



Center for Beef Excellence
Beef Bytes
July 10, 2012

Dear friends,

I hope you are enjoying the summer and have plans to experience some of the sights, sounds and bounty found here in the Commonwealth. One way to sample the local agricultural flavor is to visit a county fair. Choose from the list on the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs' [website](#). If you are looking for additional ideas, check out a "StayCation" site with information accessible at www.VisitPA.com.

For an ag fair experience on a truly grand scale, plan to visit Ag Progress Days at Rock Springs which runs from August 14 – 16. Check out the [roster of events](#)

The next issue of the *Beef Bytes* will come your way the week of July 23!

Debbie

Articles of Interest

CBE News:

[JBS Tour](#)

The Center for Beef Excellence was excited to take part in a tour and cattle feeder's meeting hosted by JBS. Company leaders spoke on the gap between supply and demand and what that will mean for the industry in the years to come.

Pennsylvania News:

[PA Inheritance Tax Eliminated](#)

In the latest budget, signed by Governor Corbett, the Pennsylvania inheritance tax for family farms was eliminated. The change applies to any working farms and will help to prevent farms from going out of business due to taxes during a generational change.

National News:

[Thoughts on Health Care](#)

With the Supreme Court ruling, the new health care law was declared constitutional despite doubts from many conservatives. Although the implementation will be difficult, much of the debate now will center around how to move forward following this decision.

[McDonalds Moves Away from Beef](#)

With high beef prices apparently here to stay, McDonalds is focusing on developing new chicken based products to draw customers. Beef prices are expected to continue to rise following another year of drought and falling cattle numbers.

[House Farm Bill](#)

The House of Representatives agricultural committee proposed their own version of the 2012 farm bill and will vote on it soon. The bill keeps the farm subsidy program, raising target prices, but significantly increases budget cuts by targeting the food stamps program.

Global News:

[Battle over Cattle Imports](#)

The Department of Agriculture is facing claims from R-CALF USA that they did not comply with previous court rulings after an injunction on their rule. New revisions to this rule have brought the debate to the surface again, as the USDA seeks to allow imports from several other countries.

[COOL Ruling](#)

The World Trade Organization ruled on the US appeal of their initial decision on country of origin labeling. The results were mixed and the US will have a year to make changes to either require less information from producers or provide more information to consumers.

[Australian Carbon Market](#)

In an attempt to reduce emissions, Australia has placed a cost on carbon and started to develop a market for emissions credits, which will go into effect in 2015. Livestock emissions are exempt, but the policy will affect meat processors and transporters.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Water for Cattle](#)

High temperatures mean that producers must take care to provide plenty of fresh, clean water for livestock. Testing water for salts, nitrates and sulfates can help to prevent problems from mineral toxicity.

[Biosecurity Practices](#)

As producers consider expanding their herd in response to high cattle prices, it is important to treat new animals properly before adding them to the herd. Testing and vaccinating for the proper diseases, such as Trich, Lepto, BVD and IBR, as well as parasite control will help to prevent problems from spreading among animals.

[New Pathogen Control](#)

Scientists have developed an alternative to antibiotics for the control of E. coli and Salmonella in cattle. Organic chlorates and nitros can kill off these pathogens in the animal, but have not yet been approved for use in food animals.

[Farm Profitability](#)

Keeping overhead costs low is one way to boost profitability on the farm. Keeping only the necessary equipment and minimizing the number of people/amount of labor needed to maintain cattle will save money in the long run.

[Cull Cows](#)

The value of cull cows is at record levels, as beef supplies remain tight due to low cattle numbers. Imports from Mexico and overseas have helped to provide extra beef, but the value of cows has already reached numbers typical of fed cattle only a few years ago.

07-09-2012

[USDA - Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup for the Week Ending July 8, 2012](#)
(Press Release)

- 07-09-2012 [**PSU: Interdisciplinary research looks at whole-farm sustainability**](#)
(Press Release)
- 07-09-2012 [**Farm Aid Music & Food Festival Returns to PA on Sept 22 at Hersheypark Stadium**](#)
(Press Release)
- 07-09-2012 [**Small But Mighty: To save dairy farms, a fair-trade inspiration**](#)
Consumers will pay a little more for coffee and chocolate to ensure that the farmers who produce those foods get a fair wage... - [AP](#)
- 07-09-2012 [**Repeal of the state inheritance tax on family farms**](#)
By PATTI S. SPENCER Extra! Extra! Read all about it! A new law that ends the Pennsylvania inheritance tax on family farms was part of the 2012-13 state budget package. Gov. Tom Corbett signed the act last Monday. The repeal of the inheritance tax on certain farms is effective for the estates of decedents dying after... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 07-09-2012 [**Eat locally grown food, support conservation efforts**](#)
For some, the idea of conservation goes hand in hand with eating locally sourced food. Doylestown-based conservation organization Heritage Conservancy wants to make that point with its fourth annual From Farm to Table dinner, to be set at picturesque and rustic Lindsay Farm in Warminster in August.... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 07-06-2012 [**Inside PDA for July 6, 2012**](#)
(Press Release)
- 07-04-2012 [**Clinton ShopRite recalls ground meat packaged at store after bits of plastic tray liner found in product**](#)
The Clinton ShopRite is voluntarily recalling store-packaged ground meat sold Sunday because the product may contain bits of plastic tray lining, according to a company news release. The store, 50 Wal-Mart Plaza in Franklin Township, says the black tray liner pad used in packaging the meat has in some cases been found in the... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 07-03-2012 [**Future of PA Farms Strengthened with Changes to State Tax Code**](#)
(Press Release)
- 07-03-2012 [**Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Attains All-Time Membership High**](#)
(Press Release)
- 07-03-2012 [**Continued dry weather raises farmers' fears for feed**](#)
If some heavy rains don't arrive soon, Alle-Kiski Valley farmers might be buying more takeout food for their livestock this fall. That's the view of some local farmers gave in assessing the impact of the scorching weather that has been baking their feed crops.... - [Kittanning Leader-Times](#)

