



Don't Miss the 2018 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention

The 2018 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention educational program as always offers three days of educational sessions for vegetable, potato, berry, and fruit growers and marketers plus a large industry trade show. Charlie Arnot be this year's keynote speaker. Don't miss out on the following opportunities at the 2018 Convention which runs from January 30 to February 1 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey.

Fruit and Vegetable Industry Bus Tour

This all-day bus tour the day before the Convention will leave the Hershey Lodge at 8:15 a.m. and return by about 5:30 p.m. It will include visits to the following businesses:

- Milton Hershey School Farm in Hershey,
- Hess Brothers Fruit packinghouse in Lancaster,
- Bird-in-Hand Smorgasbord (lunch),
- Harvest Lane Farm in Lititz, and
- Four Seasons Produce in Ephrata.

See page 15, the Convention website at www.mafvc.org or call PVGA at 717-694-3596 for further details. Cost is \$60

Reduced Registration for Spouses, Children or Employees

The Convention now offers a reduced pre-registration fee for additional persons attending from a member farm. The first

person from the farm must pay the \$75 pre-registration fee but spouses, adult children, or employees are eligible for a \$60 pre-registration fee. The purpose is to make it more feasible for growers to bring additional persons from their farms to experience the educational opportunities available at the Convention. Remember, one \$50 PVGA membership qualifies all persons from the farm for the membership registration rates. And children under 16 and all students are admitted free.

Keynote Presentation

This year's keynote speaker is Charlie Arnot, a recognized thought leader in food and agriculture and CEO of The Center for Food Integrity, who will speak on "Values, Trust and Science: Building Trust in Our Post-Truth Tribal World". He will provide unique, research based insight into building trust with today's consumer. Growers will leave the session knowing three things they should start doing, and three things they should stop doing to make their conversations about their fruit and vegetable operations 100% more effective.



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PVGA Annual Meeting Set for January 31 at 11:30 a.m.

The Annual Meeting of the General Membership of the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association will be held on Wednesday, January 31, at 11:30 in the Crystal Room of the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey. All members are asked to attend the meeting.

Traditionally, the Annual Meeting had included the election of members of the Board of Directors. However, starting six years ago, the Directors are now elected by a mail ballot which all members have received in the mail with their dues renewal notices. The terms of Brian Campbell, Eric Oesterling, Michael Orzolek, Thomas Strzelecki, Randy Treichler and Mark Troyer expire at the Annual Meeting this year. All are eligible for re-election although Mr. Oesterling, Mr. Strzelecki and Mr. Treicher have decided not seek re-election. The Leadership and Recognition Committee has nominated all the incumbents plus Robert Amsterdam of Mechanicsburg, Patrick Flanley of Zionville, Peter Flynn of West Chester, Aubrey Hanford of Lebanon, Amy Metrick of Butler, and Dale Whitenight of Danville

(continued on page 4)

We Need Your HELP!!!

If you have not volunteered to help at the Association's food booth at the Farm Show, call PVGA today at 717-694-3596. We need at least 25 volunteers in the booth at all the times. Since the Farm Show runs from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., we need two shifts to completely cover each day from January 6 to 13, 2018. That translates into a lot of volunteers. Plus, this year we will again be open the afternoon of Friday, January 5, from noon to 9:00 p.m.

You say you don't come to the Farm Show? Why not break tradition and come for once? It's worth the trip just to volunteer your time to the Association and any farmer is bound to see at least a few things of interest at the Farm Show. There is a wide array of exhibits throughout the Complex. Are you really too busy in the middle of the winter to take a day off to help support vegetable and small fruit research? Last year we earned about \$170 for each volunteer shift enabling the Association to give over \$72 per member to Penn State research.

We are grateful to the many PVGA members who help out each year but we need new volunteers each year. If YOU have never helped before, PLEASE call us today at 717-694-3596 and volunteer for 2018. You'll be helping your Association besides having an enjoyable time.

NEWS



Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association

An association of
commercial vegetable,
potato and berry growers.

President

Robert Shenot '16
Wexford

First Vice President

David Miller '17
York

Second Vice President

Jonathan Strite '16
Harrisburg

Secretary-Treasurer

William Reynolds '16

Two PVGA Scholarships to be Offered for 2018

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is pleased to be able to offer two Rudolph Grob Memorial Scholarships each year to a child or grandchild of a PVGA member who is pursuing higher education with the goal of working in production agriculture. While previously only one scholarship was awarded each year, the Board of Directors has approved awarding two scholarships beginning with 2015.

The Association gives the annual scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 in memory of Rudolph Grob of Millersville who served the Association for 50 years as a Director, 20 years as Secretary Treasurer and for over 20 years as manager of the Association's Farm Show Booth. Mr. Grob was a horticulture graduate of Penn State University who was employed for many years at Funks Farm Market in Millersville. The funds for the scholarships are generated by a portion of the interest earned by the Association's Keystone Fund, an endowment-type fund created by the voluntary extra dues paid the Keystone Members of the Association.

The purpose of the scholarships is to assist children and grandchildren of Association members in obtaining a degree that will enable them to pursue a career in the vegetable, potato or berry production industries. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be the child or grandchild of an Association member who has been a member in good standing for at least one year
- be enrolled in a two-year or four-year degree program;
- be in good academic standing; and
- be intent on pursuing a career in the vegetable, potato, or berry production industries.

Applications are now being accepted for the 2018 scholarships. The deadline is March 31, 2018. Applications are reviewed by the Association's Scholarship Committee which determines who receives the scholarships. The current committee members are: Carolyn Beinlich, Keith Eckel, Curtis Kaelin, Michael Orzolek and Hilary Schramm, Jr.

The \$1,000 scholarships are awarded for a one-year period. Recipients may apply for a renewal although preference will be given to other qualified students over previous recipients. It is not a need-based scholarship. Payment of the funds is made directly to the institution.

The following items must be included with a completed application form:

- A copy of the most recent academic transcript.
- Two letters of reference from someone outside of the immediate family.
- A typed essay (approximately 500 words) on one of the following topics:
 - Describe the biggest issue that has faced the Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry in Pennsylvania in the last five years or that the Industry will face in the next five years and how you plan to deal with this issue in your future career, or
 - Describe your previous experiences with the Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry and the role you hope to play in the Pennsylvania Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry upon graduation.

Applications must be emailed or postmarked by March 31, 2018 and are available by contacting PVGA at 717-694-3596 or on the website at <https://www.pvga.org/services/rudolph-grob-memorial-scholarship/>. The committee may request to interview the applicant in person or by telephone as well as contact college or school advisors and/or references.

If you have a child or grandchild in college, encourage them to apply for the scholarships. If you would like to help support the scholarship effort, consider joining the Association as Keystone Member. While there is a suggested table of Keystone dues based on your gross income from vegetables, potatoes or berries, you are considered a Keystone Member if you pay dues of \$75 or more instead of the \$50 regular dues. The amount of Keystone dues over the \$50 regular dues is deposited in the Keystone Fund. The Keystone Fund principle is invested in interest-bearing accounts (money market accounts, certificates of deposit, a government bond fund and/or index stock fund) while the interest is used to fund the two \$1,000 annual Grob Memorial Scholarships and vegetable research in the entomology and plant pathology departments at Penn State University.

The **Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers News** is the official monthly publication of the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, Inc., 815 Middle Road, Richfield, PA 17086-9205
phone and fax - 717-694-3596, email - pvga@pvga.org website - www.pvga.org

Our Mission:

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association serves Pennsylvania's commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers

through education, research, advocacy and promotion.

Our Vision:

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association will be the driving force in ensuring the future viability of the commercial vegetable, potato and berry industries in Pennsylvania.

Inquiries about membership, this publication or advertising rates should be directed to William Troxell, Executive Secretary, at the above addresses.

WRONG
LIST
Bill told
me on
3/2/18

Francesco Di Gioia Accepts Penn State Vegetable Position

Dr. Francesco Di Gioia, a native of Italy and a graduate of the University of Bari 'Aldo Moro' has accepted the vegetable crops research and extension position in the Plant Science Department at Penn State University. He will be replacing Dr. William Lamont, who retired at the end of June. Dr. Di Gioia is expected to begin his work in May 2018.



PVGA has issued a special invitation to Dr. Di Gioia to speak in the General Vegetable session at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2018. His topic will be Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation and Vegetable Grafting: Applied Biotechnology for Sustainable Vegetable Production Systems. This will allow Dr. Di Gioia to introduce himself to Pennsylvania growers. Dr. Di Gioia is excited to have this opportunity to interact with growers prior to his expected arrival in Pennsylvania in May 2018. Plan now to attend this special session.

He is currently working as a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Florida and the USDA's Horticultural Research Laboratory in Fort Pierce, Florida, under Dr. Erin Rosskopf. He is working on an anaerobic soil disinfestation for the management of soil inhabiting pests and pathogens as well as using grafting to enhance resiliency in vegetables. Previously he had worked on a microgreens agronomic biofortification proj-

ect at the University of Florida. Dr. Di Gioia studied the physiological response, growth, yield, and quality of grafted tomatoes under combined excess boron and salinity stress in a postdoctoral position at the University of Bari 'Aldo Moro' prior to coming to Florida in 2015. While in Italy he worked as an agricultural consultant as well as a researcher for several years. He began his career in agriculture working for nine years at a cooperative in the production of vegetable crops where he was involved with irrigation system set-up, transplanting, fertilization, harvesting, packing, and pre-refrigeration of lettuce, fennel, parsley, celery, broccoli, cauliflower, rapini, Swiss chard and spinach. He has taught and written extensively on various aspects of vegetable production, including microgreens production.

Dr. Lamont retired in an early retirement program offered by the University which resulted in many vacancies in the faculty. Given the tight budget situation facing the College of Agricultural Sciences each year lately, it was uncertain whether the vegetable crops research and extension position would be refilled. PVGA offered the College a contribution of \$25,000 toward the "start-up" funding (used to let up their research laboratories and programs) offered to new faculty members to show the vegetable industry's strong interest in seeing this important position refilled.

PVGA welcomes Dr. Di Gioia to Penn State and looks forward to working with him in the coming years.

PVGA Committees and Board Meet in State College

Since 2016, most of the major PVGA committees have had face-to-face meetings on the day prior to the December Board of Directors meeting. This year, the Executive, Leadership and Recognition, Educational, Government Affairs, and Administrative Committees along with the Capacity Development Task Force met at Toftrees Golf Resort in State College on Monday, December 11, 2017.

Prior to 2016, these committees usually only met once a year by telephone conference call a week or so before the December Board meeting to review the annual workplan for their area of activity. Each committee includes Directors and regular members of the Association. The committees used their meetings to strategically evaluate the activities of the Association in their area and make recommendations to the Board for the 2018 workplan.

The Marketing and Research Committees, the two other major committees, are joint committees with the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program (PVMRP). Those committees met in November in conjunction with the PVMRP Board meeting to make vegetable promotion plans for 2018 and to evaluate the vegetable research pre-proposals respectively.

