



**Center for Beef Excellence
Beef Bytes
April 16, 2012**

Hello, friends.

The General Assembly is taking a short recess and won't be returning until the week after the primary election on April 24. Once they return at the end of April with a short break in late May for Memorial Day, they will be focusing on passing the Commonwealth's FY 2012/13 budget before the June 30th deadline.

Perdue Agribusiness will be holding an open house on Thursday, April 26 at the Bainbridge Fire Company. See the attached invitation for more details.

If you're looking for grant opportunities, check www.grants.gov from time to time as this site is updated regularly.

Enjoy the unseasonably warm day and have a great week!

Sincerely,
MeeCee

Articles of Interest

Pennsylvania News:

[Legal Battle Over Gas](#)

The State Supreme Court will hear a case that will clarify oil and gas ownership under old leases, as landowners try to sort out rights to drilling in the Marcellus Shale. The case deals with the separation of oil, mineral and land ownership and could change many existing practices.

[Farm Markets Open](#)

There are three farmers' markets along the Pennsylvania turnpike that allow travelers to purchase locally grown food over the weekends, through the end of November. The markets feature PA Preferred and fresh farm products.

National News:

[US Employment Trends](#)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has interesting information on changes in American employment over the past 40 years. The trends show a decline in manufacturing jobs, once the top employer, and a growth in the service industry. Currently, the largest employer is the government.

[Industry Price Expectations](#)

Producers are excited about high cattle prices, but there is the possibility that rising costs will force consumers to cut back on beef consumption. To remain profitable, producers are working to increase cow efficiency and extend the grazing season.

[Clean Water Act Concerns](#)

A new rule by the Environmental Protection Agency as part of the Clean Water Act could mean that the agency will have the power to regulate all bodies of water, due to changes in the wording of the law. A group of lawmakers and activists are working to prevent the change.

[Antibiotic Oversight](#)

The Food and Drug Administration issued a guidance that calls for livestock producers to voluntarily eliminate the use of antibiotics in animal production for non-therapeutic reasons. The drugs would still be available for treating diseases under the supervision of a veterinarian.

[Corn Planting Progress](#)

Warm weather this spring means that corn plantings are well ahead of normal. This could be an indication of high production for the year, leading to an increase in the corn stocks and lower prices for livestock and ethanol producers.

Global News:

[Expanding Markets in South Korea](#)

The US Meat Export Federation target a group of influential bloggers from South Korea to spread the message about the benefits of US beef. The bloggers were treated to meals and educated on the US beef industry and will now share this information with their readers.

[Investing in Global Agriculture](#)

Leaders of anti-poverty group ONE are calling for developed nations to invest in plans to improve agriculture in the world's poorest countries. These plans would help to improve nutrition and decrease hunger concerns.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Managing Risk](#)

Price volatility in crop markets and prices mean that producers should manage risk carefully in order to remain profitable. Keeping debt low, working capital high and controlling costs allow the operation to be prepared in case of unexpected price shifts.

[Planting Clover](#)

Adding clover to pastures can improve forage quality and yield, as well as cutting down on future fertilizer need. Before planting it is important to have good soil quality and when planting it is important to follow the recommended seeding rates.

[Rebreeding Cows](#)

In order to get cows that calve late in the season back on track, producers may need to use management strategies to bring them into heat faster after calving. These methods include decreasing suckling or exposure to progesterone. Cows should have sound nutrition and be at least 30 days postpartum before breeding.

[Quality Assurance for Truckers](#)

Transporting cattle properly is an important part of beef quality assurance, so a special program has been developed just for those who haul cattle. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association offers online training and certification.

[Cost of Hay Production](#)

Many cattle producers would be surprised to find what it costs to produce a ton of hay, once accounting for land values, equipment, fertilizers and seed. Minimizing input costs through extending the grazing season and buying hay if it is cheaper can help to improve profitability.

