



Beef Bytes
October 29, 2013

Dear Friends,

Last week I referenced the Alumni Fellow award that MeeCee received at Penn State earlier this month. For a peek at the YouTube recording of her accepting the award and making a few comments, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HV5crTIwlpQ>

The General Assembly is in recess this week and next but will return on Tuesday, November 12, after the Veterans Day holiday on November 11th. There is little doubt that transportation funding will continue to dominate the discussion in Harrisburg for the rest of the year, or until a bill lands on Governor Corbett's desk. Some House leaders have attempted to tie the transportation funding bill to legislation that addresses prevailing wage which has resulted in blocking further movement and resolution of the transportation funding bill. Word has it that the House Majority Leader has now committed to bringing up a vote on a Senate funding bill that would provide for \$2.2 billion to \$2.4 billion – not quite the \$2.5 billion allocated in the House bill but certainly acceptable!

Have a question about DEP rules and regulations governing your industry or your backyard? Go to DEP's public participation homepage to seek answers and ask [questions](#).

Have a great week!

John Barley

Articles of Interest

Pennsylvania News:

[Youth Safety Initiative](#)

Pennsylvania is leading the way in developing educational materials on keeping youth safe when working in agriculture. The project is funded by a grant from the US Department of Agriculture and aims to bring together resources from across the industry for use in both formal and non-formal training environments.

National News:

[Biofuel Production](#)

The US Department of Agriculture has set aside \$181 million for loans to help construct biorefineries for the production of biofuels from sources such as wood and grass. Forecasters expected the production of advanced biofuels to match that of corn based ethanol by the end of the decade but growth has been slow.

[Consumer Demand](#)

High meat prices are causing many consumers to purchase less meat products when shopping. In October the prices that consumers were willing to pay fell across almost all different meats, including chicken and pork as well as beef. This could be due in part to the government shutdown and economic uncertainty.

[Certified Angus Beef](#)

A report from Certified Angus Beef indicated that the company continued its growth pattern, despite poor economic conditions and high beef prices. Consumer awareness of the brand is high and many consumers indicate that they would be willing to pay a premium for CAB products.

[Humane Slaughter Regulations](#)

The US Department of Agriculture released new guidelines for humane animal treatment at slaughter facilities. The guidelines are not necessarily laws, but many beef slaughter facilities have voluntarily decided to comply with the published standards in order to show that they are concerned about animal welfare.

[Farm Bill Concerns](#)

Now that Congress is back in session, lawmakers will once again try to find a compromise on new farm legislation. The biggest issue at the moment is changes to the food stamp program and how to reduce costs of the program. Other potential problems include changes to crop insurance, conservation programs and the cost of insurance.

[Aging of Farmers](#)

Several charts look at the average age of farm producers in comparison to the average age of the labor force. Trends show that producers are aging, but at similar rates to the general labor force. The average age of producers is older, but this is due to the capital intensive nature of farming. Farm prosperity will likely attract more young people into agriculture for the next generation.

Global News:

[Advertising in Peru](#)

Peru is one of the major sources of growth in beef exports to South America. The US Meat Export Federation is partnering with a national importer to market US beef through advertising on trucks in several cities. The trucks feature a popular Peruvian dish made with tripe, as Peru is a major importer of variety meats.

[Country of Origin Labeling](#)

Tyson Foods has decided not to accept any cattle for slaughter directly from Canada, citing country of origin labeling laws as the major factor in the change. Canadian born cattle fed in the US will still be acceptable, but Tyson is the third largest market for fat cattle in Canada. Beef producers continue to oppose the labeling laws due to marketing costs and restrictions.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Stocker Cattle](#)

Prices remain high for both calves and fed cattle. Strong prices mean that producers may find value in putting weight on light calves through a stocker operation. Winter grazing options include wheat and stockpiled forages as well as hay. Although late fall often brings seasonal low prices for calves, tight cattle supplies suggest that the prices will remain high this year.

[Improving Profitability](#)

Veterinarians at the American Association of Bovine Practitioners discussed steps to help producers improve profitability in their herds. The largest suggestion was for increased pregnancy testing in order to find and cull open cows, as well as those with other problems. Deworming, body condition scoring and tightening the calving season are other good practices.

