



**Center for Beef Excellence
Beef Bytes
February 27, 2012**

Hello friends,

The House and Senate have been holding budget hearings over the past few weeks and will conclude this process at the end of next week. ([link to governor's budget](#)). If you have questions regarding the [Governor's budget](#) proposal, please feel free to e-mail me at mbaker@versantstrategies.net or call the office at (717) 635-2320.

The Senate will be in legislative session March 5 thru 7th, 12th thru 14th and 27th thru 28th while the House schedule is March 12th thru 14th and 26th thru 28th.

To find out more about the history of Pennsylvania agriculture, click on this link [link](#) sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission.

Producers interested in participating in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program for 2012 can access an [application](#) for more details and eligibility requirements.

Have a great week!

Sincerely,
MeeCee

Articles of Interest

Pennsylvania News:

[Reducing Natural Gas Production](#)

Some companies drilling in the Marcellus Shale are planning to reduce production due to low prices for natural gas. Cabot has announced plans to reduce capital expenses and lowered growth estimates for the year.

National News:

[Ethanol Blends](#)

The E15 ethanol based fuel has passed EPA health testing requirements, one step on the path to being available for consumers. However, the industry must still work to educate consumers on when E15 can be used and provide proper refueling points before the fuel can be sold.

[Changing Farm Structure](#)

The USDA Farms, Land in Farms, and Livestock Operations report shows that the number of cattle farms has declined slightly. Most of the decline has been in smaller operations, with a growth in the number of larger farms.

[New Beef Cutting Strategies](#)

The Beef Checkoff and state beef councils are working on a Beef Alternative Marketing program that provides consumers with new cuts of beef as well as information and recipes. The new cuts target consumers who are looking for smaller portions and would often stay away from beef.

Global News:

[Free Trade Agreement Take Effect](#)

The US-South Korean free trade agreement is scheduled to go into effect on March 15, after five years of delayed negotiations. The changes will decrease tariffs and should increase jobs in industries supplying products to South Korea.

[Industry Partnerships](#)

Elanco Animal Health has committed to partnering with Heifer International, a group that provides animals and management training to families in poor nations. Elanco will donate \$1 for every visitor to the Heifer International webpage.

[Sustainable Beef Production](#)

A global group of industry stakeholders, including companies such as Allflex, McDonald's and Cargill, have united to form the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. The non-profit group is interested in ensuring the future sustainability of the industry in regards to air, biodiversity, energy, soil, water and people and animals.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Dealing with Lice](#)

Late winter is when lice populations peak, and producers should look for signs of infestation. Pour-on pyrethroids kill lice, but the entire herd must be treated not just animals with symptoms.

[Breeding Soundness Exams](#)

As producers prepare to turn bulls this summer, it is important to make sure they are reproductively sound and capable of getting cows bred. High calf prices mean a large return on a small investment. A vet can check semen quality as well as physical soundness during an exam.

[Increasing Profitability](#)

With high input costs, cow-calf producers must be excellent herd managers to maintain profitability. Some tips to stay ahead include selling calves in groups, castrating and dehorning calves, getting rid of open cows, keeping the breeding season short and grazing cattle longer.

[Improving Feed Efficiency](#)

A new feed additive from Novus International, Next Enhance, used plant extracts to modify rumen fermentation for increased feed efficiency and weight gain. The change allows animals to improve nutrient uptake and grow better on less feed.

[Herd Expansion](#)

For cow-calf producers looking to take advantage of high calf prices there are several strategies for growing or maintaining the herd at profitable levels. The different options

deal with how many heifers are retained, how many females are purchased and how calves are sold.

[Effects of Dystocia](#)

First calf heifers can be difficult to rebreed in the best of circumstances, but females that have trouble calving or lose their calf can have even lower conception rates for the next year. It is important to be ready to assist heifers at calving, know how to help and keep things clean.

[Reproductive Success](#)

Scientists at the University of Missouri and South Dakota State University have written a paper answer common questions about using artificial insemination and estrus synchronization to improve beef herds.