- 04-16-2012 [**Temperature swings frost expectations for area crops**](#)
Recent cold temperatures have not been kind to local farmers. A warmer than normal March caused an early blooming season for most crops. But those warm temperatures gave way to recent frosts that have damaged some crops, according to Eric Oesterling, an agent for Penn State... - [Tarentum Valley News Dispatch](#)
- 04-16-2012 [**'Pink slime' spurs beef backlash**](#)
More than a month after the existence of the ammonia-treated ground beef extender known as "pink slime" drew widespread publicity and fueled consumer fury, a predicted jump in ground beef prices has failed to surface, shoppers pepper grocers with meat-safety questions and more... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 04-15-2012 [**'Pink slime' spurs beef backlash**](#)
Christina Szydlowski's family already limited meat consumption before the recent "pink slime" scandal stirred a consumer backlash against ground beef. "We try to watch the meat that we eat. Financially, it gets to be kind of a lot," said Mrs. Szydlowski, of Scranton, a mother of four who paused Friday... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 04-13-2012 [**Inside PDA for April 13, 2012**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-13-2012 [**Humane Society finds 'deplorable' conditions at Pa. egg farm; Farm says 'a gross distortion'**](#)
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Humane Society of the United States said Thursday an uncover operation by the group at a central Pennsylvania egg farm found hens suffering in severely overcrowded cages, along with mummified bird carcasses, thick layers of dead flies and other "deplorable"... - [AP](#)
- 04-13-2012 [**U.S. Tightens Rules on Antibiotics Use for Livestock**](#)
Farmers and ranchers will for the first time need a prescription from a veterinarian before using antibiotics in farm animals, in hopes that more judicious use of the drugs will reduce the tens of thousands of human deaths that result each year from the drugs' overuse.... - [New York Times](#)
- 04-12-2012 [**Report Says a Crop Subsidy Cap Could Save Billions**](#)
WASHINGTON — The federal government could save about \$1 billion a year by reducing the subsidies it pays to large farmers to cover much of the cost of their crop insurance, according to a report by Congressional auditors due to be released on Thursday. The report raised the prospect of the government's capping the amount... - [New York Times](#)
- 04-11-2012 [**2012 Keystone International Livestock Expo Tentative Schedule Released**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-03-2012 [**Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs - Center for Dairy Excellence**](#)
(Testimony)
- 04-03-2012 [**Salmonella found in raw milk products at Kutztown dairy farm**](#)
The state departments of Agriculture and Health today advised consumers and retailers who purchased raw milk and raw milk cheese from Norman Z. and Edith B. Sauder in Kutztown, Berks County, to discard or return the products immediately after the products tested positive for salmonella.... - [Carlisle Sentinel](#)

Legislative Activity

[HB 761](#) [Cutler](#)

Amends Tax Reform Code, in realty transfer tax, further providing for definitions, for excluded transactions, documents & acquired company; and, in inheritance tax, further providing for transfers not subject to tax.

Printer Number(s): [P0784](#) [P2590](#) [P3345](#)

Bill History: 04-30-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar

Capitol Review

This week marked the end of the line for the long, [strange trip that was Rick Santorum's Presidential candidacy](#). It was a ride that was as improbable as it was compelling. Say what you want about Rick (and we know you will), the fact that he was essentially the last man standing between Mitt Romney and November shocked just about everyone who follows politics.

It seems as though some justices on the [U.S. Supreme Court have a, shall we say, less than complete grasp](#) on what is really contained in the guts of the individual mandate section of Obamacare, even as they deliberate over whether or not to scrap it. No matter where you might be on that particular question, this kind of news tends to make us a little nervous. We always thought the Supremes were kinda dialed-in. Not so much, apparently. Efforts to reach Diana Ross for comment were unsuccessful.

Tongues wagged in Harrisburg this week (that happens a lot around here) over a new Corbett Administration plan to [privatize the management of the Pennsylvania Lottery](#). The Lottery, as we all know, supports programs for Pennsylvania's senior citizens. The logic here is that those programs are in a bit of jeopardy because lottery revenues will not keep pace with our rapidly aging population. We do have us quite a few seniors in this state, and it is usually wise to keep them happy. They can un-elect you in very short order if they get grumpy.

[The debate over whether or not to abolish property taxes has re-emerged](#), you'll all be glad to know. Lawmakers have for years been wrestling with how to replace the billions in revenue the property tax generates for our schools, and we have a news flash: ain't nothing new under the sun. Abolish one, raise another, rinse, repeat.

[Pennsylvania apparently has way too much gas](#), a malady that will not be solved with an over-the-counter pill of some sort. Natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale coupled with a mild winter has caused a gas glut, pushing prices to historic lows. Drillers are now scaling back operations across the nation. Looks like we better step up the pace on converting our cars to natural gas power.

For if we do not, you will soon need a second mortgage to fill up your gas tank, as [gasoline prices are heading in the exact opposite direction of natural gas prices](#), blowing past the four buck a gallon mark in most areas this week. The silver lining is that Pennsylvania tourism is expected to get a boost, as more and more PA residents will be staying a lot closer to home this summer. No one wants to sell a kidney in order to buy enough gas to get to Ocean City.

[Governor Corbett this week indicated it is precisely these gas prices that are making him wary of lifting the cap on the state's Oil Franchise Tax to generate revenue to fix our crumbling infrastructure.](#) This was the same logic used by former Governor Ed Rendell when he balked at a gas tax increase, preferring instead to toll Interstate 80 (we see how well that worked). We have a bit of sobering news; you may all wanna sit down. Comfy? Good. The days of cheap gas are gone, baby, gone (despite what Newt Gingrich might tell you). If you want to fix our infrastructure, somebody is going to have to bite that bullet eventually. Ain't no rest for the wicked and money doesn't grow on trees.