Legislative Activity

[HB 761](#) [Cutler](#) Amends Tax Reform Code, in sales & use tax, for defs., exclusions from tax, etc.; in corporate net income tax; in insurance premiums tax; in EITC; in tax credits; community-based services tax credit; tax credit for new jobs; related repeals.

Printer Number(s): [P0784](#) [P2590](#) [P3345](#) [P3559](#) [P3883](#) [P3894](#)

Bill History: 07-12-12 G Last day for Governor's action
07-02-12 G Approved by the Governor (Act: 85)

[SB 1298](#) [Smucker](#) Amends the Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act further providing for definitions and for appeals.

Printer Number(s): [P1685](#) [P1864](#)

Bill History: 09-24-12 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

Capitol Review

The most important development last week, hands down, was that physicists may have discovered a new subatomic particle, called the "Higgs boson," that could be the key to understanding why there is diversity in the universe. In other words, the long-awaited explanation as to why in Pittsburgh your sandwich comes with fries on it while in Philly you get Cheez Whiz.

We don't know much about science books, but fortunately we came upon this [helpful explanation in the New York Times](#): "According to the Standard Model, the Higgs boson is the only manifestation of an invisible force field, a cosmic molasses that permeates space and imbues elementary particles with mass. Particles wading through the field gain heft the way a bill going through Congress attracts riders and amendments, becoming ever more ponderous." OK, we get it now. The explanation would do [Dr. Science](#) proud, not only for helping to understand an important scientific discovery, but also explaining why bills in Congress are ever so ponderous.

All right, campers, listen up. While the state budget, as usual, was hogging all of the attention, the General Assembly also passed a whole bunch of other important stuff that's worth mentioning, even a week later. We offer the following handy guide, for those of you keeping score at home:

- **Public-private partnerships.** [The measure would enable private firms to propose and finance new highway projects.](#) Although transportation advocates welcomed it as a tool that could be helpful in advancing some projects, they quickly noted that it will not make much of a dent in the state's \$3.5 billion transportation funding gap.
- **Red-light cameras.** The measure allows municipalities besides Philadelphia to install automated red light enforcement systems. It would [require municipalities to have a population of at least 20,000 residents, accredited police departments and PennDOT approval.](#)
- **Teacher evaluations.** Passed in the House but not yet considered in the Senate, Pennsylvania nonetheless appears to be headed toward a teacher evaluation system

that for the first time would be based in part on student test scores. The measure would base 50 percent of teacher and principal ratings on a wide variety of measures, including graduation rate, attendance and state and local test scores. This week, the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette pointed out that charter school teachers would be excluded from the evaluation requirements.](#)

- **E-Verify.** Approved by Governor Corbett, this requires a public works contractor, prior to the execution of the work, to provide a verification form that ensures the employees on the job are legally permitted to be in the U.S. [The verification will be made by checking their employees' status via the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's online E-Verify system.](#)
- **Gas-well drilling ban.** As part of the fiscal code this slaps a moratorium until 2018 on drilling into the untapped South Newark Basin natural gas reservoir, which lies below portions of southeastern Pennsylvania. [The provision will bar state regulators from issuing drilling permits until a state agency evaluates the impact of drilling, and the host counties are legally allowed to impose a drilling fee.](#)
- **Financially distressed municipalities.** [As we foreshadowed last week, this extends bankruptcy prohibition for Harrisburg for five months.](#)
- **Penn Vet funding.** Yes, friends, our favorite school of veterinary medicine secured approximately \$28 million for a variety of programs that help ensure a safe food supply, support the farming sector and fund medical research that benefits animals and humans alike. For a video update on just how important veterinary medicine is to agriculture and public health in Pennsylvania, [watch Penn Vet Dean Joan Hendricks on this week's installment of Terry Madonna's Pennsylvania Newsmakers.](#)

It used to be that the phrase, "Bought the farm," signified going to the big barn in the sky. Now, [thanks](#)

[to a new tax break approved by the General Assembly](#), it could mean that someone, literally, has bought a farm in order to will it to a close relative and therefore avoid paying the inheritance tax on the equity value. In fact, the new inheritance tax exemption is intended to enable more family-owned farms to be kept "in the family" from one generation to the next.

