about farm biosecurity protocols and how to identify potential hazards on farms and reduce the risk of causing damage or harming people or animals. The training would include on-site visits to farms.

PFB believes that such training will help protect both the humane officer and farmers—as well as their animals and property—in the event that investigation of a farm is necessary.

Supporting FARMER Helps Secure Agriculture's Future

Decisions made in the State Capitol don't just affect Harrisburg. They can have sweeping effects—both good and bad—on family farms across the state.

That's why, as Lehigh County farmer Brian Dietrich sees it, it's so critical that farmers build close relationships with decision-makers in Harrisburg and make the effort to keep allies of agriculture in positions where they can continue to make a difference. He chairs FARMER, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's political action committee. Short for Farmers Allied for Responsive More Effective Representation, FARMER is funded with voluntary donations from members and supports members of the General Assembly who keep the interests of farm families at heart.

"It's one of the most important parts of our organization," Dietrich said. "We can support the people who support us."

The FARMER Committee, a bipartisan group of Farm Bureau members, selects candidates to be recognized with input from FARMER members and county Farm Bureaus. Committee members look at voting records as well as candidates' stances on agricultural issues and personal philosophies.

Deserving candidates are designated as "Friends of Agriculture" and receive a campaign contribution. Monetary contributions of any size from Farm Bureau members are the key to FARMER being able to carry out its mission and grow its influence, Dietrich said.

"It's really important that Farm Bureau keeps our voice out there and stays in the forefront," Dietrich said. "There are a lot of other groups that are constantly in contact with legislators and telling their side of the story."

Supporting FARMER helps keep agriculture-friendly lawmakers on the job, said Stephen Naylor, a Perry County farmer and another FARMER Committee member. Over the past decade, FARMER has supported the election of 550 members of the General Assembly. Close to 98 percent won their election bids and were able to continue to advocate for the agricultural community.

"I think we have to keep our allies. We have to stay in touch with them and if we benefit them, it will benefit us," Naylor said. "As we know, it's an expensive game out there for them to run for elections. So they surely appreciate it."

Two lawmakers who have been recognized by FARMER—state Rep. Donna Oberlander and state Sen. Andy Dinniman—agreed. Both said they support agriculture and maintain close relationships with the county Farm Bureaus in their districts because it's the right thing to do and is important to their constituents. But they said, appreciation from farmers does not go unnoticed.

"It's always nice when someone says thank you and by being given recognition and a contribution, the agricultural community is saying thank you," said Dinniman, a Chester County Democrat. "If you develop a relationship through the Farm Bureau and work with the Farm Bureau and stand up for agriculture, the Farm Bureau's going to stand up for you."

Oberlander, a Clarion County Republican, had similar thoughts. She said the recognition she received from FARMER affirmed that just as she has farm families' backs, they're willing to go to bat for her.

"I was so thrilled that they saw our relationship as what I thought our relationship was," she said.

Please help Farm Bureau support candidates who support agriculture by contributing to FARMER. No contribution is too small. Contribution forms are included with Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's membership renewal materials or can be obtained by contacting PFB's Government Affairs and Communications Division at govcom@pfb.com or 717.761.2740. Learn more about FARMER by visiting, www.pfb.com/farmer.

Free Money for Farmers Developing Agricultural Plans in Chesapeake Bay Watershed

There's still plenty of state grant money available for farmers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to recoup the cost of developing environmental plans.

The state Department of Environmental Protection announced in October it would make \$1.5 million available to reimburse farmers in the watershed who hired professional consultants to aid in the development of their nutrient management, manure management or agriculture erosion and sediment control plans.

Through January, the department had only committed a little more than \$257,000, leaving more than \$900,000 still available. That means farmers who apply for the funding would be very likely to be approved.

Reimbursements are available for plans developed after Jan. 1, 2017. There is only a short time left for farmers to take advantage of this program. Grant applications must be submitted on or before April 1.

For more information about eligibility and grants available, farmers in Bradford, Cameron, Carbon, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Elk, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, McKean, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Union, Tioga, Wayne, and Wyoming counties should contact Sara Bolton of Larson Design Group at 570.374.5700 or sbolton@larsondesigngroup.com.

Farmers in Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, Somerset, and York counties should contact Jedd Moncavage of TeamAg at 717.721.6795 or jeddm@teamaginc.com.

Water Quality Continues to Show Improvement in the Chesapeake Bay



The water quality of the Chesapeake Bay continues to show improvement as nutrients and sediment decline in local waterways. Underwater grasses are expanding in acreage and blue crabs are increasing by substantial numbers. Between 2014 and 2016, 40 percent of

the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries have attained water quality standards showing the highest level of improvement since data was first collected in 1985.