[Winter Feed Estimates](#)

Making an accurate prediction of the amount of forage and other feed supplements that will be needed for the year will help producers avoid paying high costs for feed late in the winter. The University of Florida has released a Winter Feed Estimator to help producers determine the herd requirements based on frame size and bale size.

10-28-2013 **[Inside PDA for October 25, 2013](#)**
(Press Release)

10-27-2013 **[F.D.A. Bids to Regulate Animal Food, Acting After Recall and Deaths](#)**
The Food and Drug Administration proposed rules on Friday that would govern the production of pet food and farm animal feed for the first time. The regulation would help prevent food-borne illness in both animals and people, officials at the agency said, as people can become sick from... - [New York Times](#)

10-24-2013 **[Negotiations on a Farm Bill begin next week](#)**
Next week, Congress is expected to revive an old but increasingly rare tradition that may determine how well and how quickly the institution is able to recover from all the negative fallout of the recent government shutdown. More than three dozen members of the House and Senate plan to sit down in a... - [Washington Post](#)

10-23-2013 **[Report finds reforms stymied in poultry, livestock industries](#)**
A new analysis of the nation's farm animal industry finds almost no reforms have been made in the five years since a broad-based commission called for sweeping changes to address concerns about food safety, animal welfare and the environmental impacts of modern poultry and livestock production.... - [Baltimore Sun](#)

10-22-2013 **[Feeding antibiotics to cows is bad for humans, but Congress won't stop it, new report says](#)**
The farm and pharmaceutical lobbies have blocked all meaningful efforts to reduce the use of antibiotics in raising livestock in American, a practice that poses major public health risks, a study released Tuesday found. The report says Congress has killed every effort to legislate a ban on... - [Washington Post](#)

10-22-2013 **[Bacon's popularity pushes prices up 21.9 percent](#)**
It's in vodka, beer and milkshakes. It's been mixed with jam and wrapped around vegetables. There are ice cube trays bearing its long, wavy shape, and wrapping paper and board games decorated with its raw, pink image. If looking like cured meat is your thing, you can buy a bacon costume for... - [York Dispatch](#)

Regulations

DOA: GENERAL QUARANTINE ORDER; CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR HERD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AND HERD MONITORING PROGRAM

The Department of Agriculture established a general quarantine for the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The quarantine stipulates all persons or businesses that own or maintain one or more of any of the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)-susceptible species of the genera *Cervus*, *Odocoileus* or *Alces* including elk, white-tailed

deer, moose, mule deer, black-tailed deer, sika deer, red deer or hybrid thereof, in captivity within the Commonwealth shall continue to be required to be enrolled in and follow the requirements of either the CWD Herd Certification Program or the CWD Herd Monitoring Program. The quarantine is effective immediately upon publication of the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol43/43-42/1960.html>

IRRC: NOTICE OF COMMENTS ISSUED

The Independent Regulatory Review Council issued comments on the following proposed regulation:

- ☐ Department of Agriculture 2-159: Preferential Assessment of Farmland and Forest Land under the Clean and Green Act <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol43/43-42/1970.html>

Legislative Activity

[HB 397](#) [Keller, Mark](#)

(PN 2598) The Agritourism Immunity Act provides for protection from liability from personal injury with inherent risks for persons that sponsor farm-related tourism activities engaged in knowingly, voluntarily, intelligently and unreasonably if: (1) The person is an operator of an agritourism activity; and (2) The notice regarding immunity is conspicuously posted in at least two locations on the premises. The bill enumerates exceptions for protection from immunity. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 407, 1942)

Companions:

[HB 1435](#) Keller, Mark (Refiled from 11R Session)
[SB 395](#) Brubaker, Michael (Refiled from 11R Session)
[HCO 709](#) Keller, Mark (M)
1-14-13 H Filed
[SB 581](#) Brubaker, Michael (Related)
3- 1-13 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Judiciary

Printer Number(s): [P0407](#) [P1942](#) [P2598](#)

Bill History:

10-23-13 H Set on the House Calendar
10-23-13 H Laid out for discussion
10-23-13 H 8 Floor amendment(s) adopted
10-23-13 H Second consideration
10-23-13 H Over in House
10-23-13 H Rereferred to House Appropriations

[HB 920](#) [Sonney, Curt](#)

(PN 1059) Amends the Agricultural Area Security Law defining "wind power generation system" and adding that an agricultural conservation easement shall not prevent the granting of rights-of-way by the owner of the subject land in and through the land for the installation of or use of a wind power generation system, if certain enumerated conditions apply. Effective in 60 days.

