



Beef Bytes
December 18, 2012

Dear Friends,

Versant wishes all our friends a Happy Holiday season. The offices will be closed between December 24th and January 2. Please feel free to call my cell at 717-860-8463 if you need assistance between those dates.

We hope to see many of you at the PA Farm Show. Tickets to the opening reception can be ordered by visiting the Farm Show web site www.farmshow.state.pa.us

Versant Partner Denny Wolff reports that it appears there may be a one-year extension of the current Farm Bill. Stay tuned for details.

We are look forward to a happy, healthy and productive 2013. Thank you for allowing Versant to serve your interests.

Sincerely,
MeeCee

Articles of Interest

CBE News:

[New Cattle ID Program](#)

The Center for Beef Excellence is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to provide a statewide animal identification program that will allow consumers to know more about where their beef comes from. The project will utilize electronic identification tags and rely on voluntary producer certification.

Pennsylvania News:

[PA Farm Show Plans](#)

The Pennsylvania State Farm Show is scheduled for January 5-12 in Harrisburg. New events this year include cow patty bingo, celebrity grape stomping and a polo demonstration. In addition, past favorites such as the Today's Agriculture display, farm show detectives and plenty of food will be available throughout the week.

National News:

[Growth of Cities](#)

Population growth continues to be a major issue for the future, and much of this growth will take place in cities. This means that issues such as water supply and cleanliness/disease control will be important. Cities will have to develop strategies to deal with large, confined populations. This is especially true in developing nations where the greatest growth is expected.

[Falling Oil Prices](#)

US oil production is increasing and could lead to lower prices in the years to come. However, global supply is still lagging behind demand so the relief would be temporary. Much of the change is due to high production levels and the difficulty of getting oil moved from production fields into the supply chain.

Global News:

[Japan Fears BSE](#)

Japan recently banned beef imports from Brazil after a cow was identified with the protein that can cause BSE. The cow was not diagnosed with the disease, and investigators found that it was a spontaneous event, but the discovery still led to trade restrictions as Japan is very concerned about keeping all potentially infected beef out of their country.

[Russia Bans US Beef](#)

Shortly after joining the World Trade Organization, Russia has placed a ban on any US beef containing ractopamine. Many political experts believe that the move is retaliation against US involvement in requiring Russia to address several human rights issues before granting approval to their inclusion in the WTO.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Producer Survey Results](#)

Drovers magazine surveyed cattle producers across the country to better understand goals and attitudes within the industry. Results show that producers are generally optimistic, looking to expand their herds. Top priorities include animal health and wellbeing as well as financial management with many well-educated producers managing herds.

[Cattlemen's College](#)

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association is hosting their annual Cattlemen's College February 5-6 in Tampa, Florida as part of the NCBA Industry Convention. The event will feature session on reproductive technologies, cattle handling and industry outlook as well as a demonstration of reining and cutting with American Quarter Horses. Early registration deadline is January 11.

[Winter Calving Considerations](#)

As many producers prepare for the first calves of the year, managing cows well at calving is important to minimize calf loss. This means providing clean pens when calving indoors, vaccinating appropriately for scours and other calfhood diseases, and maintaining cows in a good body condition score so they can feed calves well.

[High Cull Prices](#)

Prices for slaughter cows remain at record high levels. This is due to a high demand for lean ground beef as well as a diminishing supply of cull cows. In fact, beef cow slaughter has declined somewhat in the past year, with the difference made up in higher levels of dairy cow culling for beef.

[Windbreaks for Cattle](#)

Energy needs for a cow increase when the temperature drops below 18 degrees Fahrenheit. Wind chill is a huge part of the cold in the winter, so providing a windbreak will allow cattle to shelter from the wind and remain warmer, cutting down on nutritional needs.