After the committee meetings on December 11, the Board of Directors met briefly with the Capacity Development Task Force to review their plans – the major one being that the Association apply to the Internal Revenue Service to become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that could accept tax-deductible contributions. Currently the Association is a 501(c)5 agricultural organization. 501(c)3 organizations are also eligible for grants from certain foundations that other types of non-profit organizations are not eligible for. The Task Force is also working on developing a succession/transition plan for the Association's executive position as well as a plan for additional staff.

The Board of Directors held their regular meeting the following day, December 12, also at Toftrees, to act on the recommendations of the various committees. The Board approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee to have the Association cover the cost of labor the new shared food booth in the Farm Show Food Court Annex in the old part of the Farm Show Complex since extra volunteers will not be available. The Board also approved their recommendation to establish a Berry Committee and a Potato Committee that would be tasked with helping the Association to better support those growers. A recommendation to set limits for Convention speaker meal expenses was approved along with a recommendation that the Association cover the expenses for one Director a year to attend the Rising Leaders program at the United Fresh Produce Association's Washington Conference in September. The Board also voted to promote a positive vote in the upcoming review referendum for the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program with advertisements in Lancaster Farming and a letter to all the growers as well several promotions at the Mid-Atlantic Convention.

After discussing the recommendations from the Capacity Building Task Force from the day before, the Board voted to apply for 501(c)3 non-profit status for the Association.

The Board approved the Leadership and Recognition Committee's recommendations for recipients of various awards and nominations for other awards. They also approved the Committee's recommendation that the Constitution be amended to allow the Board to appoint one Director each year to help insure diversity on the Board in terms of industry segment, gender, and geographic region. (Further details are included in the article on the Annual Meeting.)

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PVGA Annual Meeting... (continued from page 1)

for election. Write-in votes are also allowed. Six of the candidates will be elected to three-year terms on the Board of Directors. Ballots must be postmarked by January 15, 2018 and the results will be announced at the Annual Meeting. All members are urged to vote in the election.

The Board of Directors is proposing a change to the Association's constitution to allow the Board to appoint one director to a three-year term each year. When the mail-ballot election system was instituted the Leadership and Recognition Committee adopted the practice of nominating several more candidates than seats available. Obviously, the vote of the members determines who is elected but the results may result in certain groups (such as potato growers, processing growers, berry growers, women, etc.) or areas of the state not being represented on the Board. Last year the members approved an amendment to the Constitution allowing the Board to appoint to "at-large" members to enable the Board to fill such representation gaps or perhaps appoint someone with special expertise in a certain area, such as someone with financial or legal knowledge. Consequently, Alan Kemmerer and Rita Resick were appointed to the Board in March to fill these two seats. After further reflection, the Board voted at their recent December meeting to ask for the ability to appoint one additional Board member each year for a three-year term. Mr. Kemmerer offered to serve a two-year term which will create a rotation among the three Board appointed members of one term expiring each year. Thus the Board is proposing to change Article IV, Sections 2 and 3 as follows with the underlined text to be added and the ~~struck through~~ text to be deleted:

Article IV

Section 2 *The number of member-elected Directors shall not be less than 15. Their terms shall be staggered with one-third being elected by ballot by the members each year to serve terms of three years. The Board ~~may~~ shall each year appoint ~~up to two~~ one additional "at-large" ~~voting~~ Directors to serve a terms of three years. Election procedures and term limits are to be determined and approved by the Directors and stated in the Association's By-Laws. Terms shall begin and end on the dates of the annual meeting. Mid-term vacancies shall be filled by the Directors either at the next meeting of the Directors following the vacancy or by balloting through email, post or telecom, with the person elected serving the remainder of the unexpired term.*

Section 3 *Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors shall be vegetable or small fruit growers. The Directors should reasonably represent the different geographic regions and the different segments of the industry. The Board shall use its "at-large" appointments ~~to add diversity to the Board membership.~~ to insure diversity in the Board membership in terms of industry segment, gender and geographic representation as well as to include special expertise.*

Implementing this amendment, if it is approved, will result in the Board of Directors having 21 members for 2018. The Board is further proposing that beginning with the election for 2019, that only five Directors be elected by the membership so that over a three-year period, the number of Directors will gradually return to 18.

At the Annual Meeting, the members will also receive reports on membership, finances, the Farm Show food booth

and the other activities of the Association.

The following additions to the Association's policy resolutions are being proposed for adoption by the members at the Annual Meeting. The underlined text is to be added to the resolutions.

1. Supporting requirements that companies that receive state grants for the purpose of building, expanding or updating an agricultural processing plant use a minimum of 25% Pennsylvania agricultural products when available.
2. Supporting amendments to the Retail Food Facility Safety Act to require proprietors to obtain only one food market stand license, rather than multiple licenses for each farmers' market attended.
3. Supporting the expansion of the Red Tag permit program to allow two permits per-parcel per-hunter statewide.
4. Supporting antler restrictions for senior and lifetime license holders that require two or more points on one antler or a spike three or more inches in length.
5. Supporting the elimination of white-tailed deer antler restrictions in CWD Disease Management Areas.
6. Supporting amendments to the vehicle code to authorize issuance of annual permits to a Commercial Motor Vehicle and a non-Commercial Motor Vehicle authorizing the movement on highways for all agricultural commodities and agricultural related equipment, which exceeds the maximum vehicle gross weight specified in Title 75, Chapter 49, Subchapter C (relating to maximum weights of vehicles). The weight of any vehicle permitted may not exceed 95,000 pounds overall gross weight and the weight on any non-steering axle may not exceed 21,000 pounds.
7. Supporting an exemption for any farm licensed or farm stickered vehicle from the road weight restriction within the 50-mile farm radius.
8. Supporting the reduction of the maximum period for review and approval for nutrient management plans and the Department of Environmental Protection agricultural permits from 180 days to 90 days.
9. Supporting a farm survey, similar to that conducted by Penn State University for the Chesapeake Bay watershed, for other watersheds in the state to capture Best Management Practices that have not been cost shared to be credited to water quality improvement.
10. Supporting a restriction on township riparian buffer ordinances that would prohibit them from requiring stream-bank buffers greater than 35 feet or requiring that buffers be completely forested.
11. Supporting the exemption of structures used for growing crops in the field, such as low tunnels, high tunnels and greenhouses where crops are grown in the soil and no permanent changes have been made to soil or topography of site, from state storm water regulations.
12. Supporting the development of Best Management Guidelines by the Department of Environmental Protection and agricultural organizations that would allow farmers to maintain and improve drainage lines to protect the use of farmland without requiring of costly permits, delays and engineering costs.
13. Opposing the required metering of private wells and gravity-flow systems by government and all other agencies or organizations."

(continued on page 10)



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NEWS

PVGA Committees... (continued from page 3)

The Administrative Committee recommended the Association reach out to younger plain-sect growers for membership as well as continue the membership information booth at Ag Progress Days. They also recommended that \$10,000 of the Keystone Fund monies be transferred from the Vanguard Bond Fund account to the Dodge Cox Bond Fund account and that the Board meet with representatives from Stifel Nicholas financial advisors regarding the investment of the Keystone Fund monies. The Board approved both of these recommendations. The Committee recommended that the Association discontinue publishing a hard copy membership



PVGA President Dave Miller (right) presents a check for \$25,000 to Dean Richard Roush for start-up funds for the new vegetable extension and research position at Penn State.

directory but rather list the members in a password-protected section of the website accessible only to members. The Board tabled this recommendation pending the results from a question about the members' use of the directory on the 2018 Member Survey currently being conducted. The Administrative Committee also presented a 2018 budget worksheet. The budget will be adopted at the January 29, 2018, meeting.

The Board approved the following recommendations from the Educational Committee: 1) that the Association continue to budget up to \$5,000 to help sponsor regional educational meetings with grants of up to \$500; 2) that the Association continue to sponsor the Direct Marketing tour; 3) that the Landisville and Rock Spring field days be discontinued in favor of short video reports from researchers that would posted on the website; 4) that the Tomato, Wednesday morning General Vegetable, Cover Crops and High Tunnel sessions be videotaped at the 2018 Mid-Atlantic Convention; 5) that a short promotional video for Convention be developed; and 6) that the grower conference calls be discontinued because of low participation.

The Government Affairs Committee recommended that the Association maintain its membership in the Pennsylvania Agricultural Alliance and the United Fresh Produce Association. They also recommended that a representative from the Association make a presentation at the January Game Commission hearings. The Committee recommended the Association continue to urge members to visit their legislators in March and that the Board continue its Harrisburg legislative visitation day in March emphasizing the same priorities as last year. The Board approved all the Committee's recommendations as well as their recommended proposed changes to the Policy Resolutions as reported in the article about the Annual Meeting on page 1.

The Board also met with Dr. Richard Roush, Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State and Dr. Erin Connolly, Plant Science Department head, to be updated on changes in the College and Department, most notable being the appointment of Dr. Francesco Di Gioro to the vegetable research and extension position. President David Miller presented a check for \$25,000 to the Dean to help with the start-up funds for Dr. Di Gioro.

The Board approved the following annual donations, sponsorships and promotions for 2018 (the budget line is listed in parentheses):

- Farm Show Reception Sponsorship (Donations)	\$500
- Farm Show Public Officials Day (Donations)	\$500
- Ag In The Classroom Program (Donations)	\$500
- Ag Science Education Mobile Lab (Donations)	\$500
- Capitol Hunger Garden (Donations)	\$200
- Delaware Valley College A-Day Ad (Promotions)	\$125
- Ag Progress Days Booth (Promotions)	\$350 to \$700
- Farm-City Day Vegetables (Promotions)	± \$50
- Farm Show Vegetable Day Cooking Demonstrations	\$1,650
- PASA Conference Program Ad (Membership)	\$310
- Keystone Cornucopia Reception (Legislative)	\$200
- Ag Council Research Tour for Legislators (Legislative)	\$100
- Farm Show Livestock Sale (Farm Show Booth)	±\$100
- Farm Show Bus Transportation (Farm Show Booth)	±\$125
- Farm Show Food Court Table Cleaning (Farm Show)	±\$200
- Farm Show Visitor's Guide Ad (Farm Show)	\$700
- Grower Reception at Convention (Convention)	\$250
- Ice Cream Social at Convention (Convention)	\$800 to \$1,100

The Board also received various reports on the finances, membership, Farm Show Booth and other issues. The Board's next meeting will be January 29, 2018, at Hershey.

In Memory**Laurence L. Yager**

Laurence Yager, a retired Penn State Extension agent in the area of agricultural marketing, passed away on December 11 at his home after a long illness. He was 85. PVGA presented Mr. Yager with its first Annual Award in 2000 when he retired from Penn State.