Action Alerts a Critical Part of PFB's Advocacy

Farm Bureau is a strong voice for farmers and rural families because of the grassroots advocacy of our members.

It's important that when legislators and regulators make decisions related to agriculture, they hear from the men and women who will be living with the effects of those decisions every day. As people who understand agriculture and can see firsthand how government policies affect their farms, Farm Bureau members are in the best position to educate policy makers about agricultural issues.

One way to do that is through PFB Action Alerts. Action Alerts give Farm Bureau members an easy way to send messages on pressing legislative and regulatory issues directly to their legislators or government agencies.

Alerts are sent out via email when quick grassroots advocacy is needed on a particular issue. Action alerts can also be found in the Act Now section of PFB's website. Each alert includes background information and a customizable message that members can easily send to their representatives or a regulatory agency.

PFB members have responded to Action Alerts to weigh in on a number of important issues during the past year such as tax reform and repealing the Waters of the U.S. rule.

Action Alerts played a key role in PFB's success in lobbying for the restoration of funding for the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in the 2017-2018 state budget. When \$30 million in state funding to the school was at risk of being cut, PFB members responding to an Action Alert sent close to 1,200 messages to legislators highlighting the program's importance to agriculture. That funding was restored in the final budget.

Please be sure to play a part in the success of Farm Bureau's advocacy by responding to Action Alerts. If you have not been receiving Action Alerts via email, please check your email junk or spam folder and, if the messages are there, be sure to label them as safe or "not junk" so you will receive future updates. If you have not received any alerts at all, please contact PFB Member Relations at 717.761.2740 to ensure that PFB has your current email address on file.

Pennsylvania CWD Cases on the Rise

Early testing of deer harvested during the 2017-2018 hunting seasons has already revealed 51 positive results for chronic wasting disease, more than double the number of positive tests found during 2016. And according to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the majority of samples collected during the season have yet to be tested, which means even more CWD-positive tests are likely to come.

All but three of the deer that have tested positive for CWD so far this season were from Disease Management Area 2 in the south-central part of the state. The others were from Disease Management Area 3 in the north-central part of the state. The Game Commission offered free testing for hunters who harvested deer within disease management areas and commission staff also collected samples. In total, nearly 8,000 samples were collected statewide.

CWD affects all cervids, including deer and elk, and is spread by deer-to-deer contact. It is always fatal and there is no known cure for the disease.

To date, 98 free-ranging deer have tested positive for CWD in Pennsylvania. The Game Commission has sought to control the disease's spread by limiting the transportation of deer harvested

within disease management areas, targeting hunter pressure on problem areas and removing some deer populations using sharpshooters.

"By developing a control program where we go into these hotspots and remove the animals with a greater likelihood of carrying the disease, we might stand our best chance of controlling CWD on a larger scale, while minimizing the impact on the larger deer population or diminishing deer hunting opportunities," said Wayne Laroche, the Game Commission's special assistant for CWD response.

Delaware River Commission Accepting Comments on Proposed Fracking Ban

The Delaware River Basin Commission, a multi-state agency that regulates the Delaware River and water that flows into it, has proposed a ban on extracting natural gas from rock formations in the basin through high volume hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking.

If enacted, the ban would affect drilling activity in the basin area that benefits farmers and other landowners who hold natural gas leases. It would also effectively stop farmers and landowners in the region from being able to enter into new leases with gas companies if natural gas deposits are discovered on their land.

In Pennsylvania, the affected areas would include parts of Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Schuylkill, Wayne and Pike counties.

The commission has extended a public comment period on the proposal, giving the public until March 30 to comment on the plan. This is a chance for farmers and rural landowners to tell the commission directly how the proposed regulation would affect them.

Several public hearings to solicit comments have already occurred and another is scheduled for Feb. 22 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Lehigh Carbon Community College. There will also be a telephone public hearing March 6 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. You must register to speak at the hearings. Visit bit.ly/2zEaB9C for more information or to register for the hearings. Written comments can also be submitted online at dockets.drbc.commentinput.com.

Requests to be exempted from using the online registration and written comment collection systems may be addressed to: Commission Secretary, DRBC, P.O. Box 7360, West Trenton, NJ 08628.

New Requirements for Applying Dicamba Herbicide in 2018

The herbicides Engenia, Xtendimax and FeXapan, when applied over the top of Roundup Ready 2 Extend (dicamba tolerant) soybeans, are now classified as "Restricted Use Pesticides" and will require dicamba-specific training by a certified applicator to purchase and apply. A list of where and when the training sessions will be held will be available from pesticide dealers, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and Penn State Extension.

