



**Center for Beef Excellence**  
**News You Can Use**  
**July 31, 2012**

Good Afternoon Friends,

As many conversations this time of year end up discussing rainfall or lack thereof, turning to a science based monitor can help. Visit [here](#) for updates.

The Ag in the Classroom program recently completed another successful week of teacher training. Congratulations to all the good people who volunteer their time and resources to make this project so successful. Visit the [web site](#) to find out more about this worthwhile program or to secure a mobile teaching unit for your school..

Versant is in a flurry Ag Progress Days planning. We look forward to seeing you all at the event next month!

Sincerely,  
MeeCee

***Articles of Interest***

**Pennsylvania News:**

[Crop Insurance](#)

For producers growing their own feeds the hot weather has damaged crops in many areas. Crop damage must be reported within 72 hours of discovery and a loss adjuster must examine the damage to allow for collection of insurance.

**National News:**

[Funding for Agricultural Research](#)

The National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science is a group composed of leaders from many universities across the country. The goal is to promote additional funding for research in animal science as global demand for animal products is expected to rise.

[Farm Bill](#)

House leaders have scheduled a vote on the 2012 Farm Bill but there is still much debate over the types and amounts of spending cuts. Disaster relief for livestock producers is another concern as many of the programs expired at the end of 2011.

[Drought Influences Prices](#)

Poor crop yields are likely to eventually lead to higher food prices for consumers. However, the effect on inflation is expected to be minimal, as this is seen as a temporary condition

and will not impact federal monetary policy. Foreign countries who import US grains may see food inflation.

#### [Consumer Beef Preferences](#)

The Beef Checkoff has conducted research to show changing consumer preferences for the cuts of beef used and how they are prepared. Recently, more consumers are cooking at home and purchasing a higher proportion of ground beef rather than steaks or roasts.

#### [Ethanol Mandate](#)

A debate has risen in Congress over the Renewable Fuels Standard and its impact on the price of food and fuel. Some groups are calling for repeal or change to the standard that would allow flexibility based on corn stocks to provide demand relief in years of drought.

#### [Meatless Monday Debate](#)

A USDA website statement caused a big reaction as employees were encouraged to participate in Meatless Monday as a way to reduce their carbon footprint. The statement was removed after reaction from agricultural groups and leaders claim it was posted without proper clearance.

#### [Protecting Youth in Agriculture](#)

Following the spring debate over proposed youth labor laws that could decrease youth involvement in agriculture, leaders in both the House and Senate have proposed laws that would prevent future discussions and new regulations to limit the work opportunities for farm kids.

#### **Global News:**

##### [Taiwan Lifts Trade Ban](#)

Government leaders in Taiwan agreed to end a ban on US beef imports over concerns about ractopamine. The move may help to restart discussions of a free trade agreement that has been in progress since 2007.

#### **Cattle Management Articles:**

##### [Calculating Hay Needs](#)

Producers should begin to look for hay now if they expect to run short this winter. Determining how many cows will be fed and how long they will stay on hay is essential for deciding how much hay to purchase.

##### [Weaning Options](#)

Low stress weaning can provide health benefits for calves when compared to conventional weaning methods. Fenceline weaning and nose clips both allow calves to stay near their dams for a few days to accept the loss of nursing before being physically separated.

##### [Drought Resources](#)

Ohio State University has developed a website for producers dealing with drought. There is information on both crops and livestock as well as disaster relief programs. These links are available at <http://agmr.osu.edu/managing-drought-2012>

##### [Seeding for Extra Forage](#)

Producers needing short term forages can look to seeding a variety of grasses for later summer or autumn grazing. Options include oats, wheat, barley, rye, turnips, sorghum and a variety of millets. Careful planning should be done to choose the right forage for the circumstances.

##### [Future of Cattle Feeding](#)

With corn prices continuing to rise, nutritionists and cattle feeders are considering alternative production systems for the future. This could include feeding more byproducts or feeding higher forage rations- emphasizing optimal performance rather than maximum gain.