Companions:

[HCO1339](#) Sonney, Curt (M)
2-26-13 H Filed

Printer Number(s): [P1059](#)

Bill History: 10-22-13 S Meeting set for 10:30 a.m., Room 461 Main Capitol ...Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs
10-22-13 S Voted favorably from committee on Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs
10-22-13 S Reported as committed from Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs
10-22-13 S First consideration
11-12-13 S Set on the Senate Calendar

[HB 1809](#) [Aument, Ryan \(R\)](#) Amends Title 34 (Game) further providing for trespass on private property while hunting.

Bill History: 10-24-13 H Filed

[SB 638](#) [Vogel, Jr., Elder](#) (PN 1309) Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) to provide for a tax exemption for certain agricultural structures so long as certain enumerated conditions are met. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 693, 996)

Companions: [SCO 604](#) Vogel, Jr., (M)
Elder
1-29-13 S Filed

Printer Number(s): [P0693](#) [P0996](#) [P1309](#)

Bill History: 10-21-13 H Set on the House Calendar
10-21-13 H Laid on the table
10-21-13 H Removed from the table
11-12-13 H Set on the House Calendar

Capitol Review

We start this week's stroll through politics with a special shout-out to Pennsylvania's Lieutenant Governor, Jim Cawley, [who is back on the job](#) after a short stint in the hospital. Glad to have you back in the sandbox, governor!

The Associated Press ran a story last week alerting us all to the news that the GOP does, in fact, [intend to make Obamacare a target](#) in the 2014 election cycle. Really, what gave it away? Can't imagine the depths one must have plumbed to find that factoid. President Obama responded that he will be glad to dismantle Obamacare as long as the Affordable Care Act stays intact.

By far the funniest (if by "funny" you mean "astoundingly arrogant") story we read last week – alright, this YEAR – was from the left side of the state, where UPMC's lawyers argued in court that the [health care giant has no employees](#). None. Pay no mind to the [fact that their own web site](#) boasts of having 55,000 such employees. Yes, that massive building on Grant Street with the UPMC logo that you can see from Blawnox has no actual UPMC employees in it.

And apparently, a federal judge has about had it with the [lawsuits being launched by UPMC and Highmark](#), and has called for both sides to put their guns back in their respective

holsters and go have a drink somewhere, maybe iron things out amicably, all of which may happen when the earth plunges into the sun.

The governor signed a bill into law that would [make it cool for doctors to apologize](#) if they accidentally do something horrendous to you. Heretofore, that kind of thing would have gotten them all sued up. Nice idea, good law, but does it strike anyone else as odd that we have to pass a law to allow someone to say "I'm sorry?" Maybe Elton John was right....sorry seems to be the hardest word.

The House also decided to [kick the transportation can into November](#), citing new discussions with Senate leaders as reason for the delay. Well, we waited this long right? What's two more weeks in the grand scheme of things?

Of course, the fact that some lawmakers are [tying transportation funding to prevailing wage "reform"](#) has not helped the cause much, as it seems to keep mucking up what should be a relatively painless process (see: overwhelmingly bipartisan SB 1 vote in the state Senate). When Governor Ed Rendell was in office, he was often criticized for "tying" issues together in order to pass them. Lots of folks said that each issue should be considered on its own merit. Lots of folks who are still serving in the House of Representatives, for instance.

At a hearing on how to make the state's Right to Know Law better, the state-related schools (Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln) came up with their own sure-fire way: [keep them exempt from it](#). Apparently those schools like the state loot they get, but the state laws they might have to abide by? Eh, not so much. Wonder if they offer courses on government transparency.

A plan that would expand gaming in Pennsylvania by allowing [bars and restaurants to offer small games of chance](#) sailed out of the State Senate last week, promising up to \$150 million annually for the state's anemic checking account. There was singing, dancing, cake and punch and all in the land were happy. Until (cue ominous music)...