Producers will be required to maintain records that the herbicide was applied according to label restrictions. Other requirements include applying the new dicamba herbicides when wind speeds are below 10 mph, narrowing the window of time during the day these products may be applied, thoroughly cleaning spray tanks to prevent cross contamination and keeping records of sensitive crops planted nearby.

Pa. Congressmen Want for Support for Spotted Lanternfly Efforts

Pennsylvania's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives are calling for the 2018 Farm Bill to include additional funding for efforts to stop the spread of the invasive spotted lanternfly.

The request came in a letter signed by all 17 Pennsylvania congressmen and sent to leaders of the House Committee on Agriculture. The Pennsylvania congressmen asked for the 2018 Farm Bill to ramp up funding for the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program, which Pennsylvania has tapped in its effort to fight the pest.

"This increase would ensure Pennsylvania has the tools and resources it needs to defend from pests such as the Spotted Lanternfly," the delegation wrote. "If swift action is not taken to combat this invasive pest, we risk jeopardizing our nation's food and economic security, which is why we strongly support this necessary investment."

The spotted lanternfly was first discovered in the U.S. in Berks County in 2014 and has since spread to other southeastern counties. The pest can cause widespread plant damage and is a major threat to fruit and hardwood crops.

PFB Board Supports Hoffman, Cotner for Reelection to Penn State Trustees

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Board of Directors is endorsing Chris Hoffman and Donald Cotner for reelection to the Penn State Board of Trustees.

Both currently serve on the board as delegates for agricultural societies. Hoffman, of Juniata County, is seeking a second term as a trustee. Cotner, of Northumberland County, is seeking his third term on the board.

Hoffman owns and operates Lazy Hog Farm, a 1,400-sow farrow to wean 4,800-head nursery barn, and 4,400-head finishing barn, as well as Lazy Chick Farm, which raises 250,000 chickens annually. He was elected to PFB's State Board of Directors in 2006 and has served as the organization's Vice President since 2014.

Cotner is a 1971 graduate of Penn State with a B.S. in education. He is a partner in Cotner Farms Inc., a family owned and operated egg layer, grain production and feed mill farm, and is also a partner in Don Cotner Farms, LP and Boyd Station, LLC, a soybean processor. He is a Northumberland County Farm Bureau member.

PFB Members Appointed to Farm Service Agency State Committee

Four Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members have been appointed to the committee responsible for carrying out U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency's programs within the Keystone State.

Appointed to the Pennsylvania committee were Bonnie Wenger, Lebanon County; George Greig, Crawford County; Doug Graybill, Bradford County; and Bill Hoover, Huntingdon County. Wenger will serve as committee chair.

"The State Committees will help to ensure USDA is providing our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural producers with the best customer service," said USDA Secretary Perdue. "They serve

as a liaison between USDA and the producers in each state across the nation by keeping them informed and hearing their appeals and complaints."

Farm Bureau, Farmers Union Launch National Effort to Combat Opioid Crisis

Farm Bureau is teaming up with the National Farmers Union on a nationwide initiative aimed at helping farm families and rural communities as they grapple with the challenge of opioid addiction.

The groups have launched a website to help families access treatment and prevention resources and are planning a series of events and a social media campaign aimed at raising awareness and sharing resources.

The Farm Town Strong initiative comes after a study commissioned by the organizations found that the farming community has been among the hardest hit by the opioid epidemic. About 74 percent of farmers and farm workers surveyed reported that either they, someone they knew or a family member had struggled with opioid addiction, compared with 45 percent of rural adults in general. The study also found that while opioids are easily available in rural communities, treatment and prevention resources are lacking.

"Farm country has been hit hard by the opioid epidemic – even harder than rural America as a whole, or big cities," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "It's going to take everyone working together to combat this crisis to make a difference."

For more information, visit www.farmtownstrong.org.

Help Rebuild Puerto Rican Agriculture

Puerto Rico's farmers will need lots more help going forward as they try to restore their lives and farms following the devastation of Hurricane Maria. Puerto Rico Farm Bureau has established a fund to assist farmers in rebuilding the island's agriculture.

The hurricane hit the island head on in September, destroying as much as 80 percent of agricultural production. Due to the extensive damage, rebuilding Puerto Rico's agricultural sector is going to be a long-term process.

"Maria was a devastating storm and many farmers and ranchers in Puerto Rico face an unprecedented challenge to return their land to production and rebuild infrastructure," said Puerto Rico Farm Bureau President Hector Ivan Cordero. "The disaster will affect our farm and ranch families for many years, but our will to overcome the damage is strong."

