



**Beef Bytes**  
**October 29, 2012**

Dear Friends,

As Hurricane Sandy descends on Pennsylvania, readers are encouraged to visit [Ready PA](#). The site provides the latest updates from Governor Corbett as well as the current storm status and an emergency planning guide. Please be safe and always err on the side of caution.

The Center for Beef Excellence reports that the **Beef Industry Council Meeting set for Tuesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Livestock Evaluation Center has been postponed**. Look for forthcoming notifications regarding a rescheduled date.

Please let Versant know if we can provide updates to clients regarding changes in plans due to Storm Sandy.

Sincerely,  
MeeCee

***Articles of Interest***

**Pennsylvania News:**

[Agricultural Grants](#)

Pennsylvania crop producers recently received 21 grants to help promote specialty crops, for purposes such as marketing and increasing market share of locally grown foods. The grants totaled almost \$1 million.

**National News:**

[Connecting with Consumers](#)

The US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance has release as website, [www.fooddialogues.com](http://www.fooddialogues.com), to educate consumers on how food is produced. The site offers information from independent groups as well as scientific research on topics especially interesting to the public.

[Effects of Drought](#)

The consequences of the 2012 drought may not be totally felt for a few years. Retail food prices will rise, mostly in animal products, but it will take a while for livestock sectors to adjust to high grain prices and for a recovery in total groundwater levels.

[Defense of Antibiotic Use](#)

Dr. Scott Hurd of Iowa Sate University published a blog defending the judicious use of antibiotics in livestock production, due to the ability to increase growth/efficiency and safety while decreasing costs of production- leading to increased sustainability.

## **Global News:**

### [Monitoring Greenhouse Gasses](#)

The United Nations appointed Dr. Frank Mitloehner of UC Davis to head a project measuring the environmental impacts of livestock production. Dr. Mitloehner played a critical role in refuting arguments that the US livestock sector produces more greenhouse gases than the transportation industry through revealing faulty assumptions and careless science.

### [New Trade Agreement](#)

The US has signed a free trade agreement with Panama that includes phasing out tariffs on beef products over the next 15 years. Panama is expected to maintain a constant strong growth rate and offer strong trade possibilities for the future.

### [Global Animal Traceability](#)

A firm based in India has proposed a plan for electronic identification and animal traceability programs that would cover the entire globe. The program focuses on both individual animal identification and owner identification to track where animals have been.

## **Cattle Management Articles:**

### [Protein Supplements](#)

Although protein in forages can drop off in the fall, most classes of cattle will not require supplements. The exception would be heavy milking cows or heifers in early lactation as well as growing calves.

### [Corn Stalk Cautions](#)

Grazing corn stalks offers a low cost food resource when pastures are low. However, cows should be acclimated to starch in their diet before being turned out onto fields full of corn to prevent acidosis.

### [Show Calves](#)

A basic introduction to the junior market steer program and a good summary of information for beginning showmen. This resource covers everything from health and feeding to halter breaking calves and working hair.

### [Benefits of Growth Technology](#)

Dr. Jude Capper of Washington State University has release a study considering the environmental and economic results of removing growth enhancing technologies from beef production. The change would increase carbon footprint, manure and land/water needs.

### [Caring for Feeder Calves](#)

When cattle are brought into the feedlot the manager must take steps to maximize feed intake and productivity. Feeding consistent amounts and types of feed as well as minimizing stress and caring for the hospital pen are all steps to improve overall performance.

10-29-2012

### [Silos Loom as Death Traps on American Farms](#)

STERLING, Mich. — Tommy Osier, 18, a popular but indifferent student, was still a year from graduating from high school, and that was no sure thing. Farm work paid him \$7.40 an hour, taught him discipline and gave him new skills. He had begun talking about making a life in farming.... - [New York Times](#)

10-28-2012

### [In Dairy Industry Consolidation, Lush Paydays](#)

THERE was a time not long ago when Gregg L. Engles was considered a genius in the

dairy industry, a shrewd C.E.O. who had cobbled together a string of local businesses to create the nation's largest milk bottler, Dean Foods. Dean's Web site described Mr. Engles as the primary architect of dairy... - [New York Times](#)

10-26-2012 [Inside PDA for October 26, 2012](#)  
(Press Release)

10-26-2012 [State officials offering seminar on manure management](#)  
The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, in partnership with the Allegheny County Conservation District, will offer a free manure management seminar from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 15 at the Eden Hall Campus of Chatham University, 6035 Ridge Road, Richland Township.... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)

