



Beef Bytes
December 10, 2012

Dear Friends,

Remember to stop by the Versant Office on December 18th from 2-4 pm for our holiday party featuring Grinch Grog! See the invitation below. Please bring associates and friends. We believe the "more the merrier".

The winners in the 2012 Versant Big Buck Contest were:

Brady Ebersole-Youngest Entry (Mother is Deputy Secretary of Legislative Affairs Kristin Crawford)

Son of Glenn Rowe-Teenage Winner (Father is PennDOT Bureau Chief Glenn Rowe)

Brian Smith-Winner Biggest Buck taken during Archery Season (Brian is a board member of the PA Pest Management Association)

Ed Van Istendal-Winner of the First Buck taken during rifle season (Ed is the President-Elect of the PA Pest Management Association)

Russell McLucas-Winner of the Biggest Buck taken on a home farm

These lucky winners will be receiving their prizes in the mail. Congratulations!

To find information from the featured food to a daily schedule for the 2013 PA Farm Show visit: <http://www.farmshow.state.pa.us/>.

Have a good week.
MeeCee

VERSANT HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE



Come celebrate with us!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18
2PM—4PM

116 PINE STREET
5TH FLOOR
HARRISBURG, PA



DEBBIE CHAPPELL 717.635.2320
DCHAPPELL@VERSANTSTRATEGIES.NET

Articles of Interest

Pennsylvania News:

Drilling Affects Cattle

An article in [The Nation](#) magazine argued that cattle near natural gas wells and fracking sites are becoming sick with a mysterious illness that could be related to chemicals used in the drilling process. However, the energy industry [refutes](#) the report as the sources are not named and the stories are not well documented, while scientific reports testify to the safe practices used in natural gas production.

National News:

[Fiscal Cliff Implications](#)

At the end of the year, mandatory spending cuts and higher tax rates are set to go into effect and the result could be a blow to the already struggling economy. Agricultural producers will be affected by changes to tax laws and write offs, revisions to the safety net, changes in farm bill policy and the potential decline in biofuels as the country strives to cut costs through energy independence with the development of natural gas.

[Large Animal Vets](#)

Although many cattle producers still fear a growing shortage of large animal vets, survey responses and job information suggest that rather than an overall shortage of vets there are simply areas of the country that are underserved due to the difficulty of making a living in those areas. Vet students are having a harder time finding jobs and paying bills upon graduation.

[Faulty Research Concerns](#)

The scientific community is responding to an article that claims that genetically modified corn caused tumors in rats. The European Food Safety Authority found that the methods used in the study were unacceptable, and the rats used for the experiment came from a strain that is prone to develop tumors normally. A petition is calling for the study to be retracted.

[Farm Bill Cuts](#)

Political leaders continue to fight over how to make cuts to the 2012 Farm Bill, even as the prospect of signing legislation by the end of the year appears slim. The parties agree that cuts should total \$32-\$34 billion, but Republicans would like to make large cuts in the food stamps program while Democrats refuse this option.

[Antibiotic Resistance](#)

Consumer concern is growing over the use of antibiotics in livestock production, as fears rise that this could lead to bacterial resistance in human populations. However, researchers have shown that some bacteria are naturally resistant to antibiotics. Thus, the question becomes how best to treat disease to minimize selection for resistant populations.

Global News:

[COOL Compliance](#)

The World Trade Organization has given the US until May 23, 2013 to come up with changes to mandatory country-of-origin labeling laws to address concerns from Canada and Mexico on trade impacts of the law. The US has agreed to make changes but there is still much discussion and drafting that will need to be done before the revisions are clear.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Feedlot Trends](#)

A National Animal Health Monitoring System survey showed that feedlot operators are very concerned about how cattle are managed before they enter the feedlot. Important pre-arrival events include bunk training, respiratory vaccinations and castration/dehorning. Feedlots also place a high value on Beef Quality Assurance trainings.

[New Deworming Product](#)

Merial is introducing an injectable dewormer that can work for up to 150 days. The drug works in two stages, with one immediate release of the active ingredient followed by another release activated 70 days after treatment. This means that cattle can be treated once for parasite control throughout the grazing season.

[Feeding Bred Heifers](#)

Body condition in bred heifers is especially important, as it affects the health of the calf when it is born as well as the cow's ability to rebreed. Drought conditions mean that many animals are entering the winter in poor body condition. Producers should consider both the quality of the hay they are feeding and the option of supplementing animals for limiting nutrients.