A native of Greenfield Township in Erie County, he was an Air Force veteran who served in Korean War. After leaving the military, he went on to earn his bachelor's degree from Cornell University and his master's degree from Penn State. He began his 36-year tenure with Penn State Extension in 1964, working as the regional marketing agent for Adams, Franklin, York, Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster and Cumberland Counties.

Although his official territory of service was a just of section of the state, his agricultural marketing expertise enabled him to assist producers of various agricultural commodities not only in Capital Region but throughout the Commonwealth.

As part of his longstanding dedication to direct marketers, Yager was active in organizing meetings and tours for direct marketers in the Mid-Atlantic region and on a national basis as well. Many farm market operators in the state benefited from his advice in designing their markets, either on a personal level or through his presentations.

While Yager was widely known for this expertise in direct marketing, he has also helped growers organize wholesale marketing ventures as well. Many of the earlier produce auctions here in Pennsylvania sought his help in establishing their businesses.

During his time at with Penn State Extension he took several leaves of absence to serve overseas for Penn State in the Bahamas, Poland, Swaziland and Armenia.

Mr. Yager was very active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. During his retirement he enjoyed gardening, bee keeping and church activities. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Betty; two daughters, two sons, four grandchildren and a sister.

From the Gettysburg Times, December 13, 2017, and other sources.

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NEWS

National New Briefs

Tax Reform Passes Senate

The U.S. Senate has approved its plan to overhaul the federal tax code, moving tax reform—a longtime priority for farmers—a step closer to the finish line.

With the House having passed its tax reform bill last month, lawmakers can now begin to work out differences between the two plans and draft a final, combined version that would need to be voted upon by both chambers. Farm Bureau supports reforming the tax code so that it is simpler, more transparent and fair to farmers. Whether that's the case will depend on the details of the final plan.

Farm Bureau believes tax reform should help all types of farm businesses, reduce effective tax rates by cutting income tax rates enough to make up for any deductions lost and allow businesses and farms to deduct expenses when they are incurred.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.*

EPA Proposes Formally Delaying WOTUS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is proposing officially putting the brakes on implementing its Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule while the controversial regulation is reviewed and potentially rescinded and rewritten.

The 2015 rule, which Farm Bureau opposes, never went into effect because of injunctions issued by federal courts that questioned the rule's legality. But those cases are still working through the legal process so the possibility remains that new court rulings could put the rule into effect. EPA's proposal seeks to avoid that scenario by delaying the effective date of the regulation for two years.

EPA has proposed rescinding WOTUS and recently accepted public comments on that plan. The agency is now holding listening sessions to gather input on what a revised clean water rule should look like. The current version of WOTUS would give EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers broad authority to regulate nearly all land areas as "water," including an estimated 98 percent of Pennsylvania land. Farm Bureau believes the regulation attempts to regulate land areas well beyond what is allowed by federal law and has advocated for repealing the rule and replacing it with one that protects water quality without trampling on landowners' rights.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.*

Help Support Farming by Completing 2017 Census of Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is starting to send out the 2017 Census of Agriculture this week. Conducted every five years, the questionnaire collects comprehensive data about agriculture in every county in the nation.

Those figures help highlight agriculture's importance to the local and national economies. The data is used by farmers and agribusinesses for planning and by legislators and policy makers for developing agriculture policy, such as the farm bill, and designing programs that help farmers and other residents of rural areas.

"Collected in service to American agriculture since 1840, the census gives every producer the opportunity to be represented so that informed decisions can support their efforts to

provide the world with food, fuel, feed, and fiber," USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue said. "Every response matters."

USDA mails the surveys directly to farms and responses are due back — either via mail or online — by Feb. 5. Responding to the Census is required by law. For more information, visit: www.agcensus.usda.gov.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.*

New IRS Deadline and Penalties for Filing W-2s and 1099s

A law passed by Congress last fall has moved up the deadline for filing W-2 and 1099 forms with government agencies. All employers must now file Form W-2 with the Social Security Administration by January 31 of each year. Form 1099-MISC must also be filed with the IRS by January 31. January 31 remains the deadline to issue a W-2 or a 1099 to an employee or payee (contractor). The new deadline is an attempt to combat the massive eFile fraud problem. The IRS will now have the needed verifying information for the W-2 and 1099 amounts on taxpayer 1040s. It is hoped that this action will cut deeply into the admitted \$15 billion in fraudulent refunds issued last year. The new law imposes increased penalties for employers who miss the new deadline. File your W2s on February 10, and a \$50-per-form penalty will be assessed. If you have 10 employees, this is a \$500 penalty for each late form. File the forms in March as you could last year and the penalty increases to \$150 per form. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's MSC Business Services recommends that farmers double check that all information on W-2 and 1099s are correct prior to issuing.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, January 2017.*

EPA Imposes Changes to Dicamba Herbicide Labels

The EPA has prompted label changes for 2018 for the herbicide dicamba. More than 3 million acres of soybeans were damaged in 2017, which was attributed to off-target damage. Next season, only certified applicators with dicamba-specific training can apply dicamba and records must be maintained.

Wind speed, a limited application window, tank clean-out to prevent cross contamination and awareness of nearby sensitive crops will need to be practiced reducing the risk of herbicide drift. The label changes will help to keep dicamba available to growers for over-the-top application to soybeans in the future.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.*



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State News Briefs

Spotted Lanternfly Quarantine Zone Expanded

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has expanded the quarantine zone, created to halt the spread of the invasive spotted lantern fly.

With the latest expansion, the state has shifted to imposing quarantines at the county, rather than municipal, level and including areas where the insect's presence has not yet been confirmed but there's a high risk of spread. The quarantine area now covers 13 entire counties: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Carbon, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill.

"This invasive insect threatens to destroy \$18 billion worth of agricultural commodities here like apples, grapes and hardwoods, inflicting a devastating impact on the livelihoods of our producers and businesses," Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said.

Businesses in the quarantine area must obtain a Phytosanitary Certificate or compliance agreement from the department to move items outside the area and need a permit to move items within the quarantine zone. People who live within or are traveling through quarantine zones should check vehicles for egg masses before leaving an infested area, buy firewood locally instead of moving it between areas, check outdoor items and trees for egg masses, not transport brush, yard waste or construction waste outside the quarantine area. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/PDASpottedLanternfly>.

Voters Approve Expansion of Property Tax Program

Pennsylvania voters have approved amending the state

Constitution to alter a program that offers property tax reductions for homes and farms.

The amendment removes a cap on the maximum level of property tax relief a school district or other taxing body (such as a county or municipality) may allow through the homestead/farmstead exemption. That program allows districts to exempt a portion of the assessed value of eligible properties from taxation as long as that revenue is made up through other means.

While—in theory—the change will allow local governments and school districts to offer greater relief to eligible taxpayers, it's not likely to have any meaningful effect on homeowners' or farmers' tax bills unless further action is taken by the General Assembly. Districts cannot offer greater property tax relief through the homestead/farmstead exemption without having the revenue to offset the cost. That means state lawmakers would likely need to approve another source of state funding—such as higher sales or income taxes—before eligible landowners would see their property tax bills eliminated or reduced.

But even under the best circumstances, farmers—even with the cap lifted—won't see meaningful property tax relief through the homestead/farmstead exemption because of limits on how the program is applied to farms. Farmland does not qualify at all for the exemption. And only farm buildings located on properties where the landowner lives are eligible.

From the Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update, Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.

(continued on page 10)

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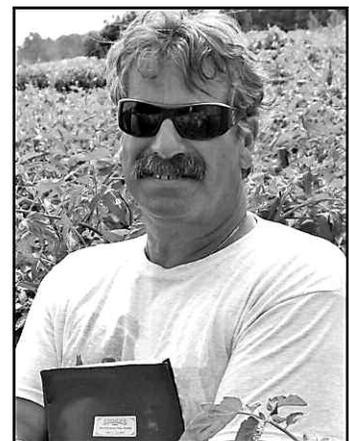
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NEWS

State News Briefs (continued from page 9)**Help Shape the Future of Penn State Extension Programs**

Penn State Extension is seeking input from the agricultural community as it begins a strategic planning process that will set priorities and help determine what types of programs and services will be offered. Participating in that process will help Extension identify needs that programs should meet and gauge interest in different types of services.

College officials are looking for agriculture industry representatives with a wide range of backgrounds and areas of expertise to provide input during the planning process. Penn State has set up an online survey to determine who is available to provide input on a variety of topics. Please complete the survey by going to www.surveymonkey.com/r/WND6XRF.

From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.

New PFB Company to Support Agriculture by Providing Information Technology Solutions

A new initiative recently launched by Pennsylvania Farm Bureau seeks to help businesses meet their technology needs while also supporting advocacy for agriculture. pfbSOLUTIONS is a new, for-profit company owned by PFB that aims to bridge the gap between the corporate world and rural Pennsylvania.

By partnering with well-known technology companies, pfbSOLUTIONS will offer its customers services such as computer and communications networking, information technology management, data storage and security. The company has products and services available to serve large and small businesses both within and outside of the agriculture world. Proceeds from pfbSOLUTIONS will support PFB and its mission of advocating and building a better future for Pennsylvania's farms and rural communities.

"Just like our farmer members, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau needs to diversify in order to remain a strong organization," said PFB President Rick Ebert. "We believe pfbSOLUTIONS will help us do that."

In addition to offering technology services to businesses, pfbSOLUTIONS will also partner with DTN to provide localized agricultural weather-forecasting services to farmers. PFB members will receive an exclusive discount on those services. For more information, visit www.pfbsolutions.com.

From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**,
Penna. Farm Bureau, December 2017.

SRBC Seeks to Register Grandfathered Water Uses

In a recent study that compiled all available data to characterize Basin-wide water use and availability, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) estimated that there are possibly more than 700 facilities exempt from regulatory oversight with an estimated water use of nearly one billion gallons per day. To try to determine how much water is being used by these grandfathered water users, the SRBC has established a new program under which facility managers must register their grandfathered withdrawals and consumptive water uses by December 31, 2019, to preserve the facility's exemption from any permit approval in the future.

The Commission is incentivizing early registration by offering a free registration period from January 1 through June 30,

2018, after which a \$500 registration fee (July 1 through December 31, 2018) or \$1,000 registration fee (all of 2019) will apply.

It is currently PVGA's understanding that agricultural water users are exempt from this registration requirement UNLESS they are withdrawing more than 3,000,000 gallons in any 30-day period, in which case they do need to register their water use. Additional information is available at their website at www.srbc.net.

PVGA Annual Meeting...

(continued from page 4)

14. Supporting the establishment by the Department of Transportation of an online and paper no-spray registry for roadside state spraying.
15. Supporting a requirement that persons bringing emotional support and/or service animals into facilities where pets are not otherwise allowed have the need for the emotional support and/or service animal certified by a medical professional.