10-24-2012 [Conservation program available to local farmers](#)  
Greene County agricultural producers are being encouraged to make application for Natural Resource Conservation Service incentive programs. While the 2012 Farm Bill has not yet been approved, and it is not known if a shortterm continuation of the 2008 Farm Bill will be approved, NRCS is... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)

10-24-2012 [Corn Ethanol Makers Weigh Switch to Butanol](#)  
NEARLY a decade after the adoption of federal renewable fuel standards led to a sharp increase in production of ethanol, some producers in the Corn Belt are considering making a different fuel. The fuel, butyl alcohol, or butanol, is worth more to refiners because it has more energy than ethanol,... - [New York Times](#)

10-24-2012 [Area farmers finding number of ways to bring people back to the land](#)  
If you've ever picked your own apples or bumped along on a hayride, you've taken part in agritourism. But the concept has grown up as more people want to learn about their food. That's led to local-food meals served in the middle of sunflower fields and classes on making cheese from goat milk.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)

10-23-2012 [Across Corn Belt, Farmland Prices Keep Soaring](#)  
EAGLE GROVE, Iowa — After initially trickling in slower than the auctioneer's babble, the bids began picking up. "Get your hands up," belted Marv Huntrods, the auctioneer, his baritone echoing from a raspy speaker in a plaid-carpeted Masonic lodge here last week. He chopped the air with one hand and drew out his vowels.... - [New York Times](#)

10-23-2012 [EDITORIAL: Cost of organic food may not be worth it](#)  
Americans spent roughly \$28.6 billion for organic foods in 2010, up from just \$3.5 billion in 1996. Most of them did it knowing that organic food costs 10 percent to 40 percent more than conventionally grown food. And most of them did it believing that organic food is healthier for them and their families.... - [Easton Express-Times](#)

## **Legislative Activity**

[HB 2371](#) [Maher, John](#) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles) further providing for width of vehicles.

**Printer Number(s):** [P3532](#) [P3664](#) [P4151](#)

**Bill History:** 10-28-12 G Last day for Governor's action  
10-24-12 G Approved by the Governor (Act: 173 )

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[HB 2372](#) [Hickernell, David](#) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in general provisions, for defs.; in regis. of vehicles, for exemption; in fees, for farm vehicles; in inspection, for periodic inspection & operation; &, in size, weight & load, for width & length.

**Printer Number(s):** [P3533](#) [P3665](#) [P4152](#) [P4219](#)

**Bill History:** 10-28-12 G Last day for Governor's action  
10-24-12 G Approved by the Governor (Act: 174 )

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[SB 390](#) [Brubaker, Michael](#) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in size, weight and load, further providing for width of vehicles.

**Companions:** [SB 1323](#) Brubaker (Refiled from 09R Session)

**Printer Number(s):** [P0375](#) [P1681](#) [P1793](#) [P2451](#) [P2490](#)

**Bill History:** 10-24-12 H Signed in the House  
10-24-12 G In the hands of the Governor  
11-03-12 G Last day for Governor's action

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[SB 1298](#) [Smucker, Lloyd](#) Amends the Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act further providing for definitions, for roll-back taxes and special circumstances and for appeals.

**Printer Number(s):** [P1685](#) [P1864](#) [P2410](#)

**Bill History:** 10-27-12 G Last day for Governor's action  
10-24-12 G Approved by the Governor (Act: 190 )

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## Capitol Review

Well kids, it's Halloween season, and boy, do we have some scary stories for you. Let's begin with a very eerie development from Harrisburg, where (imagine creepy sounds here) *Harrisburg City Council members actually agreed to do something they were asked to do!*

The Council went along with the mayor and receiver William Lynch and (cue scary music) *agreed to double the earned income tax in order to head off the layoff of police, fire fighters and other city employees.* Not everyone was happy about this. Two Council members opposed the tax increase, and one of them offered this ominous comment: "*The piper will be coming home soon.*" Oh, my God, not the piper! PLEASE, ANYBODY BUT THE PIPER!

Ah, this bouillabaisse of metaphors brings confusion. So, before we freak out totally about the piper, it occurs to us to ask whether he or she will be coming home to roost, a la chickens, or coming home to be paid. Because if it's the latter, he or she had better show up before the end of next month, *when the city is projected to run out of dinero.* What this might mean in terms of police and fire protection and refuse collection for the last month of the year portends a very scary story indeed.

Suddenly it seems there is an entire orchestra of pipers seeking remuneration. The federal government, for one, will be [taking a bigger chunk of your paycheck come January as a temporary reduction in Social Security taxes expires](#). Neither presidential candidate has expressed an interest in extending the reduction, nor has it gained traction in Congress. The cost to a “typical” wage earner is about a thousand bucks per year. Cha-ching!