12-17-2012

[Dairy farmers face new financial risks](#)

FRANKLIN COUNTY - Dairy farmers have more than drought to worry about. Two support programs are at risk this season: - The federal Milk Income Loss Contract program evaporated with the end of the 2008 Farm Bill on Sept. 30. The Senate has

passed its version of the... - [Chambersburg Public Opinion](#)

12-14-2012 [Inside PDA for December 14, 2012](#)
(Press Release)

12-14-2012 [DAIRY FARMERS VOICE CONCERNS OVER PRICING](#)
PENNSYLVANIA BY KRISTY WESTBROOK Staff Writer The national debate over dairy pricing hit a bit closer to home this week as one farmer from Meshoppen voiced his concerns in a conference call with farmers across the country. - [Sayre Morning](#)

12-14-2012 [Raw Milk Recall](#)
The Chester County Health Department Tuesday said it was informed of an increase of severe gastro enteric symptoms among persons who drank raw milk supplied by Kimberton Farms Dairy. Kimberton Whole Foods, distributor, has removed raw milk products packaged by Kimberton Farms Dairy, also known as Camp Hill Village or Kimberton... - [Main Line Suburban Life](#)

12-12-2012 [Center for Dairy Excellence Brings Charge for Industry's Future](#)
(Press Release)

12-12-2012 [Portfolio: Kimberton Dairy raw milk taken off shelves](#)
The Chester County Health Department Tuesday said it was informed of an increase of severe gastro enteric symptoms among persons who drank raw milk supplied by Kimberton Farms Dairy. Kimberton Whole Foods, distributor, has removed raw milk products packaged... - [West Chester Daily Local News](#)

Legislative Activity

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senate will convene on Tuesday, January 1, 2013 for swearing-in ceremonies. The House will return to begin session on January 14 and the Senate will return on January 22. Swearing-in ceremonies for the newly elected Attorney General, Auditor General and Treasurer will take place on January 15.

Capitol Review

Our loyal Happy Hour readers will recall that last week we pretty much trashed the idea that the Mayan calendar (or lack thereof) portends The End of the World As We Know It, come December 21, exactly one week from today. Since then, we've seen a series of bizarre events that may cause us to reassess that earlier assessment.

First, the Philadelphia Eagles actually snatched a victory from the jaws of defeat, instead of the other way around, as it had been for a couple of months ([and as it was again four nights later](#)). End of the World question aside, we're standing by our prediction regarding The End of the Andy Reid Era.

In Michigan, the cradle of organized labor, [the state enacted a right-to-work law](#), which relieves non-union workers from having to pay unions for negotiating labor contracts and for other services. Jimmy Hoffa surely is spinning in his... wherever.

[Then there was a little celestial chin music from an asteroid](#). Described as being "the size of a mountain" – no elaboration as to whether we're talking Roundtop or Everest – it made us

wonder whether Mother Nature was taking a practice swing before teeing up this planet and duck-hooking us into oblivion.

As the week wore on – and with a drum roll we present our We Can't Make This Up feature – [the Pope joined the Twittersphere!](#) His inaugural post said, "Hi folks, PopeBen16 here, jus 2 let u know i have secrets to happiness, immortality, wealth and wish to share w/ u, lol!! All u need 2 do is" And at that point he was out of characters. Nevertheless, he was a social media juggernaut, amassing a million followers in short order, at least until they began un-following him for pestering the crap out of them with seven tweets in seven hours.

Then from the [Discovery Channel came a program about the "Amish mafia,"](#) where the storylines include violence, adultery, prostitution, blackmail, gambling, wild parties and drugs. It was like [HBO's Boardwalk Empire](#), only without Steve Buscemi or a shred of believability.

Finally, by week's end, it was revealed that [North Korea had successfully launched a satellite into outer space.](#) Seriously, if these events don't add up to an impending apocalypse, we don't know what does. So we're now officially hedging our bets until 12:01 a.m. on 12/22.

If we do make it past that date, though, Governor Corbett will lead the charge for a comprehensive transportation funding solution come 2013. At a Pennsylvania Society event last weekend, [the governor asserted that he will roll out a transportation funding plan that provides a lasting, multimodal solution to this problem.](#)

Also on the transpo front, [PennDOT's deputy secretary for administration, Mark Compton, was tapped as Turnpike CEO,](#) beginning Feb. 1. Compton succeeds Roger Nutt, who resigned for health reasons.