Federal

16. Supporting changes in the regulations for Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL) that would make CDL Medical Card anniversary dates coincide with the card holder's birthdate.
17. Supporting the exemption from registration for farmers using drones in their own farm business.
18. Supporting the ability of farmers to update and maintain on-farm management plans utilizing current soil and manure samples that would eliminate the need to rewrite NRCS 590 Nutrient Management Plans every three years.



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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 1)

Charlie Arnot is highly regarded as both a writer and sought-after speaker who engages audiences across the globe. Charlie has more than 25 years of experience working in communications, public relations and issues management within the food system. He serves as CEO of The Center for Food Integrity, a non-profit organization dedicated to building consumer trust and confidence in today's food system.

One client said of Charlie's work, "Others help us talk about our business, you help us think differently about who we are and what we do." His commitment to excellence, innovation and integrity have positioned him as a trusted counselor to CEOs, government leaders and executives, and as a respected industry advisor on critical issues within the food system. Clients and food and farm industry leaders seek his unique expertise in applying the peer-reviewed trust model developed in 2007 to help them build trust in their processes and products.

Charlie spent ten years as a corporate officer for a leading food company. He also worked for a public relations agency, was an award-winning radio journalist and worked in video and film. Charlie grew up in southeast Nebraska and graduated from the University of Nebraska with a Bachelor of Journalism degree.

Pre-Convention Workshops

Besides the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Bus Tour, several special workshops will be offered on Monday, January 29, the day before the main Convention opens. **PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THESE WORKSHOPS ALONG WITH THE WORKSHOP FEE.** Unless otherwise noted, workshops will be conducted at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey. Further information on any of the workshops is available on the convention website at www.mafvc.org.

FSMA Grower Training – (\$150 with a \$130 discount from PDA for PA farmers - one discount per farm – includes lunch and required training materials) (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

Intended for fruit and vegetable growers and others interested in learning about produce safety, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule, and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). The Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training Course will satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in § 112.22(c), which states:

020 Biocontrols – (fee \$75) (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. includes lunch)

Biocontrols offer growers tools to better control many insects, mites and plant diseases. This one day school will focus on indoor production of vegetables and herbs. Many of the concepts and techniques will be applicable to outdoor production.

Computer Record Keeping – (fee \$30) (12:00 noon to 4:30 p.m.)

This workshop presented by Penn State Extension Educator Robert Goodling will be an overview of computer software and apps on other electronic devices that can help growers better manage their farm operations.

PA Pesticide License Training – (fee \$65 includes lunch and required training materials) (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

A presentation of the information needed by pesticide applicators to be able to successfully pass the required test to become a licensed pesticide applicator in Pennsylvania. The test will be administered on the morning the following day, January 30, 2018.

Urban Community Farming. A Cornucopia of Opportunity – (fee \$75) (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. includes lunch)

All across America entrepreneurs and community groups are working to eliminate food deserts in urban areas through the establishment of urban farms. This day-long course featuring some of the Mid-Atlantic's top experts will provide a primer for new and experienced urban farmers on a variety of topics that are central to the success and growth of their urban farm.

Managing Your Farm Business – (fee \$45) (9:00 to 11:45 a.m.)

This workshop will cover some principles of basic farm business management such as financial management tools and other topics. See www.mafvc.org after January 1 for updated details on the program

Managing Your Retail Market

This previously announced workshop has been cancelled because several speakers are unable to present their topics.

Best Practices for Orchard Trellis Construction – (fee \$20) (1:30p.m. – 3:30p.m.) To be held at the Penn State Fruit Research and Extension Center in Biglerville.

Have you had to repair a trellis that failed due to a wind storm or heavy crop load? Do you struggle with decisions on cost-effective trellis materials and design features? Do you have trouble-shooting questions for a trellis you've already installed? Our speakers are John Wall, John Wall, Inc., who will provide a field training on trellis design principles, and Lynn Kime, Penn State Extension, who will discuss trellis economics will be able help you with these issues.

(continued on page 13)

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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 12)

UK Cider – (fee \$150) (1:00 to 4:00 p.m.) To be held at Wyndridge Farm, 885 S. Pleasant Ave., Dallastown, PA

Guest speakers Tom Oliver from Oliver's Cider and Perry in Herefordshire and Gabe Cook, the Ciderologist, will cover the following topics: U.K. Cider—Tradition & Today; Wild Fermentation; Blending—Structure & Practice; and Sensory Analysis You can have your cider analyzed.

Vegetable Marketing Roundtables

Join Kitchen Table Consultants staff for roundtable discussions over lunch on how you can better promote your vegetable products using the "tools" they have created for the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program for PA Produce Month. The roundtables will be in the Great Lobby at the top of the escalators from 12:00 noon to 1:30 on January 31 and February 1.

Forming Peer Discussion Groups Roundtable

We all learn from peers that we respect. Peer to peer discussion groups consist of farmers that meet regularly to discuss and exchange ideas of concern to their operations. The power of these groups is they are self-directed and rely on shared knowledge. Discussing the pros and cons of an idea or practice allows for idea sharing, offering advice and formulation of opinions on practices that can be implemented at the home farm. We are all better for having a strong network of peers.

The concept for this Round Table is to discuss the features of Peer Discussion Groups, and gauge interest in piloting this method of learning in a few locations across Pennsylvania. John Berry is leading the round table and brings twenty years' experience utilizing this unique adult education technique. From vegetable grower study circles, novice farmer discussion groups, grain marketing clubs, and facilitating small group activities countless times; John brings a wealth of understanding and skill centered on effectively using peer discussion groups to strengthen and grow your business. Join John on Wednesday evening, January 31 at 7:30 for this Round Table.

Annual Growers Banquet

Many of you plan to gather with friends for the evening meals at Hershey. Why not plan to join a larger group of friends and fellow growers at the Annual Fruit and Vegetable Growers Banquet on January 30. There will be door prize drawings for the ladies and brief presentations by the participating grower organizations. PVGA will present its nineteenth Annual Award at the Dinner and a Life Memberships. Tickets for the banquet and reception are \$35.

Spanish Session

In an effort to provide additional education to Hispanic orchard employees, Penn State Cooperative Extension is again organizing a special session in Spanish to be held on Wednesday, January 31 at the Convention. Various relevant fruit and vegetable production topics will be presented. All are welcome, so please encourage your Hispanic friends and workers to attend the day's seminars and trade show.

Attendees must pay the regular registration fee. Employees of PVGA members are eligible for the \$65 or \$60 pre-registration rate.

Ice Cream Social

After you have enjoyed dinner on your own on Wednesday, January 31, come to the Great Lobby outside the trade show

hall for the nineteenth annual PVGA Ice Cream Social from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. The social will be open to all Convention attendees, so come early to enjoy a visit with old friends and to meet new friends. The ice cream will only be served until 8:00 p.m. but you can continue to visit for as long as you like.

Music Jam Session

A music jam session will be held in the Lodge Lobby on Wednesday, January 31, so if you play an instrument, bring it along and join in the fun.

The Hershey Lodge

The Hershey Lodge offers an indoor pool and water park, exercise and game room, and restaurants while the Hershey (continued on page 14)



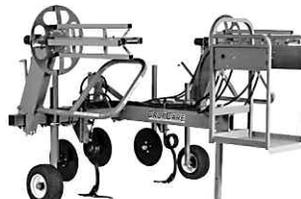


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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 13)

area has an outlet center, Chocolate World and other attractions that will appeal to whole family. So why not plan a mid-winter vacation at the Lodge. In case of a winter storm, you can still attend all the Convention events without setting foot outside - the Convention will go on regardless of the weather. A special Convention room rate makes the Lodge more affordable. Rooms are \$145 per night for up to four persons. To make a reservation, call 1-800-HERSHEY or 717-533-3311 and tell them you are with the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention. Staying at the Hershey Lodge rather than some other motel ultimately enables us to keep the registration prices down. Child care services are available through the Hershey Lodge as well. Plan now to spend the week in Hershey.

Pre-Register

There is no better opportunity for you to meet with vegetable, potato and small fruit experts from across the nation, dozens of vendors and fellow growers in one place. Plan now to be there! Remember that pre-registration helps us make better plans and can save you from waiting in a long registration line. You also save \$15 to \$30 by pre-registering by January 26. There is a pre-registration form in the November issue of the newsletter and on the Convention website at www.mafvc.org where you can also register online. Each member's membership renewal form, mailed by first-class mail to each member, is also a Convention registration form. You can also call PVGA at 717-694-3596 and we will be happy to mail or fax you a registration form. Walk-in registration at the Convention is also available. Checks must be used for all pre-registrations by mail. Cash, checks or credit cards are accepted at the Convention.

Convention Program

The following topics and speakers have been scheduled for the educational program at the 2018 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention. *Please note, speakers, topics, times and rooms in this program are subject to change. Check for updates on the website at www.mafvc.org. The printed program at the Convention will take precedence over any pre-convention programs. This list does NOT include the Tree Fruit, and Wine Grape sessions which are listed in the November newsletter and on the website.*

* indicates topic expected to qualify for a category pesticide update training credit

** indicates topic expected to qualify for a core pesticide update training credit

Tuesday Morning, January 30, 2018**Tomatoes** – Trinidad Room

- 9:00 **Growing Good Neighbors Through Stewardship and Communication** – Stephanie Regagon, Fieldwatch
- 9:45 ***Best Management Practices for Tomato Bacterial Diseases** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.

Organic Vegetable Production – Empire Room AB

- 9:00 **Impacts of Conventional Pest Management Practices on Organic Farming** – Galen Dively, Univ. of Maryland
- 9:45 **Managing Weeds in Organic Vegetables** – Alan Leslie, Univ. of Maryland

Rhubarb – Empire Room CD

- 9:00 **How We Grow Rhubarb in Colorado** – Dennis Duncan, High Altitude Rhubarb
- 9:45 **How We Grow Rhubarb Year Round in Ontario** – William French, Lennox Farms

Kale/Brussels Sprouts – Crystal Room

- 9:00 **Increasing Success with Brussels Sprouts: Varieties, Topping and Insect Management** – Dr. Rebecca Sideman, Univ. of New Hampshire
- 9:45 **How We Do Kale** – grower panel: David Miller, Miller Plant Farm; Richard Calimer, Scenic View Orchards

Application of Drones and Mapping – Where is This Going? – Magnolia Room AB

- 9:00 **Drone Mapping and Scouting- AgVue Technologies** – Paul Caskey, Drone Imaging Services
- 9:45 **Veris Mapping - Why Should We Do This?** – Justin Croner - GrowMarkFS

Microgreens – Wild Rose Room

- 9:00 **Selection Criteria and Use of Microgreens by Chefs** – Zach Ford, U.S. Hotel Restaurant & Tavern
- 9:45 **Microgreens Production II** – Dr. Robert Berghage, Penn State Univ.