Tax-deductible donations can be made to the Puerto Rico Agricultural Relief Fund, established through Texas Farm Bureau's Agriculture Research and Education Foundation. All donations will go directly to farmers recovering from the hurricane.

To donate, visit www.fb.org/pragfund or mail a check to: Texas Farm Bureau Agriculture Research and Education Foundation; Puerto Rico Agricultural Relief Fund; P.O. Box 2689; Waco, TX 76702-2689; Attn: Cyndi Gerik. Checks should be made out to the "Texas Farm Bureau Agriculture Research and Education Foundation"

For more questions, contact Janice Neckar at jneckar@txfb.org or 254.751.2494.



Learn About Agricultural Planning Tool at Upcoming Workshops

Farmers can learn about how to use PAOneStop—an online tool that can be used to develop agricultural plans

to meet regulatory requirements—during a series of upcoming workshops.

PAOneStop is a free computer mapping tool that helps users create high-quality maps required for completion of Nutrient Balance Sheets and Nutrient Management, Erosion and Sedimentation and Manure Management plans. The program can also walk users through the steps of completing an Erosion and Sedimentation Plan.

Each training consists of two separate sessions over two days. The following training events have been scheduled or are in the process of being planned:

Perry County: Feb. 6 and 21, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Greenwood High School in Millerstown

Huntingdon County: Feb. 13 and 22, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Huntingdon Comfort Inn

Westmoreland County: Feb. 28 and March 7, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., J. Roy Houston Conservation Center in Greensburg

Somerset County: March 1 and 8, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., AG Service Center in Somerset

Chester County: March 3 and 21, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Lower Oxford Township Building

Tioga County: March 27 and April 3, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tokishi Training Center in Wellsboro

Blair County: March 28 and April 11, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Morrisons Cove Memorial Park Banquet Hall in Martinsburg

Berks County: April 5 and 19, Berks County Ag Center in Leesport

Lycoming County: April 7 and 14, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Lycoming Ag Center in Montoursville

Leigh County: April 5 and May 2, Lehigh Valley Conservation District in Allentown.

For more information about PAOneStop or questions about the upcoming trainings, visit www.paonestop.org or contact Bob Neiderer at 877.722.4724.

Learn About Agricultural Planning Tool at Upcoming Workshops

Thinking about joining a local board, running for elected office or even advocating for issues in your community? A new online course offered by Penn State Extension aims to give students the information they need to get more involved with local government.

The self-paced course is available from the comfort of your home and includes a series of videos and readings. It takes only about six

hours to complete and covers topics such as the structure and function of local government, tips for getting involved and the basics of running for elected office.

“There are so many local government organizations within Pennsylvania, from school boards to townships and more,” said Judy Chambers, course instructor and economic and community development educator for Penn State Extension. “There’s a constant need for people to get involved, either as volunteers or elected officials, and a real opportunity to make a significant difference within your own community.”

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau encourages its members to be involved in their local governments as that is where many decisions are made that affect agriculture. Farmers who are part of or involved with local government can provide their perspective when decisions makers are considering ordinances or regulations that could affect agriculture.

The cost to register for the course is \$69. To learn more or register, visit <http://bit.ly/2o49a00>

Member Benefit Spotlight

Farm Bureau Members Eligible to Win a New 2018 Ford F-150



Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members can now get even more value from their Ford member benefit with a unique opportunity to enter the Built Ford Tough F-150 Sweepstakes to win a two-year lease on a new 2018 Ford F-150.

Entering the contest is easy. Simply visit www.fordfarmbureauadvantage.com or text the word SWEEPS to 46786. You must be a legal resident of the U.S., a current Farm Bureau member and over the age of 21 with a valid driver’s license to win. The sweepstakes ends Sept. 30, 2018. For complete sweepstakes details, visit www.fordfarmbureauadvantage.com and select Click to Enter Sweepstakes.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau added Ford to its lineup of member benefits last year. Through the Ford Special Offer, PFB members receive \$500 Bonus Cash toward the purchase or lease of eligible Ford vehicles or \$750 Bonus Cash toward the purchase or lease of eligible new Lincoln vehicles.

That means you can get big savings now on your choice from the comfortable and capable lineup of Ford cars and trucks or from the luxurious Lincoln lineup.

To take advantage of this Ford/Lincoln offer, simply register at www.fordfarmbureauadvantage.com. You must have been a PFB member for at least 30 consecutive days prior to your vehicle purchase to be eligible.