- 02-27-2012 [78 illnesses linked to Pa. dairy's raw milk](#)
HARRISBURG, Pa. — State health officials say 78 bacterial infections have been linked to a central Pennsylvania dairy, making it the worst illness outbreak related to raw milk in the state's history... - [AP](#)
- 02-27-2012 [Scotland area raw milk blamed for another illness](#)
The Pennsylvania Department of Health has added another case to the state's largest outbreak of illness linked to raw milk in at least five years. A case from York County is not a new infection, but one the department recently found out about, according to department spokeswoman Holli Senior.... - [Chambersburg Public Opinion](#)
- 02-24-2012 [Inside PDA for February 24, 2012](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-24-2012 [Toddler, man from S.J. sickened from Pa. raw milk](#)
A 3-year-old boy and a 27-year-old man from South Jersey became ill recently from drinking raw milk from a Pennsylvania farm. New Jersey health officials are warning residents about the risks of drinking unpasteurized milk in wake of the illnesses. The state Department of Health and Senior Services says the two became sick... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 02-23-2012 [Two Languages, but a Single Focus on Milk at Meals](#)
By TANZINA VEGA IF the health properties of a glass of milk are not enough to make consumers drink up, maybe a breakfast date with the actress Salma Hayek will do the trick. On Friday, the Milk Processor Education Program, a dairy industry group, will announce the latest version of the National Milk Mustache "got... - [New York Times](#)
- 02-21-2012 [USDA: Milk Production in Pennsylvania Up Slightly in January](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-15-2012 [Farmer ordered to stop interstate sales of raw milk](#)
A federal district judge here has found that a Lancaster County farmer violated federal law and ordered him to stop distributing unpasteurized, or raw, milk across state lines. U.S. District Judge Lawrence F. Stengel made the ruling on February 3, the Justice Department announced today.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

Legislative Activity

[SB 1427](#)

[Folmer](#)

Amends The Local Tax Enabling Act providing for the definitions of "farmer" and "farming"; and further providing for declaration and payment of income taxes and for withholding and remittance.

Printer Number(s): [P1965](#)

Bill History: 02-16-12 S Filed
02-16-12 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Finance

Capitol Review

Before we get all Pennsylvania newsy on you, we'd like to take a moment to give a shout-out to all the [students, faculty and volunteers at Penn State, who last weekend raised a whopping \\$10.6 million for pediatric cancer research](#). The haul from this year's dance marathon brings the running total to over \$88 million. Well done, Nittany Nation! You are...

Still warm and fuzzy from the previous paragraph? Well, good, because we learned this week that the [state's public pension contributions in this year's budget will top a billion dollars, and hit the four billion dollar mark a few years down the road](#). For those of you scoring at home, a billion clams represents about 4% of the total state budget. There, that will teach you for being all happy and optimistic about life.

[Legislative leaders announced this week that there would be a public meeting on Wednesday, where maybe, just maybe, the new and improved legislative maps would be sprung on the populace](#). Wednesday came, the meeting lasted all of 90 seconds, and there were no maps for you. So, this makes it increasingly likely that [this year's elections will be run in the seats drawn way back in 2001](#). Shouldn't be that big of a deal, quite frankly; it's not like we've annexed New Jersey or Ohio in the interim.

This also means that the current court battle being waged over when [to schedule special elections for six vacant House seats](#) might just be moot. In any case, we imagine the courts are rather tired of hearing about maps right about now, and would rather go back to more mundane and less politically-charged topics.

Lawmakers seem to have shifted the gears on the Commonwealth's policy vehicle when it comes to liquor stores. The people at the wheel have [downshifted from "privatization" to "modernization", failing to muster enough legislative support for the former](#). This presents quite a conundrum for privatization fans. If State Stores become too modernized, and successful, what will be the rationale for trying to sell them off again in 2013?

The budget hearings droned on...we mean, continued...this week with the House joining the band. The highlight of the week was the [four state-related university presidents coming together to warn that the currently-proposed higher education cuts might just force them to go private](#). Of all the message points the esteemed presidents could have used, we are not sure if that one was the most effective way to make the case to some of the folks in the room. Forcing Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln to privatize is probably exactly what some of them want in the end anyway. Never try to threaten somebody with a good time, folks. It doesn't work.