(continued on page 15)

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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 14)

Food Trends – Cocoa Terrace/Cocoa 1

- 9:00 **2018 Food Trends to Keep Your Customers Engaged** - Heather Manzo, Penn State Extension
- 9:45 **2018 Direct Marketing Silver Bullets** – Heather Manzo, Penn State Extension

Keynote – Nigerian/Trinidad Room

- 10:45 **Federal Legislative Update**
- 11:00 **Keynote: Values, Trust and Science – Building Trust in Our Post-Truth Tribal World** – Charlie Arnot, The Center for Food Integrity

Tuesday Afternoon, January 30, 2018

Tomatoes – Trinidad Room - sponsored by the *American Vegetable Grower* magazine

- 1:30 ***Magnesium Based Nanomaterials for Management of Bacterial Spot of Tomatoes** – Yin-Yu Lao, Univ. of Florida
- 2:00 ***New Bio-Pesticides for Tomato Production- Uses and Applications** – Timothy Johnson, Marrone Bio Innovations
- 2:30 **Tomato Variety Trial – Year Two, Any Trends?** – Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension
- 3:15 **Getting Micronutrients in the Zone for the Best Tomatoes** – Steven Bogash
- 4:00 ****Drift Management** – to be announced

Organic Vegetable Production - Empire Room AB

- 1:30 **Toigo Organic Farms: How we grow tomatoes** – Kevin Mathews, Toigo Organic Farms
- 2:00 ***Using Biocontrols to Manage Aphids in High Tunnels** – Elsa Sánchez, Penn State Univ., Margaret Skinner and Cheryl Frank, Univ. of Vermont
- 2:30 **Growing Organic Belgian Endive for Winter Markets** - John Eisenstein, Jade Family Farm
- 3:15 ***Heat Treating Seed** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.
- 4:00 **911 – High Tunnel Rescue** – Dr. Elsa Sánchez, Penn State Univ. and Thomas Ford, Penn State Ext.

Cut Flowers – Empire Room CD

- 1:30 **New and Exciting Cut Flowers Introductions for Mid-Atlantic Growers**– Tom Caan, Fred C. Gloeckner Co.
- 2:00 ***Weed Management in Field Grown Cut Flowers** – Thomas Ford, Penn State Extension
- 2:30 **Butterbee Farm Sustainably Grown Flowers for Baltimore** – Laura Beth Resnick, Butterbee Farm
- 3:15 ***Utilizing Biocontrols in High Tunnel and Field Grown Cut Flowers** – Dr. Lily Calderwood, Cornell Cooperative Extension
- 4:00 **Factors that Influence Stem Length in Cut Flowers** – Dr. Robert Berghage, Penn State Univ.

(continued on page 16)

Fruit and Vegetable Industry Tour Details

This all-day tour leave the Hershey Lodge at 8:15 a.m. for the following stops. First is the Milton Hershey Orchard, Environmental Center and Greenhouses used in the horticultural educational program for the Milton Hershey School. Second is Hess Brothers Fruit Company, a family-owned fruit distribution operation that ships 1.5 million bushels of local eastern apples each year. After lunch at the Bird-in-Hand Smorgasbord, the tour will visit Harvest Lane Farm, a family-owned farm that raises fruits and vegetables on 25 to 30 acres primarily for their year-around retail market. The final stop will be Four Seasons Produce, a major produce wholesaler with a state-of-the-art distribution center which has grown its sales of organic produce to over 50% of its sales.

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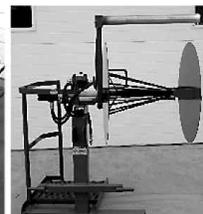
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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 15)**Root Vegetables** – Crystal Room

- 1:30 **How We Grow and Market Roots** – Chris Brittenburg, Who Cooks for You Farm
- 2:00 **Sweet Potato Production in Pennsylvania** – Dr. Michael Orzolek, Penn State Univ.
- 2:30 ***Insect and Disease Pests of Carrots and Beets** – Dr. Carla Burkle, Penn State Extension
- 3:15 **Healthy Soils for Roots, Tubers and More** – Dr. Sieglinde Snapp, Michigan State Univ.
- 4:00 **Production of Overwintered Bulbing Onions in Low Tunnels** – Dr. Rebecca Sideman, Univ. of NH

Ethnic/Specialty Vegetables – Magnolia Room AB

- 1:30 **Best Hot Pepper Varieties** – James Weaver, Meadow View Farm
- 2:00 ****Sprayer Cleanup** – William Riden, Penn State Ext.
- 2:30 **Outstanding Specialty Melons for the Mid-Atlantic Region** – Pam Guigley, Seedway
- 3:15 **Growing Ethnic Vegetables and Attracting the People Who Buy Them** – Leonard Burger Jr., Burger Farms
- 4:00 ***Managing Phytophthora: 2017 Research Results** – John Esslinger, Penn State Extension

Farm Management - Wild Rose Room

- 1:30 **Communicate to Lead** – John Wodehouse, Penn State Extension
- 2:15 **Using the Records You Have to Make Decisions** – Robert Goodling, Penn State Extension
- 3:15 **What Your Employees Want** – John Berry, Penn State Extension
- 4:00 **Retiring From the Farm** – Juliette Enfield, Penn State

Agritourism - Cocoa Terrace/Cocoa 1

- 1:30 **Agritourism at High Altitude Rhubarb** – Dennis and Donna Duncan, High Altitude Rhubarb
- 2:30 **Fair Weather Acres** – Billy and Michelle Collins (invited)
- 3:15 **Keeping Employees Honest** – panel – John Roba, Roba Farms and others.

Wednesday Morning, January 31, 2018**Pumpkins/Vine Crops** – Magnolia Room ABCD - sponsored by the *American Vegetable Grower* magazine

- 9:00 **Pumpkin Variety Trial Results** – Dr. Elsa Sanchez and Dr. William Lamont, Penn State Univ.; Dr. Timothy Elkner, Thomas Butzler, and Robert Pollock, Penn State Extension
- 9:30 ***The Squash Bees of Pennsylvania** – Dr. Margarita López-Urbe, Penn State Univ.
- 10:15 **Why Are My Cucurbits Collapsing** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.
- 11:00 **Managing Cucumber Beetles While Conserving Pollinators** – Dr. Shelby Fleischer, Penn State Univ.
- 11:30 **PVGA Annual Meeting** – Crystal Room

Greenhouse Ornamentals – Empire Room AB

- 9:00 ****Pesticide Application Equipment Selection and BMP's for Greenhouse Operators** – Thomas Ford, Penn State Extension
- 9:30 **Best Annuals of the PSU Flower Trials** – Sinclair Adam, Penn State Extension
- 10:15 **Ornamental Plant Nutrition** - Fred Hulme, Everris NA
- 11:00 ***Mealybug Management** – Dr. Raymond Cloyd, Kansas State Univ.
- 11:30 **Marketing Your Business as No One Will** – Maria Zampini, UpShoot, LLC

General Vegetables – Crystal Room

- 9:00 ***Biopesticides: What We Have Tried and What Has Worked** – Abby Seaman, NYS Ag Experiment Station
- 9:30 **Using Shade Cloth to Increase Marketable Yields of Tomatoes and Peppers** - Dr. Gerald Brust, Univ. of Maryland
- 10:15 **High Tunnel Tomato Nutrient Management: Lessons Learned** – Dr. Rebecca Sideman, Univ. of New Hampshire
- 11:00 ****Sprayer Calibrations** – Robert Pollock, Penn State Extension
- 11:30 **PVGA Annual Meeting** – Crystal Room

Soil Health/Reduced Tillage – Empire Room CD

- 9:00 **Challenges and Opportunities for Soil Health in Organic Vegetables** – Dr. Franklin Egan, PA Assoc. for Sustainable Ag (PASA)
- 9:30 **No-till vs Plastic Bed Vegetables (title tentative)** – Drs. Elsa Sanchez and Sjoerd Duiker, Penn State Univ.
- 10:15 **Biological Aspects of Soil Health Related to IPM** – Dr. Mary Barbercheck, Penn State Univ.
- 11:00 **Trials, Tribulations and Triumphs in Weed Control in No-Till Vegetable Systems** – Dr. Gerald Brust, Univ. of Maryland
- 11:30 **PVGA Annual Meeting** – Crystal Room

(continued on page 17)



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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 16)

Farm Market Development – Trinidad Room

- 9:00 **From the Ground Up** – Mike & Barb Dietrich, Oley Valley Organic
- 10:15 **Location, Location, Location** – Charles Smith, T.S. Smith & Sons
- 11:00 **“From The Ground Up”, Starting a Retail Farm Market** – Jen Brodsky, Kitchen Table Consultants

Small Fruit – Wild Rose Room

- 9:00 **Fluctuating Temperatures and Effects on Berry Crops** – Dr. Richard Marini, Penn State Univ.
- 9:30 ***Insect and Mite Pests of Brambles** – Dr. Carla Burkle, Penn State Extension
- 10:15 ***What’s New in SWD Management?** – Dr. Kelly Hamby, Univ. of Maryland
- 11:00 **The Strawberry Virus Situation of 2012-13: What Went Wrong, and How We’re Avoiding a Repeat!** – Dr. Robert Martin, USDA-ARS, Corvallis, OR
- 11:30 ****Keeping Pesticides from Groundwater** – Megan Chawner, Penn State Extension

Spanish – Cocoa Terrace

- 9:00 **Actividad de Apertura** (Welcome and Ice-breaker)
- 9:45 ***Manejo Ecológico de Plagas en la Agricultura** (Ecological Framework for Pest Management) – Beth Sastre, VCE-Loudon Extension
- 10:30 **Establecimiento de Hortalizas en el Campo** (Vegetable Crop Establishment) – Dr. Anamaria Gomez, Independent Consultant
- 11:15 **Empezando un Huerto** (Starting an Orchard) – Maria Gorgo-Gourovitch, Penn State Extension

Wednesday Afternoon, January 31, 2018

General Vegetables – Magnolia Room ABCD

- 1:00 **Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation and Vegetable Grafting: Applied Biotechnology for Sustainable Vegetable Production Systems** - Dr. Francesco Di Gioia, Univ. of Florida (soon Penn State Univ.)
- 2:00 ***Allium Leafminer: Life Cycle, Location and Management** – Dr. Shelby Fleischer, Penn State Univ.
- 2:30 ***Managing Flea Beetles in Both Cole Crops and Eggplant** – Dr. Thomas Kuhar, Virginia Tech Univ.
- 3:15 **Equipment to Incorporate Soil Amendments** – William Reiss, BDI Machinery Sales
- 4:00 **Vegetable Stand Establishment** – Lee Stivers, Penn State Univ.

Greenhouse Ornamentals – Empire Room AB

- 1:30 ***Chemical Control of Ornamental Diseases** – Virginia Brubaker, Griffin Greenhouse Supplies
- 2:00 **Results of the PSU Perennial Plant Trials** – Sinclair Adam, Penn State Extension
- 2:30 **Using Consumer Trends to Market your Business** – Maria Zampini, UpShoot, LLC
- 3:15 ***Managing Western Flower Thrips** – Dr. Raymond Cloyd, Kansas State Univ.
- 4:00 ***Biological Controls for Ornamental Growers** – Matthew Krause, BioWorks, Inc.