And while we're on that Turnpike thing, [the gov presided at a grand-opening ceremony for a new all-electronic Turnpike interchange near Malvern.](#) The project is expected to relieve congestion and attract business in the region. It's also notable as an example of the shape of things to come as our favorite toll road moves toward a person-less toll collecting system in the next five years. (Wow! Wonder how many of our readers on the Hill financed part of their college costs with summer jobs as toll takers? Will PHEAA be able to pick up the slack?)

State Treasurer Rob McCord said he absolutely, positively [will not authorize any payments to a private state lottery manager](#) until he is absolutely, positively sure that said manager is operating under the law, and he's not absolutely, positively sure that the lottery privatization proposed by the Corbett administration is gonna pass muster in that respect.

[Centre County Rep. Scott Conklin said he has bipartisan support for a proposal that would shrink the size of the Penn State board of trustees to 22 members and not include the university president.](#) Auditor General Jack Wagner said last month that Penn State's current 32-member board is among the largest in the country. Conklin's proposal also would obligate Penn State, along with Pitt, Temple and Lincoln universities, to adhere to the state's Right to Know law.

As for any progress regarding the Fiscal Cliff (the polar opposite of [Jimmy Cliff](#)), nothing to see here, move along. An apocalypse on 12/21 would render that issue moot.

In Other News

- 12-17-2012 [**New Jersey considers having retailers charge for single-use paper and plastic bags**](#)
Legislation encouraging customers in New Jersey to carry reusable shopping bags and forcing larger retailers to slash distribution of plastic bags gets its first hearing today in Trenton... - [AP](#)
- 12-14-2012 [**Pennsylvania voter-ID law's fate not likely to be settled until November 2013**](#)
HARRISBURG - It could be nearly a year before Pennsylvanians know whether they will need to show photo identification at the polls for future elections. Commonwealth Court Judge Robert E. Simpson Jr. said Thursday he would decide within the next 10 days on a trial date to determine the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 12-14-2012 [**Life Expectancy Rises Around the World, Study Finds**](#)
A sharp decline in deaths from malnutrition and infectious diseases like measles and tuberculosis has caused a shift in global mortality patterns over the past 20 years, according to a report published on Thursday, with far more of the world's population now living into old age and dying... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-14-2012 [**Rates would remain steady for water customers**](#)
CARMICHAELS — Carmichaels Water Authority voted Monday to approve a proposed 2013 budget of \$666,000 with no rate increase. The last time rates were increased was in 1992. Rates were decreased in 1994. The authority services customers in Carmichaels and part of... - [Waynesburg Greene County Messenger](#)
- 12-12-2012 [**Pa. would take \\$300 million hit if fiscal cliff talks fail**](#)
HARRISBURG — If Republican negotiators and President Obama fail to reach a fiscal agreement by Dec. 31, Americans will pay more taxes, and state programs from education to welfare will fall short, interest groups and state officials warn. Pennsylvania would lose about \$300 million in federal money starting in... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 12-12-2012 [**Pesticides: Now More Than Ever**](#)
How quickly we forget. After the publication of "Silent Spring," 50 years ago, we (scientists, environmental and health advocates, birdwatchers, citizens) managed to curb the use of pesticides[1] and our exposure to them — only to see their application grow and grow to the point where American... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-11-2012 [**Pa. auditor probes why 7,000 workers, others get free rides on turnpike**](#)
HARRISBURG - Auditor General Jack Wagner wants the debt-ridden Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission to put the brakes on free rides for more than 7,000 employees and contractors. Toll-free rides by turnpike personnel have cost the taxpayers \$7.7 million over about five years, Wagner said Monday, and at a time when the turnpike... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 12-11-2012 [**Obesity in Young Is Seen as Falling in Several Cities**](#)
PHILADELPHIA — After decades of rising childhood obesity rates, several American cities are reporting their first declines. The trend has emerged in big cities like New York and Los Angeles, as well as smaller places like Anchorage, Alaska, and Kearney, Neb. The state of... - [New York Times](#)
- 12-11-2012 [**Could the Farm Bill Devastate America's Birds?**](#)

STRETCHING across the Upper Midwest is a 276,000-square-mile expanse full of wetlands and grasslands. This vast area — known as the prairie pothole region and extending from northwestern Iowa to Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana and into Canada — provides the breeding habitat for... - [New York Times](#)