[Changing Use of Distiller's Grains](#)

Cattle feeders have successfully used dried distillers grains as a substitute for corn in diets. However, lower ethanol production may lead to shorter supplies while competition with China and rising corn prices will drive the cost up.

- 12-10-2012 **[Inside PDA for December 7, 2012](#)**
(Press Release)
- 12-10-2012 **[Plowed under: Federal farm bill languishing](#)**
The political debate over the so-called fiscal cliff has overshadowed another piece of legislation that could have a significant impact on farmers, consumers and the poor if it's not addressed: the farm bill. This sweeping measure, which expired Sept. 30 and is worth about \$284... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 12-09-2012 **[USDA to allow more meat, grains in school lunches](#)**
WASHINGTON -- The Agriculture Department is responding to criticism over new school lunch rules by allowing more grains and meat in kids' meals... - [AP](#)
- 12-06-2012 **[Stalled Farm Bill Is Pushed for Its Savings](#)**
WASHINGTON — As President Obama and Republican leaders try to avoid automatic spending cuts and tax increases beginning in the new year, several lawmakers say a stalled farm bill that reshapes nutrition and agriculture programs could contribute billions of dollars in savings.... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-06-2012 **[Giant announces food recall](#)**
Giant Food Stores on Friday announced it had removed a product from shelves after a recall by Veggie Patch. Veggie Patch recalled its ultimate meatless burgers due to possible listeria contamination. Listeria can cause listeriosis, an uncommon but potentially fatal disease,... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 12-06-2012 **[Pennsylvania Farm Show adds new attractions, including cow-patty bingo](#)**
Here's your chance to bet on whether Bessie the cow can win you a game of bingo. The 97th annual Pennsylvania Farm Show will kick off Jan. 5 at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expo Center in Harrisburg with several new attractions including cow patty bingo.... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 12-06-2012 **[Report finds bay restoration progress, concerns](#)**
WASHINGTON — A new report by the Environmental Integrity Project is calling for tougher state permitting and oversight to achieve Chesapeake Bay restoration goals.... - [AP](#)
- 12-05-2012 **[PA's 97th Farm Show Offers New Attractions, Time-Honored Favorites](#)**
(Press Release)
- 12-04-2012 **[PA Farm Bureau OpEd: Farming and the Fiscal Cliff](#)**
(Press Release)

Legislative Activity

The 2013/14 Legislative Session will convene on January 1st with the swearing-in ceremony for members of the Pennsylvania Senate and House of Representatives.

Capitol Review

There's been a lot of hand-wringing lately surrounding a trio of potentially Armageddon-like issues, and we're devoting a little time here today in an effort to ease your troubled mind.

The first is all this business about the Mayan calendar, and whether it portends the end of the world, come December 21, or whether to throw in with the [NASA scientists who say it'll just be your standard Winter Solstice](#). Like our fellow procrastinators, we don't see much sense in beginning our Christmas shopping just yet. If we do get past 12/21, there's still plenty of time to acquire the requisite gifts. For a few extra bucks, [amazon.com](#) can provide next-day delivery for just about anything. But we think the smart money is on the NASA scientists, because isn't rocket science the benchmark for superior intellect?

We move from rocket science to gridlock politics, the factor currently thwarting efforts to deal with the fabled Fiscal Cliff. If we somehow escape the destruction of mankind on 12/21, [we apparently could free-fall into economic ruin just 10 days later, unless Congress "does something."](#) While that would be out of character, our own keen analysis posits that the Congress will pull this one out as its 535 members sweat over the realization that failure to act could mean the end of the world as *they* know it.

The third apocalyptic event is churning away in the City of Brotherly Love, [where eight straight losses by the Philadelphia Iggles has probably assured the end of Andy Reid](#), at least until he lands a new head coaching gig about five minutes after his demise. Unlike the end of the world and the end of economic stability, the end of the Reid regime has inevitability written all over it, as Philly sports fans point out that the Phillies have won a game more recently than the Eagles. Still, it pays to be careful what one wishes for.