(continued on page 18)



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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 17)**Cover Crops (and Other Soil Amendments)** – Crystal Room

- 1:30 **Cover Crops – Practical Methods for Vegetable Farms** – Matt Steiman, Dickinson College
- 2:00 **Using Leaf Mulch as an Organic Amendment (tentative title)** – Robert Muth, Muth Family Farm
- 2:30 **Designer Cover Crops for Multiple Uses** – Dr. Sieglinde Snapp, Michigan State Univ.
- 3:15 ***Nitrogen and Weed Management in Cover Crop-Based Crop Production** – Dr. Steven Mirsky, USDA-ARS Beltsville
- 4:00 **Are Cover Crops Improving Soil Health Indicators? What We've Learned from On-Farm Demonstrations** – Megan Chawner, Penn State Extension

Educating Consumers and Media to Your Advantage – Trinidad Room

- 1:30 **Communicating Food Safety Issues to Your Advantage** – Meredith Melendez, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 2:00 **Creating a Positive Message for Hot Topic Issues** – William Hlubik, Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- 2:30 **Keeping in Contact with Consumers Through Web-based Marketing** – Gillian Armstrong, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 3:15 **Building your Farm Brand and Identity** – to be announced
- 4:00 **Planning for Success During Large Events through Public Relations** – Tim VonThun, VonThun Farms

Wholesale Marketing – Empire Room CD

- 1:30 **Retailer Panel** – Atif Bostic, Uplift Solutions (Wakefern); Dan Bate, Supervalu; and Patti Olenick, Weis Markets; and *Alex Baloga, PA Food Merchants Ass'n. (invited)*
- 2:45 **Wholesaler Panel** – Ben Rice, Rice Fruit Co.; Anthony Tomasic, Paragon Produce; and Emily Kohlhas or Dan Vena, John Vena Produce; and *David Hahn, Four Seasons Produce (invited)*
- 3:45 **What PA Preferred Can Do for You** – Ashlee Dugan, PA Dept. of Agriculture

Small Fruit – Wild Rose Room

- 1:30 ***Using Disease Forecasting to Monitor and Manage Strawberry Fruit Rots in the Mid-Atlantic** – Justine Renee Beaulieu, Univ. of Maryland
- 2:00 **The Clean Plant Network: What Is It and What Does It Do?** – Dr. Robert Martin, USDA-ARS, Corvallis, OR
- 2:30 **Strawberry Production in Containers – Tips for Success** – Kathy Demchak, Penn State Univ.
- 3:15 ***Integrated Management of Black Root Rot Complex and Crown Rots of Strawberry** – Dr. Mahfuz Rahman, West Virginia Univ.
- 4:00 **Virus Testing – How & When to Sample & Ship Samples** – Dr. Robert Martin, USDA-ARS, Corvallis, OR

Spanish - Cocoa Terrace

- 1:30 **** ¿ Cómo minimizar el efecto negativo de pesticidas en polinizadores de cultivos?** (Pollinators and Pesticides) – Dr. Margarita López-Urbe and Carlos Quesada, Penn State Univ.
- 2:15 **Estamos Contigo** (We are with You) Alejandra Olivares and Elizabeth Lucano Gómez, Consulate of Mexico in Philadelphia

Thursday Morning, February 1, 2018**High Tunnels** – Magnolia Room ABCD

- 9:00 **Indoor Cukes in Bags**, David King, Harvest Valley Farms
- 9:30 ****Pesticide Calculation and Sprayer Calibration for High Tunnels**, Steven Bogash
- 10:15 ***Managing Early Season Insects in HT with a Biological Focus** – Steven Bogash
- 11:00 **Learning the Potential of Grafted Indeterminate Tomatoes in HT** – Kaitlin Horst, Re Devined
- 11:30 **Update on Colored High Tunnel Bell Peppers** – Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension

Sweet Corn – Trinidad Room – *sponsored by the American Vegetable Grower magazine*

- 9:00 **Sweet Corn Varieties and Genotypes: Where We are Headed** – Blake Meyers, Seigers Seed
- 9:30 ***Weed Control and the Transition to No-till** – H. Grant Troop, AgXplore
- 10:15 ***Managing Sweet Corn Insects and Resistance Problems with Today's Options** – Dr. Galen Dively, Univ. of Maryland
- 11:00 **Bird Damage in Sweet corn: Risk Factors and Management Strategies** – Dr. Catherine Lindell, Michigan State Univ.
- 11:30 ***Organic Sweet Corn Without the Worms: It Can Be Done!** – Jennifer Glenister, James and Moie Crawford, New Morning Farm

(continued on page 19)







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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 18)

Potatoes – Empire Room AB

- 9:00 **Update on Programs at the Potatoes USA** – Bryan Bender, Bender Potato Farms
- 9:30 **The 2017 Potato Growing Season in Review** – Robert Leiby, Pa Co-operative Potato Growers
- 10:15 **The Colorado Potato Breeding and Selection Program** – Dr. David Holm, Colorado State Univ.
- 11:00 ***Insect Control Update** – Dr. Tom Kuhar, Virginia Tech Univ.
- 11:30 ***Potato Disease Update** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.

General Vegetables – Crystal Room

- 9:00 **Supporting Bee Populations for Cucurbit Crops** – Dr. Shelby Fleischer, Penn State Univ.
- 9:30 **Basics of Drip Irrigation for Vegetable and Small Fruit Production** – Dr. William Lamont, Penn State Univ.
- 10:15 **Tillage and Cover Crops in Snap Bean/Pea Production** – Dr. Gordon Johnson, Univ. of Delaware
- 11:00 ***Mildew Management in Cucurbits** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.
- 11:30 ***How to Control Gyphosate Resistant Weeds** – Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Univ.

Alternative Activities for On-Farm Marketing – Cocoa Terrace/Cocoa 1

- 9:00 **Practical Safety Considerations with On-Farm Activities** – William Banka, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 9:30 **Hunting and Fishing Activities for Guests on the Farm** – Stephen Komar, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 10:00 **Athletic Activities on Agritourism Farms** – Michelle Infante-Casella, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 10:30 **Agritourism Offerings: If We Plan it, Will They Come?** – Ginger Myers, Univ. of Maryland Extension
- 11:00 **Gleaning to Fight Hunger and Reduce Food Waste: The Role of the Farmer** – Brian Strumfels and Elyse Yerrapathruni, NJ Agricultural Society, Farmers Against Hunger

Small Fruit - Wild Rose Room

- 9:00 ***Practical Approaches to Spotted Wing Drosophila Management** – Dean Polk, Rutgers Univ
- 9:30 **Bird Damage in Blueberries: Risk Factors and Management Strategies** – Dr. Catherine Lindell, Michigan State Univ.
- 10:15 **Blueberry Production in Florida: A Different Way of Growing** – Dr. Carla Burkle, Penn State Extension
- 11:00 ***National Blueberry Virus Survey: Pennsylvania Results and What They Means for Virus Management** – Dr. Robert Martin, USDA-ARS, Corvallis, OR
- 11:30 **Mulches and Amendments for Blueberry Production** – Kathy Demchak and Dr. Richard Marini, Penn State Univ.

(continued on page 20)

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CONVENTION

2018 Convention... (continued from page 19)**Asparagus** – Empire CD

- 9:00 ****Core Credit** – To be announced
- 9:30 **Asparagus Production, Management & Marketing** – Carl Cantaluppi, North Carolina Extension retired
- 10:30 ***Controlling & Managing Important Diseases of Asparagus** – Dr. Andrew Wyenandt, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 11:00 **Asparagus Growers Roundtable** – Carl Cantaluppi, Carl Cantaluppi, North Carolina Extension retired

Thursday Afternoon, February 1, 2018**High Tunnels** – Magnolia Room ABCD

- 1:30 **Growing Organic Hoophouse Tomatoes** – Chris Brittenberg, Who Cooks For You Farm
- 2:00 **Reconditioning High Tunnel Soils** – grower panel
- 2:45 ***Challenges of Soilborne Disease Management in High Tunnels** – Dr. Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.
- 3:15 **High Tunnel Economics** – Arthur King, Harvest Valley Farms
- 3:45 **New Introductions of Parthenocarpic Cucumbers for HT Growers** – Steven Bogash

Third Party GAP Audits – Crystal Room

- 1:30 **3rd Party Audits – Where We've Come From and Where We are Headed** – Steve Strub, Wegmans
- 2:00 **Common Mistakes on a 3rd Party Audit** – John Mast, Audit Solutions, LLC, and Christine Shearer and Brenda Sheaffer, Penna. Dept. of Agriculture
- 2:45 **Collaborating for Food Safety Success** – Lindsay Gilmore, Food Safety Consultant
- 3:15 **I Survived a 3rd Party Audit** – Grower Panel

Potatoes – Empire Room AB

- 1:30 **Strategies for Incorporating Value-Added Traits in New Potato Cultivars** – Dr. David Holm, Colorado State Univ.
- 2:00 **Variety Licensing and Its Implications** – Dr. Walter DeJong, Cornell Univ.
- 2:45 **2017 Potato Trials in Pennsylvania and Promising Varieties** – Robert Leiby, Pa Co-operative Potato Growers and Dr. Xinshun Qu, Penn State Univ.
- 3:15 **How to Conduct On Farm Potato Research** – Dr. Curtis Frederick, Serman Masser

Farm Labor – Nigerian Room

- 1:00 **Update on US DOL Regulations** – Lou Nieves, Jr., US Dept. of Labor
- 1:30 **Current Labor Situation: What Can Be Done** – Chalmers Carr, President USA Farmers
- 2:15 **Mexico's "We Are With You Program"** – Mexican Consulate
- 2:45 **Getting the Labor Situation Moving** – Diane Kurrle, U.S. Apple Association
- 3:15 **Current Labor Situation in the Mid-Atlantic** – Sean High, Penn State Center for Agricultural & Shale Law
- 3:45 **Questions for all the Speakers**

Marketing on Social Media – Cocoa Terrace/Cocoa 1

- 1:30 **Creating a Digital Marketing Kit** – Kim Rush Lynch, Univ. of Maryland Extension
- 2:00 **Farm Approach to Social Media** – Kelly Jackson, Emily's Produce
- 2:45 **Social Media Marketing for Green/Ag/Hort Businesses** – Kathy Jentz, Washington Gardener Magazine
- 3:15 **Tricks of the Trade – Moderator** – Shannon Dill, Univ. of Maryland Extension

Small Fruit – Wild Rose Room

- 1:30 ***Diagnosing Blueberry Problems** – Dr. Gary Pavlis, Rutgers Coop. Extension
- 2:00 **Pruning Blueberries: The Art and the Science – Concepts, Principles, and Practices** – Dr. Mark Ehlenfedt, USDA-ARS
- 2:45 ***Strategies for Successful Weed Control in Highbush Blueberries** – Baylee Carr, Rutgers Univ.
- 3:15 **Cover Crops for Blueberries** – Kate Brown, Rutgers Univ.