If you are a Pennsylvania hamlet that does not have its own police department and instead relies upon the State Police, you may be [losing your share of ticket revenue under the newly-proposed Corbett budget](#). Under his plan, the local share of traffic violations would no longer stay local, but instead be diverted to the State Police. We're sure there is some reasonable argument against this idea, but having spent two days trying to figure out what that might be, we are just gonna go ahead and wait until somebody e-mails it our way, because we are fresh out of ideas.

As some Pennsylvania policy makers play the "I know you are, but what am I?" game on transportation funding, the House is poised to pass a bill to enable public/private partnerships in the state to help alleviate a bit of the problem. Here is a [nice piece from our pals at the Reading Eagle on the types of projects that could be eligible](#).

And if you'd like to bone up on your P3 knowledge, [pop on over to this blog](#), hosted by some of our friends.

We found out recently that Pennsylvania [now ranks 14th nationally in the percentage of unionized workforce](#).

The United States Postal Service announced its five-year plan this week, and it includes an [end to Saturday deliveries, as well as 50-cent stamps](#). Nothing says we are ready to stand up to the private sector competition like fewer hours and more expensive products.

The Lottery Commission this week announced they have sent [Gus the Second Most Famous Pennsylvania Groundhog off to that big burrow in the sky](#). Reaction was mixed, as some folks refused to understand just how creepy he really was, apparently. He will be replaced by a bumbling but good-natured roughed grouse named Sal.

With there now being zero chance that any GOP Presidential nominee can lock up the nomination before April 24th, [Pennsylvania will, in fact, again be relevant in the Presidential Primary kerfuffle](#). Lest anyone believe, however, that whoever wins the state will get a big boost to the nomination, we refer you to President Hillary Clinton's spokesperson.

If we do, however, mean more than a hill of beans, those beans are looking more and more like they will be in the pockets of our own [Rick Santorum, who is currently polling off the charts in his home state](#) (no doubt getting under the skin of our other two favorite sons, Newt Gingrich and Ron Paul.)

Once the long-awaited North Shore connector opens in March out in the Steel City, [riders heading in to downtown \(or even, for that matter, heading into dahntahn\) will ride for free](#), thanks to subsidies from the Rivers Casino and the Pittsburgh Steelers.

And that's the whole ball of wax for this week as February draws to an end and spring training opens for the Phightin' Phils and the Battlin' Bucs!

In Other News

02-27-2012 [One Year Later: Measuring the Loss of adultBasic Health Coverage](#)
(Press Release)

02-24-2012 [UPDATED: Dept. of State - Unofficial 2012 Primary Candidate List in Ballot](#)

Order

(Press Release)

02-24-2012

PennDOT: Statewide Roadside Cleanup Planned, Volunteers Needed

(Press Release)

02-23-2012

Aq Department Invests \$92,000 to Grow Farmers Markets, Specialty Crop Industry

(Press Release)

02-22-2012

Federal grant to fund work-force training

With funds from a \$625,000 federal grant to use over the next three years, Reading Area Community College is poised to address work-force training needs in three areas of high demand - advanced manufacturing production technology, solar technology and health information technology.... - [Reading Eagle](#)

02-20-2012

Cuts hide in \$21.8 million bonus for education

MIFFLINBURG -- Gov. Tom Corbett said he put \$21.8 million more into education over last year in his proposed 2012-13 budget, giving \$6.5 billion to public schools. But school districts, administrators and associations are crying foul, claiming accounting tricks make it look like more money when actually there... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)

02-22-2012

Chairman Markosek Natural Gas Impact Fee Fast Facts

(Press Release)

02-16-2012

House RACP debate focuses on jobs

House considers cuts to redevelopment aid Program's debt limit would be reduced HARRISBURG - The House started debate Wednesday on a bill to greatly reduce the scope of a state community redevelopment program and rejected an amendment to exempt job-producing projects from a proposed lower borrowing... - [Scranton Times](#)