OK, are we ready for this week's installment of We Can't Make This Up? It lands in our laps, once again, from the City of Harrisburg. [City officials renowned for their inability to competently address the city's financial crisis took umbrage with a Saturday Night Live-style parody of their inability to competently address the city's financial crisis](#). Taking the heat was local Chamber of Commerce head Dave Black, whose organization's annual dinner was the venue for the skit. While hardly of Python-caliber comedic quality, we would respectfully suggest it violates the first rule of political humor: "If there's a possibility that someone will be deeply offended by what you say or do, make fun of yourself and not the other guy."

[The Inquirer reported this week that Philly Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz is sticking a proverbial toe in the 2014 gubernatorial waters](#). She has hired away the state Democratic Party's finance director, which is seen as a signal that she's considering a run for the nomination. So, calling the roll on officially announced, admittedly prospective and rumored potential candidates on the D side: former Environmental Secretary John Hanger, former Congressman Joe Sestak, former Revenue Secretary Tom Wolf, Philadelphia millionaire Tom Knox, state Treasurer Rob McCord, Auditor General Jack Wagner, Montgomery County Commissioner Josh Shapiro, Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski, three French hens, two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree. Insiders say the French hens and turtle doves will bow out if the partridge makes it official.

[On the R side of the equation, the Associated Press reported that Governor Corbett may face opposition from within his own party](#). Montgomery County former commissioner/former DA Bruce Castor, who ran unsuccessfully against Corbett for the attorney general nomination in 2004, said he's "exploring options" at the urging of other GOP members who are not impressed with the governor's performance to date.

So, the state's General Fund revenue collection is up, unemployment is down, and if we can just stave off the end of the world and veer away from the fiscal cliff, things could be looking rosy, yes? No! [Budget Secretary Charles Zogby brings us the buzz-killing news that the next state budget could be more painful and difficult than the two previous painful and difficult ones.](#)

In Other News

- 12-10-2012 [**Hershey will fund Ghana factory aimed at reducing malnourishment among children**](#)
The Hershey Co. will build a peanut processing factory in Ghana as part of an effort to fight malnutrition among children there. It will do so in partnership with "Project Peanut Butter," a long-running effort founded by an American pediatrician, Dr. Mark Manary.... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 12-10-2012 [**Divining the Weather, With Methods Old and New**](#)
EMMITSBURG, Md. In these times of upset and uncertainty, comfort comes in knowing that dental floss can cut a dense cheesecake more cleanly than any knife. That cloves of garlic will send ants scurrying. That a cow requires at least 15 pounds of hay per day. That the state bird of South Dakota is the... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-09-2012 [**Corbett says transportation funding plan ready**](#)
NEW YORK -- Gov. Tom Corbett says his administration has a transportation funding plan ready to go, and he indicated to business leaders this morning that action will be coming early next year. The governor spoke about finding money for repairing roads and bridges... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 12-09-2012 [**Gasoline prices expected to set record in 2012**](#)
Here's the thing about gas prices: They're high. This year, they were so high that they set a record -- Americans will spend more on gasoline in 2012 than in any other year. The yearly national average price will be around \$3.63 per gallon, according to GasBuddy.com.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 12-07-2012 [**Bucks ticket wins \\$50 million in Powerball**](#)
A ticket sold in Fairless Hills won \$50 million in Wednesday night's Powerball drawing. The cash value: \$33.1 million. Less taxes, of course. The ticket matched all the numbers drawn: 13, 17, 19, 27 and 38, with a Powerball of 12. It was purchased at Levittown News & Tobacco, 411 S.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 12-07-2012 [**Unused Pills Raise Issue of Disposal and Risks**](#)
Brand name drug makers and their generic counterparts rarely find themselves on the same side of an issue, but now they are making an exception. They have teamed up to fight a local law in California, the first in the nation, that makes them responsible for running — and... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-06-2012 [**Gates foundation donates multimillion-dollar grant to Philly schools**](#)
THE BILL & Melinda Gates Foundation is giving \$2.5 million to pay for new educational initiatives that will benefit Philadelphia's district, charter, parochial and private schools. Philly was one of seven district-charter compact cities that received multimillion-dollar grants Wednesday from the Gates Foundation, which... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 12-06-2012 [**PA's Pension Problem**](#)

As 2012 winds down, chatter over fixing PA's public pension problem picks up. But about the only thing that's clear is how difficult a problem it is to fix. Gov. Corbett Tuesday told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review editorial board that among options are raising the retirement age for state and public... - [Philadelphia Daily News](#)

12-05-2012

[**Budget Secretary Zogby Provides Mid-Year Budget Briefing**](#)
(Around the Capital)