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GENERAL

Minutes of the February 1, 2017, Annual Meeting

Call to Order, Proof of Notice of the Meeting and Attendance - President David Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 11:40 a.m. in the Crystal Room of the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania, with about 48 members present. Notice of the meeting had been published in the December newsletter and on the dues notices.

Minutes - Brian Campbell and Michael Orzolek moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the February 3, 2016, Annual Meeting and to approve them as published in the agenda. The motion was adopted.

Officer and Committee Reports

Treasurer - Secretary-Treasurer William Reynolds reviewed the year-end financial reports summarized as follows:

	Income	Expenses	Balance
General Fund	\$506,698	\$470,626	\$242,308
Keystone Fund	\$10,886	\$3,600	\$136,775
Onion Committee Fund	\$12,652	\$12,427	\$21,693

Dr. Orzolek and Kenneth Martin moved to accept the financial reports. The motion was adopted.

Executive Committee

Capacity Development Task Force – Robert Amsterdam, chairman of the Task Force, reported that the Task Force is studying the pros and cons of the Association becoming a 501(c)3 organization as well as how the Association might go about adding additional staff.

Leadership and Recognition – Robert Shenot, Committee chairman, announced the following persons had

been elected to three-year terms as Directors by the mail-in balloting: Christopher Harner, Mr. Martin, Mr. Miller, Christopher Powell, John Shenk, and Jeffrey Stoltzfus.

Scholarships - Mr. Shenot also announced Lake Miller and Carville Mace were awarded the two Rudolph Grob Memorial Scholarships.

Young Grower Award – Mr. Shenot introduced Brandon Christner as the winner of the first PVGA Young Grower Award.

Administrative

Budget - Mr. Reynolds, Committee chairman, reviewed the General Fund budget adopted by the Board of Directors. The budget anticipates \$489,800 in income and \$521,200 in expenditures for a deficit of \$31,400.

Membership - Mr. Reynolds, reported that membership stood at about 861 compared to 822 on the second day of the Convention last year.

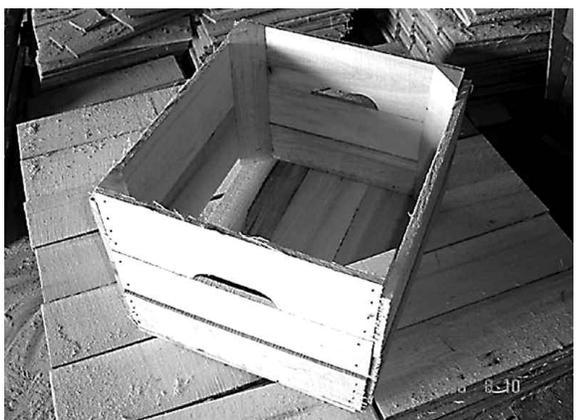
Farm Show and Ag Progress Days Food Booths - Mr. Reynolds noted that a gross profit of about \$3,800 was earned at the Ag Progress Days Booth while a profit of about \$60,200 had been earned at the Farm Show Booth and – all due to the volunteer labor at both events. Thanks to Jack Grace, Jackie Grace, Nancy Grace and Boots Hetherington, who volunteered for the entire week at the Farm Show, were expressed, as well as to Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Shenot and Mr. Campbell who helped manage the booth during the week.

Educational Committee – Jonathan Strite, Committee chairman, reported that the Convention was going well with registration at about 1,151 compared to 1,082 the previous year.

(continued on page 22)



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GENERAL

Minutes of the February... (continued from page 21)

The Association will be working with Penn State Extension to sponsor twilight meeting again in the 2017 season as well as to produce videos for on the website.

Government Affairs Committee – Mr. Stoltzfus, Committee chairman, reported the Directors will visit with state legislators in March. The Association will also be represented at the United Fresh Produce Association Public Policy Conference in Washington in the fall. He then presented the following Policy Resolutions additions recommended by the Board of Directors:

(*Underlined text is to be added. ~~Struck through~~ text is to be deleted.*)

State Issues**Surplus Food**

- Supporting an increase in the State Food Purchase Program budget of \$5 million to allow food banks to purchase and process more Pennsylvania surplus food products through the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) Program.

Wildlife Crop Damage

- Opposing hunting on Sundays with the exception of hunting crow, coyote and fox, as well as woodchuck in cultivated fields with express written permission of the landowner.

Labor

- Supporting a requirement that all employees for whom unemployment compensation contributions are made be eligible to receive compensation only from the at-fault employer within the base year.

Right to Farm

- Opposing the ability of municipalities to require permits for the harvesting of any agricultural commodity.

Transportation

- Supporting the inclusion of questions in the Pennsylvania driver's test about safe driving practices in the presence of farm equipment, dump trucks, tractor trailers and other large machinery encountered on public roads, including a question on wide turns by large vehicles.

Solid Waste Management

- Supporting the regulation of food waste used in agricultural facilities for digesters or composting as agricultural waste rather than as municipal waste under the Solid Waste Management Act.

Public Utilities

- Supporting requirements for the control of noxious weeds along roads and other right-of-ways while minimizing drift and off-target movement to adjacent croplands.

State and Federal Issues**Food Safety and Pesticides**

- Supporting the participation of the state Department of Agriculture in the DriftWatch program to mitigate the potential problems as a result of the registration of dicamba and 2,4,D products for use on genetically modified soybeans.

Wetlands

- Supporting a uniform standard for wetland determination by USDA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA.

Flood Insurance

- Supporting the exemption of agricultural buildings from FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program insurance surcharge.

Biotechnology

- Opposing registration requirements for farmers utilizing GMO technology.

Farm Equipment

- Supporting legislation requiring that all farm equipment manufacturers make diagnostic, service and technical information/software available to machinery owners and independent service technicians.

A question was raised as to whether the Association should maintain its opposition to Sunday hunting, especially in areas of the state where deer crop damage is especially severe. Mr. Martin and Joel Kosa moved to approve the recommended additions to the Policy Resolutions as presented. The motion was adopted.

Marketing Committee – It was reported the Committee will be meeting in March.

Research Committee – It was reported that the Association would be funding the multi-state project on protected berry production with \$8,000 and would be contributing \$60,000 to vegetable research projects that would be chosen that evening by the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program Board.

Simply Sweet Onion Committee - It was reported that the trademarked onion program is continuing at about the same acreage and number of growers.

New Business

Constitutional Amendment – The Board of Directors proposed the following amendment to Article IV, Sections 2 and 3 as follows (*Underlined text is to be added. ~~Struck through~~ text is to be deleted.*):

Section 2 *The number of member-elected Directors shall not be less than 15. Their terms shall be staggered with one-third being elected by ballot by the members each year to serve terms of three years. The Board may appoint up to two additional "at large" voting Directors to serve terms of three years. Election procedures and term limits are to be determined and approved by the Directors and stated in the Association's By-Laws. Terms shall begin and end on the dates of the annual meeting. Mid-term vacancies shall be filled by the Directors either at the next meeting of the Directors following the vacancy or by balloting through email, post or telecom, with the person elected serving the remainder of the unexpired term.*

Section 3 *Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors shall be vegetable or small fruit growers. The Directors should reasonably represent the different geographic regions and the different segments of the industry. The Board shall use its "at large" appointments to add diversity to the Board membership.*

Dr. Orzolek and Mr. Shenot moved to approve the amendment to the Constitution. The motion was adopted without dissent.

Memorial for Deceased Members Mr. Miller noted that the following Association members and friends had passed away in 2015 or 2016: Donald Kaelin, Burton Hetherington, and Donald Hollabaugh.

Adjournment There being no further business, It was properly moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was adopted at about 12:30 p.m. The Board of Directors immediately convened to elect officers for 2017.

William Troxell
Executive Secretary

MARKETING

“Are You Crazy?!” Retail Farm Market Bus Tour to the Hudson Valley

Brian Moyer

September 19th was a beautiful day for the 2017 “Are You Crazy?!” Retail Farm Market Tour. This year’s tour was a one day tour to the Hudson Valley in eastern New York State which has many markets and pick your own operations. Mid-September is the start of the pick your own season in New York and the markets were in full swing.

Our first stop was Abma’s Farm in Wyckoff, NJ. The Abma family has been a produce and poultry farm for 85 years. They gave us a hay wagon tour of their farm which includes a large composting operation along with their market and garden center and CSA (Community Supported Agriculture). The Abmas are transitioning the farm to the next generation where everyone has a role to play.

Our next stop was Pennings Farm Market in Warwick, NY where we had lunch. The Pennings Farm operates on 100 acres producing tree fruit such as apples, apricots, nectarines and peaches along with produce. For over 30 years the market has been a retailer of local produce run by Steve and Jill Pennings. In recent years, the market has become a farm-to-table café and beer garden and last year opened up a cidery tap room where the next generation is producing hard cider.

After lunch at Pennings we headed to Soons Orchard in New Hampton, NY. Sharon Soons talked to us about the history of the farm and market which has been there since 1910. The market has been popular for its homemade pies, fruit butters, jams and pick-your-own. Like many orchards of late, Soons has entered into the hard cider business and has created a tasting room that also features New York produced wines and spirits.



Our last stop of the day was at Lawrence Farms Orchards in Newburg. There are three generations working various aspects of the farm which grows fruit and vegetables primarily for pick your own. Located on a hill top, Lawrence Farms Orchards is surrounded by beautiful views of the Hudson Valley. A popular attraction is their “Little Village” which was originally created for the children and grandchildren of the family but in recent years has been opened up for the public to enjoy.

All the farms we visited were gracious and sharing about their history, their business, and their community.

The “Are You Crazy?!” Retail Farm Market Bus Tour is a classroom on wheels where we share information and engage in some peer-to-peer learning so all who attend and gain information that will help strengthen their retail farm market. The 2018 tour will be in central New Jersey sometime in July. Details will follow.

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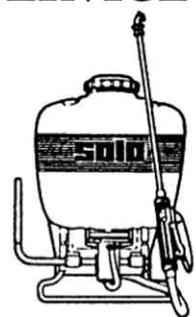
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VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

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Polyethylene plastic mulch has become an essential crop input for specialty crops such as tomatoes, peppers, or berries. The plastic film provides benefits such as: limited soil erosion, soil moisture and temperature control, reduced weed pressure, increased growth rate, higher yield, and extended seasons. Plastic mulch film also works well in conjunction with modern irrigation and fumigation methods, often allowing growers to reduce their use of conventional herbicides. For these reasons, over 100 million pounds of plastic mulch film is purchased, laid, removed, and disposed of each year in the United States. With rising costs associated with its removal and shortages in farm labor, growers are facing seemingly unavoidable time and financial burdens.