The plan got to the House and ka-flooy! [The wheels came off](#), as is so often the case in the always-entertaining lower chamber. We will be interested to see what happens when everyone returns to Harrisburg in two weeks. Really, it's not like the state needs the money or anything like that. We could always have a yard sale to fund basic education next year.

As New Jersey became the latest state to [recognize same-sex marriage](#), things took a decidedly different turn on that particular issue in the Keystone State as [one lawmaker called for the impeachment](#) of Attorney General Kathleen Kane for refusing to defend the state's Defense of Marriage law in court. Ms. Kane was less than amused, as her response would indicate. Legal mumbo-jumbo aside, if we ever had to pick an all-elected-official football team, we'll take her in round one.

By the way, for those playing at home, our own former Governor Tom Ridge [has called that law a mistake](#), and is now urging his fellow Republicans to chill out a little

Frolicking in your mansion in the Philly burbs while you "forget" to [pay property taxes on your city property](#)? The state is coming for you, pal. Tax scofflaws beware, the Senate is about to rain on your picnic. Better say you are sorry and square up!

In the category of awesome, U.S. Senator Bob Casey is pushing a plan to [give tax cuts to small breweries](#), a plan that those party animals at Harvard say could raise as much as a billion clams a year in spin-off revenue. Our senator is so much cooler than your senator.

Rumors are flying around the City of Brotherly Love that Ed Rendell could become the next [chairman of the School Reform Commission](#). So we are gonna just leave that right there and let y'all chew on it for a while, we'll check back with you later.

We say JayPa. You say terno. Rumors abound in the 5th Congressional district that Jay Paterno, whose name seems to ring a bell for some reason, [may be looking to take on U.S. Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson](#). That would spice things up a bit in the normally-quiet central PA hinterlands.

From the We Can't Make This Up file, we'd like to first ask you a question. Do you think you are tough? Hard as nails? Take on anyone? Well, [this guy beat up a shark](#). Beat. Up. A. SHARK! So there you go, tough guy.

In Other News

- 10-28-2013 [Why Prisons Are Shrinking](#)
The mandatory sentencing movement that swept the United States beginning in the 1970s drove the state prison population up from less than 200,000 to about 1.4 million today and made corrections the second-fastest-growing state expense after Medicaid. But bipartisan sentencing reforms in a... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-28-2013 [Crash course on Buck and Bambi](#)
With deer aroused, reduce speed, avoid that 1-in-77 trips collision By Ashley Wislock
The Daily Item SUNBURY — SUNBURY — Mating season for deer will likely peak the second week of November, meaning deer will be running amok, onto Valley highways and often, into Valley motorists.... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 10-24-2013 [What hospital patients need to know about Medicare: Linda Rhodes](#)
Q: The other day I heard something about Medicare having a "two midnights" rule when you've been hospitalized. What's that all about? A: Over the past few years, you also might have heard about patients being classified as either "inpatient" or under "observation"... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 10-24-2013 [Americans will have an extra six weeks to buy health coverage before facing penalty](#)
The Obama administration said Wednesday night that it will give Americans who buy health insurance through the new online marketplaces an extra six weeks to obtain coverage before they incur a penalty. The announcement means that those who buy coverage through the exchange... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-24-2013 [Pa. transportation bill delayed by talks on prevailing wage](#)
The traffic jam over a major transportation funding bill will last until at least November. Republican leaders in the Pennsylvania House initially identified this week as the make-or-break moment for a Senate-passed transportation bill, but Speaker of the House Sam Smith, R-Jefferson, said Tuesday afternoon... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 10-24-2013 [Legislation would close state's 'triple dippers' loophole](#)
HARRISBURG — You've surely heard of double-dipping retired state employees. But what about triple-dippers? Double dippers are retirees who receive a government

pension and return to their jobs part-time. Triple dippers are those who also collect unemployment checks after they reach the limit of 95 days per year they can... - [Meadville Tribune](#)

10-22-2013

[Meet a couple who turned their hobby of foraging for mushrooms in the woods into a successful mushroom business](#)

OLEY — Most people would not be happy if a fungus took over their basement and garage. They certainly would not set up two buildings to nurture it along. But that's what Joe and Angela Evans did when they started Oley Valley Mushroom Farm. The Berks County couple started out as hobby mushroom growers who also... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)