- 07-31-2012 [\*\*Ag Progress Days Visitors Encouraged to Stop By Agriculture Department Building\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-31-2012 [\*\*PDA Ready to Help Farmers Grow Their Businesses During Ag Progress Days\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-31-2012 [\*\*USDA - Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup for the Week Ending July 29, 2012\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-30-2012 [\*\*PSU Agricultural Law Brief - July 2012\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-30-2012 [\*\*PA Farm Bureau Seeks Relief from Restrictive Trade Barriers and Improved...\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-30-2012 [\*\*Pennsylvania farmers like removal of death tax from their heirs\*\*](#)  
Dale Heagy didn't have to pay the "death tax" when he bought his Lebanon County farm from his father two years ago. Yet the East Hanover Township dairy farmer still cheered at the recent law eliminating the Pennsylvania inheritance tax on working farms passed on to... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 07-27-2012 [\*\*Center for Dairy Excellence: Livestock Carcass Management Workshop to be held...\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-27-2012 [\*\*Bethlehem Township, Pa., researching whether Koehler farm can expand cattle count\*\*](#)  
Farm animals have been housed on the Dale A. Koehler family farm in Bethlehem Township, Pa., since the late 1700s. More than 220 years later, township officials are researching whether the animals are even permitted on the Freemansburg Avenue farm. Raising livestock is prohibited within the township's medium-density... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 07-24-2012 [\*\*PDA: Hot, Dry Weather a Reminder to Report Crop Damage Promptly\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-24-2012 [\*\*USDA - Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup for the Week Ending July 22, 2012\*\*](#)  
(Press Release)

## **Legislative Activity**

- [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**

Families who live near [low-achieving public schools](#) can take advantage of a new state program to help pay for a better education elsewhere.

Got an extra buck? Pennsylvanians kept [scratchin'](#) last year, to the tune of \$3.48 billion in lottery sales.

Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Court ruled Thursday that the zoning provisions of Act 13, the state's oil and gas drilling law, are [unconstitutional](#). Not satisfied with that verdict? Expect the state's Supreme Court to weigh in on its [appeal](#) of that lower court's decision.

A precedent is being set as a school [property tax](#) elimination bill undergoes an in-depth analysis by the newly created state independent fiscal office.

A suburban [Philadelphia election official](#) says he's not going to enforce a new law forcing citizens to present photo identification to vote on Election Day.

[Pa. Auditor General Jack Wagner criticizes Penn State's power, secrecy](#) Too much power is concentrated in the job of Penn State president and too little information is shared by a university that receives taxpayer support.

Have a great week!

## **In Other News**

- 07-31-2012     [PA Pharmacists Association: It's back to school time! Who should be vaccinated?](#)  
(Press Release)
- 07-31-2012     [401\(k\) fee disclosure rules go into effect](#)  
By Tim Grant / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Workers are getting their first chance to see how big a bite management fees are taking out of their total retirement savings. Investment firms that manage retirement accounts for companies across the nation were required by July 1 to send disclosures to companies spelling... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 07-31-2012     [Corn for Food, Not Fuel](#)  
IT is not often that a stroke of a pen can quickly undo the ravages of nature, but federal regulators now have an opportunity to do just that. Americans' food budgets will be hit hard by the ongoing Midwestern drought, the worst since 1956. Food bills will rise and many farmers will... - [New York Times](#)
- 07-30-2012     [Gov. Corbett Appeals Commonwealth Court Decision on New Marcellus Shale Law](#)  
(Press Release)

- 07-30-2012 [\*\*State cash grant program for poor ends Wednesday\*\*](#)  
HARRISBURG - A decades-old state program that provides cash grants as a lifeline to the poor will go out of existence Wednesday with a one-month reprieve having run its course. The General Assistance cash grant program which dates to the Great Depression has provided a monthly stipend of roughly \$200 to nearly 70,000... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 07-29-2012 [\*\*Is Algebra Necessary?\*\*](#)  
A TYPICAL American school day finds some six million high school students and two million college freshmen struggling with algebra. In both high school and college, all too many students are expected to fail. Why do we subject American students to this ordeal? I've found myself moving... - [New York Times](#)
- 07-27-2012 [\*\*Midwest drought expected to lead to higher food prices\*\*](#)  
A drought gripping the Midwest will definitely register into higher prices at the supermarket. But, it's too early to predict just how much shoppers will be paying for everything from beef to breakfast cereal. "I don't have a crystal ball," said Scott Karns, CEO and... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 07-27-2012 [\*\*Court strikes down provisions in gas drilling law\*\*](#)  
HARRISBURG, Pa. — A Pennsylvania appellate court panel on Thursday struck down provisions in a new law regulating the state's booming natural gas industry that opponents said would leave municipalities defenseless to protect property owners from being surrounded by drilling sites or waste... - [AP](#)
- 07-25-2012 [\*\*Pa.'s tough, new voter ID law lands in court\*\*](#)  
HARRISBURG, Pa. — The first legal test for Pennsylvania's tough new voter identification law started Wednesday, with state lawyers calling the measure a completely rational step while opponents attacked it as an unnecessary, unjustified and partisan scheme that violates the... - [AP](#)