[Speaking of buying things, Democrats and Republicans took a well-deserved bow in Delaware County this week for their role in saving 850 Sunoco refinery jobs and paving the way for another 250 worker hires as the oil company announced some \\$200 million in new investments and improvements thanks to a new partnership with the private equity firm, the Carlyle Group. Among those front and center was Governor Tom Corbett of "Shell cracker" fame. This time, the state's investment will come primarily in the form of some \\$25 million in grants to enable the refinery to improve its railroad tank car offloading procedures and construct, you guessed it, a "mild cracker" for natural gas. What's a "mild cracker?" Maybe one without cheddar cheese? Who cares. Jobs is jobs.](#)

[On the potential downside for the Governor this week, PennDOT put out the word that a computer comparison of the state's voter registration roll against all Pennsylvanians holding drivers licenses indicates that nearly one in 10 voters lacks a driver's license – one of the approved forms of voter identification needed to get into the polling booth on election day this November. That's a much higher number than backers of the original voter ID](#)

[legislation estimated. The good news, though, is that the computer couldn't identify that, say "Joe Smith" registered to vote at 123 Main Street is the same guy as "Joseph C. Smith," the licensed driver at 123 Main Street. Of course, Joe might have the same problem on Election Day when he tries to prove to the satisfaction of the Judge of Elections that he is the "one and only" Joe Smith of 123 Main Street. Okay, Let's pause for a public service announcement: Get out your wallet. What name is on your driver's license? Is it the same as the name on your voter registration? If not, get cracking and contact the folks at the voter registration office at the County Courthouse and get the right name on both registrations. Didn't we warn you that trying to pass yourself off as "Melvin the Magnificent" on your driver's license was going to cause you problems someday?](#)

[With that, whew, have a great week!](#)

In Other News

- [07-09-2012](#) **Lancaster Central Market named one of best in world**
[Lancaster Central Market has been named one of the world's best markets. It joins a prestigious list of global markets in such far-flung places as Spain, Japan and France rated by CNN GO, a global travel and lifestyle website of the Cable News Network. The market is the oldest, continuously operated farmer's market in the... - Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- [07-08-2012](#) **Rewritten Pa. redistricting plan challenged anew**
[HARRISBURG, Pa. — Democrats mounted a new challenge Friday in state Supreme Court to a Republican-drawn map of Pennsylvania's legislative districts, after challenges to a prior plan six months ago won a stunning victory from the divided high court and forced this year's election to be... - AP](#)
- [07-06-2012](#) **Gov. Tom Corbett signs Pennsylvania prison reform into law**
[Prison reform became law on Thursday, sort of. Gov. Tom Corbett signed SB100, which incorporated many of the reform proposals recommended by his Justice Reinvestment Working Group and which passed both the House and the Senate unanimously. PA prison camphill.JPGView full sizePennsylvania has been constructing more... - Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- [07-05-2012](#) **Pa. says 758,000-plus voters lack PennDOT photo ID**
[18 percent of Philadelphia's registered voters do not have PennDOT identification. State officials say more than 758,000 registered voters in Pennsylvania do not have photo identification cards from the state transportation department, leaving their ability to vote in November in doubt unless they... - Allentown Morning Call](#)
- [07-05-2012](#) **Malware may knock thousands off Internet on Monday; how to check whether you are vulnerable**
[WASHINGTON — The warnings about the Internet problem have been splashed across Facebook and Google... - AP](#)
- [07-05-2012](#) **Muhammad Ali named 2012 Liberty Medal recipient**
[PHILADELPHIA — Boxing great Muhammad Ali is the recipient of the 2012 Liberty Medal... - AP](#)
- [07-04-2012](#) **Corbett already eyeing bills for the fall session**
[HARRISBURG - The last few weeks of grueling negotiations over a state budget may be over, but Gov. Corbett already has his eye on the legislature's fall session to move bills that did not survive the budget crunch. Topping that list, Corbett said Tuesday: changes in the way charter schools... - Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- [07-03-2012](#) **With boomers coming, hospice industry diversifies**
[CONCORD, N.H. - Forget that image of a hospice worker sitting next to a hospital bed in a dimly lit room... - AP](#)
- [07-03-2012](#) **A Climate Scientist Battles Time and Mortality**

[COLUMBUS, Ohio — One day in 1991, high in the thin, crystalline air of the Peruvian Andes, Lonnie G. Thompson saw that the world's largest tropical ice cap was starting to melt. It was the moment he realized that his life's work had suddenly become a race. Temperature Rising... - *New York Times*](#)