Referencing the above paragraph, we give you [Auditor General Jack Wagner](#), ladies and gentlemen. He understands. Bravo.

Lawmakers this week were shocked to learn that new [newly-minted Voter ID law may present a bit of a problem](#) to a group of people who were completely overlooked during House and Senate debates on the bill: the Amish, who were apparently too busy planting and plowing and building and generally minding their own business. They will, however, likely have a tough time getting a non-photo ID, due to the fact that the questionnaire they need to fill out at PennDOT is about the size of the hardcover version of *Atlas Shrugged*.

All of this could end up being much ado about nothing, however, as the [ACLU and the NAACP have announced they will file a lawsuit to get the entire law overturned](#). And you probably shouldn't be too shocked if you see the U.S. Justice Department follow suit, as it has done in other states. The Obama DOJ gets a little squeamish about Voter ID bills. We can't imagine why.

[The Commonwealth Court this week granted a 120-day injunction on the zoning section of the state's new shale impact fee law.](#) We guess the argument that the state can override local zoning "because we said so" wasn't quite compelling enough for the courts. Lightheartedness aside, this may scramble the eggs for the state as it tries to establish some uniform rules to govern zoning.

Hey, remember a few weeks back when we told you that a recently-passed Senate bill that [legalized direct wine shipments could face a rocky road in the House](#)? As we recall, we said something about shenanigans. Well, shenanigans are, indeed, afoot. The House this week indicated that instead of taking up that bill, it will seek to amend it with language to privatize the state store system (try to contain your shock). Selling the state stores is now officially the Rasputin of state government.

[The Legislative Reapportionment Commission on Thursday finally produced another set of maps](#) for the state's 203 House and 50 Senate seats. Because the first set of maps went the way of all flesh, these newly-proposed lines won't take effect until the 2014 elections. If you are planning on weighing in or perhaps designing maps of your own, the 30-day clock is ticking, so go here and have at it.

Before leaving town for the Primary Elections last week, the [House passed a bill that will for the first time set up a framework for public/private partnerships for transportation projects](#). A big shout-out goes to House Transportation Committee Chairman Rick Geist for finally pushing it across the House goal line (which seemed to always be moving, for some reason).

Wanna know why Russell Crowe and Tom Cruise and Viggo Mortensen hang out in western Pennsylvania? It's not for the Primanti's sandwiches, folks. [It is because Pennsylvania's Film Tax Credit has become a serious economic generator for the Pittsburgh area](#), with

filmmakers flocking there every month and major production facilities being built. Since the FTC was hatched, it has doled out \$240 million, which has generated \$1.8 billion in economic activity. Oh, and it has also created 14,500 jobs. Remember when some lawmakers railed against this tax credit during the Rendell years? Seems like forever ago, doesn't it?

Governor Corbett this week had a frank observation for folks who are concerned about rising school property taxes: [take it up with your school board](#). The governor is continuing, sometimes rather bluntly, to make the case that the state is holding up its end of the school funding deal, but teacher pensions and profligate school board spending are the real problems. There are classic battle lines shaping up over this one, and November may provide us with the first clue on who is winning.

Well, that's all for this week. Have a great one!

In Other News

- 04-16-2012 [**Act 13 goes into effect, bringing impact fee and regulations**](#)
HARRISBURG -- When oil and gas drillers in Pennsylvania wake up on Monday, they'll be under new rules on how they deal with officials, where they can locate their operations and the price tag attached to wells. Drillers will have to ante up fees based on their number of wells and the... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 04-15-2012 [**Leftover salt has unsavory outcome for municipalities**](#)
Local communities struggled in recent years with road salt shortages that sent demand and prices for the material through the roof. Now, because of a mild winter, communities that used just a fraction of the salt they ordered have it stockpiled to the roofs of maintenance sheds,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 04-15-2012 [**In Pa. assembly primary, good year for incumbents**](#)
A safe prediction about the upcoming primary for seats in the Pennsylvania Legislature: April 24 will be a good day for incumbents... - [AP](#)
- 04-11-2012 [**HDPC examines new voter ID law**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-11-2012 [**AG Wagner Says PA Motorists 10 Times More Likely to Pass Deficient Bridge...**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-11-2012 [**Rep. F. Keller - HB 1329: Moving the Clock Forward on PA's Prevailing Wage Law**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-10-2012 [**Turnpike Farmers Markets Open to Offer Travelers a Taste of Pennsylvania**](#)
(Press Release)
- 04-04-2012 [**Bill to Shrink Legislature Heads to Senate, Turzai Says**](#)
(Press Release)
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