[More than 80 CEOs from major U.S. companies urged Obama, Romney and Congress to find a bipartisan solution to the impending fiscal cliff](#). Interestingly, they noted that reducing the deficit without raising taxes is mathematically impossible. Cha-ching!

A new report says [Pennsylvania has the fourth-highest in-state tuition charges in the nation for four-year public universities](#). Penn State’s University Park campus topped the list nationally with in-state tuition and fees totaling more than \$17,200 for the current class. Cha-ching!

Software firm Oracle is said to be the prime beneficiary of legislation awaiting Governor Corbett’s signature. The measure would let [companies that create at least 250 jobs pocket most of the state income taxes withheld from employees through 2018](#). Cha-ching!

The good news is that SEPTA has 120 new rail cars for its regional lines. The bad news is that there’s no more money to replace the remaining 231 30-plus-year-old cars that comprise the bulk of the agency’s regional rail fleet. A growing backlog of SEPTA’s capital improvement needs would [require outlays of \\$652 million per year for 20 years to catch up](#). Cha-ching!

OK, so money isn’t everything, and there were several other events worth reporting this week, beginning with the nation and Pennsylvania getting totally debate-happy. Here’s a rundown:

- President Obama and Mitt Romney squared off for their third and final debate, this one on foreign policy. [One pundit compared it to “a liver and asparagus sandwich.”](#) Yum.
- State attorney general candidates David Freed and Kathleen Kane argued about who is better able to combat sexual abuse. [Their scrum was carried live on the Pennsylvania Cable Network](#). If Kane wins on Nov. 6 she would be the first Democrat to hold the post since it was made an elected office in 1980. If Freed wins, he would be the first elected Attorney General named David.
- That brings us to this week’s rendition of We Can’t Make This Up, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce-sponsored debate between Ed Rendell and Rick Santorum, [which featured Democrat-on-Democrat and Republican-on-Republican criticism](#). Talking points? What talking points?
- And finally, we are pleased to note that U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and challenger Tom Smith have foregone their opportunity to watch the Eagles and/or Steelers, submitting instead to a debate to be [aired in some locales at 1 p.m. Sunday and later in other parts of the state](#). So if a debate occurs in the Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania is tuned into football, does a tree make any noise when it falls down? Maybe our friend, the piper, can answer that question when he comes home to roost.

Call it a good idea that no one knows about. [Two-thirds of the public supports “common core standards” designed to ensure that students leaving high school are ready for college or the](#)

[workplace](#). Just nine months away from a mandate to implement such standards, only one in five Pennsylvanians are aware of the initiative, however.

Up in Clearfield County, [RES Coal LLC has opened a coal-cleaning plant and will market the lower-ash, lower-sulfur product in the U.S. as well as for export](#). On hand to praise the effort was longtime environmentalist-legislator Camille “Bud” George, who retires from the House after the current session.

## ***In Other News***

- 10-29-2012     **[Bracing for Storm, U.S. Stock Markets to Close](#)**  
All United States stock and options markets will close on Monday as Hurricane Sandy approaches, as Wall Street braces for the storm to barrel through the heart of the country’s financial center. The decision, made on Sunday night, leaves the American stock markets... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-28-2012     **[Reports on Energy Drinks Show Gaps in Safety Policy](#)**  
The disclosure this week that the deaths of five people since 2009 may be linked to a popular energy drink has revealed major gaps in the way federal regulators and companies monitor product safety. Food and Drug Administration officials say that they are aggressively... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-28-2012     **[Corbett signs bill to allow companies to pocket state income tax](#)**  
Gov. Tom Corbett has signed a bill that would allow companies that create 250 new jobs to keep virtually all of the personal income tax paid by their employees. The bill, known as the Promoting Employment Across Pennsylvania Act, was designed to encourage economic development and new job creation in the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-26-2012     **[Business news in brief](#)**  
IN THE REGION FMC halts three product sales The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ordered FMC Corp. to halt the distribution and sale of three drain-cleaning products, saying they should have been registered with the federal government as pesticides but were... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-24-2012     **[Safety Becomes a Concern With High-Caffeine Drinks](#)**  
Among the latest entrants in the energy industry’s caffeine race is a pocket-size squeeze bottle called Mio Energy. Each half-teaspoon serving of Mio, which is sold by Kraft Foods, releases 60 milligrams of caffeine in a beverage, the amount in a six-ounce cup of... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-23-2012     **[Pa.'s unregulated tattoo industry](#)**  
To the dismay of many parents, tattooing remains hugely popular among young people and the number of tattoo parlors locally and across the state has grown exponentially. Adding to parents' consternation is the fact that tattooing is largely an unregulated industry in Pennsylvania.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)