Moreover, at the end of a growing cycle, plastic mulch becomes brittle and difficult to completely pull up from the soil. Once the row of film is sliced for proper removal, it's pulled up from the shoulders, taking with it a valuable layer of topsoil beneath. Depending on applicable acreage, growers will spend anywhere from 3 days to 3 weeks or more on the removal of polyethylene film. Plastic remnants are often hidden underneath the soil and revealed during future planting seasons.

Another issue with plastic mulch is that majority of the film used in the U.S. is either sent to landfill or an incinerator. This places a large removal fee on growers because the added tonnage from dried topsoil adhesion increases the disposal cost. With existent premium charges on water and notable minimum wage increases, additional costs such as disposal fees make it difficult to predict the profitability of future growth cycles.

Soil biodegradable mulch films have been developed to replace the use of polyethylene mulch. These films are designed to provide all of the same benefits as standard plastic mulch such as weed reduction, yield increase and soil protection. However, instead of pulling up the mulch at the end of a growth cycle, it can be safely tilled into the soil for remaining degradation to occur and quicker turnaround of field availability.

In order for materials to be labeled "biodegradable," they must be fully digested by microorganisms present in the soil, allowing for biodegradation to occur. The microorganisms digest the material as food for energy and leave behind only water, carbon dioxide and biomass.



Utilizing a conventional triple mulch layer for biodegradable mulch film the same way it's used for laying plastic.



Commercial raspberries grown on the West Coast using black biodegradable mulch film.

Truly biodegradable mulch films are regulated by North American ASTM D6400 or European EN 13432 standards for soil biodegradation or compostability. Certified films are labeled "biodegradable" and "compostable," signifying that they meet industry standards for full biodegradation within a minimum specified timeframe. For ASTM D6400, the film must completely biodegrade within 180 days, and for the EN 13432 standards, the timeframe is 12 weeks.

Mixed messaging with terms such as "degradable" have brought confusion and deception to the marketplace for truly biodegradable films. Products without the

biodegradable or compostable label do not meet industry standards for complete biodegradation. For example, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy has declared "oxo-degradable" plastics—including oxo-degradable mulch film—to be fragmenting into small pieces during degradation, contributing to microplastics pollution. As a result, the foundation recommends banning oxo-degradable plastic from the market until it meets standards such as EN 13432 and ASTM D6400. Various regions have implemented laws protecting consumers from these fabricated marketing messages and misleading products. The state of California for example has instated a law prohibiting oxo-plastics from using the labels biodegradable and compostable.

The University of Tennessee and Washington State University's agricultural departments have recognized the valuable benefits of biodegradable mulch film. The two universities are currently on year 4 of a 5-year study awarded \$14 million by the FDA to test the performance of different biodegradable mulch films and determine any long-term impacts with usage. Results from the study are set to be released in 2018.

Overall, soil biodegradable mulch films may be a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to polyethylene plastic film. With minimum wage increases, costly disposal fees, and non-degradable remnants contaminating the soil, a mulch film with fewer time and budget constraints is ideal. And with biodegradable mulch film becoming increasingly popular, industry regulators should continue emphasizing the importance of product labeling and how it relates to official biodegradation standards.

Mr. Moeller is with Organix Solutions

Lettuce Downy Mildew

Susan B. Scheufele

Downy mildew (*Bremia lactucae*) is a common disease of lettuce in cooler growing environments, where temperatures are low and there are long periods of leaf wetness caused by overnight dew. These conditions are common in late-fall and in cool-season greenhouses. This fall we have seen downy mildew in field lettuce and in a heated winter greenhouse. Symptoms include white sporulation on leaf surfaces, which growers may assume to be powdery mildew. Importantly, downy mildew requires cool weather and leaf wetness while powdery mildew occurs during warm weather and under dry conditions. Downy mildew is caused by an oomycete like late blight and powdery mildew is caused by a fungus, so fungicides used to control one may not control the other. Be sure to properly identify the pathogen or submit a sample to the diagnostic lab.

Symptoms The disease causes leaf yellowing in angular patches, as the spots are veinlimited. On red leaf varieties the initial spots may appear more grayish and water-soaked. Under humid conditions, white crusty sporulation forms when sporangiophores emerge from stomata and produce sporangia in distinct white projections, as with brassica downy mildew. Sporulation usually forms on the underside of the leaf but may also be seen on the upper leaf surface. Later, lesions turn tan or brown and papery as the tissue is killed. Older leaves close to the ground usually are the first to show symptoms.

Crop Injury Downy mildew can reduce yields and quality of the crop. Infected wrapper leaves must be removed at harvest. Infections on the cap leaves or of leaf lettuce may result in leaving heads or whole plantings behind in the field. Downy mildew damaged leaf tissue can be an entry site for secondary rot producing organisms. These rot organisms may compound crop losses in the field, and can also cause losses later when the lettuce is in transit.

Life Cycle Damp, cool conditions and moisture on leaves are required for the pathogen to infect lettuce and cause symptoms to develop. The short-lived sporangia are dispersed by winds. Cultivated lettuce is the main host but it has also been reported on other plants such as artichoke, cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*), and strawflower (*Helichrysum bracteatum*). *Bremia lactucae* is a complex organism, consisting of multiple races (pathotypes), which may affect different cultivars. New races continue to occur as the pathogen changes. Within each pathotype, some isolates have developed a lack of sensitivity to some fungicides. It is not entirely clear whether or not *B.*



Vein-limited angular patches on the upper leaf surface. Photo, S. Scheufele



Grayish, water-soaked lesions on red lettuce. Photo, S. Scheufele



Crusty, white sporulation forms under humid conditions. Photo, S. Scheufele.

lactucae produces more persistent overwintering spores (oospores) in our area, if it is blown in from other growing regions, or is associated with seed.

Cultural Control Planting resistant varieties is the most effective strategy for preventing lettuce downy mildew. However, choosing the right resistant variety necessitates that one knows which strain(s) of the pathogen is present. We are currently conducting experiments to determine the strain(s) present here in Massachusetts but this process may take some time. In the meantime, we are interested in hearing from anyone who has or has had the disease on their farm in the last few seasons to learn more about this disease and to compile a list of varieties which do and do not seem to get disease that growers could use. Please email or call Sue at sscheufele@umext.umass.edu or 413-577-3976 and let me know when you have seen the disease and which varieties were and were not affected.

Other cultural controls may include:

- Destroying crop residues promptly after harvest
- Crop rotation into unaffected fields
- Buying quality seed
- Reducing leaf wetness by using drip irrigation, increasing spacing, orienting rows parallel with wind, controlling weeds, and so on
- Heat and vent greenhouses to remove moist air

Chemical Control Many fungicides are labeled to control downy mildew and can be effective if a spray program is started early, before disease occurs when conditions are favorable. Oomycete-specific materials (e.g. Tanos, Ranman, Curzate) should be mixed with a broad spectrum fungicide (e.g. mancozeb or copper). For organic growers, contact fungicides, e.g. Oxidate or Milstop, on a tight spray schedule (no residual activity) have been found by growers to be most effective. See the [Mid-Atlantic

Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations] for a complete list of registered fungicide. Check labels for pre-harvest intervals.

*Ms. Scheufele is with the Univ. of Massachusetts Vegetable Program. From the **Vegetable Notes for Vegetable Farmers in Massachusetts**, Univ. of Mass. Extension, Vol. 29, No. 26, December 7, 2017.*

GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION

Getting Started Using Natural Enemies in Greenhouses

Leanne Pundt and Tina Smith

Many growers in Massachusetts and Connecticut are successfully using natural enemies (beneficial insects, mites, nematodes and other organisms) as an alternative to pesticides to manage pests in greenhouses. If you are considering using natural enemies on your spring crops, prepare by taking some important steps three months prior to releases. The success of any biological control program relies on patience and a commitment to detail such as sanitation, scouting and record-keeping.

Sanitation and Disinfecting: Greenhouse sanitation and disinfecting are steps that growers

can take now to prepare for the spring growing season. Clean as early as possible to eliminate over-wintering sites for pests to reduce their populations prior to the growing season. Greenhouse pests will over-winter in weeds and protected areas in unheated greenhouses and especially during years with unseasonably warm temperatures. Remember that pests are much easier to prevent than to cure.

Floors: Begin by thoroughly cleaning the floor of soil, organic matter and weeds. Pay particular attention to areas around furnaces or along side walls where small weeds may exist. Install physical weed mat barriers if floors are bare dirt or gravel and repair existing ones. Weed barriers not only prevent weeds, but also make it easier to manage algae. Avoid using stone on top of the weed mat that will trap soil and moisture, creating an ideal environment for weeds, diseases, insects and algae. Fix any low spots or poorly drained areas in the greenhouse that allow water to accumulate.

Benches, Hose Nozzles, Media Mixing Area: Benches, preferably made of wire, should be disinfected and pots, flats and trays should be either new or disinfected. Bench tops and work tables should be made of a non-porous surface such as a laminate that can be easily disinfected. Avoid using bare wood for these tasks. Disinfect hose nozzles, hang hoses to keep ends off the floor and provide a clean and covered area for growing media. Avoid holding plant material and contaminated pots, media or debris in the media mixing area.

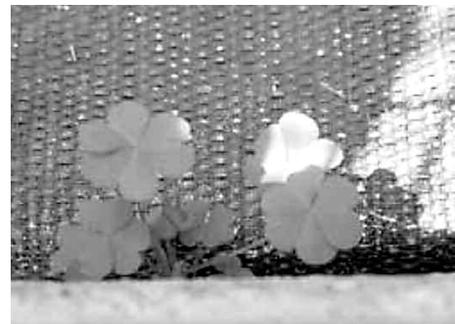
Disinfectants: Disinfect the growing and plant handling areas, and irrigation system. There are several different types of disinfectants that are currently used in the greenhouse for plant pathogen and algae control. They are quaternary ammonium compounds (Green-Shield®, Physan 20®, and Triathlon®), hydrogen dioxide (ZeroTol®, Oxidate®) and chlorine dioxide (Selectocide™). All these products have different properties, so read and follow label directions. Chlorine bleach may be used



Releasing natural enemies in your greenhouse can help reduce pesticide use, but planning and good sanitation are key to effectiveness. Photo, K. Campbell-Nelson

for pots or flats, but is not approved for application to walls, benches or flooring. Alcohol is flammable and therefore not used as a general disinfectant. However, it is useful as a dip or swipe treatment to disinfect propagation tools. If possible, disinfectants should be used on a routine basis both as part of a pre-crop clean-up program and during the cropping cycle.

Organic Options: Organic growers have fewer options for disinfectants. Oxidate® is the only material mentioned above that is currently listed by the Organic Material Review Institute (OMRI), see www.omri.org. Ethyl or isopropyl alcohol is also allowed under the organic standards. Organic growers should always check with their certifying organization before using any material new to their growing practices.



Good sanitation, including removing weeds from inside and around the perimeter of greenhouses, will help to control greenhouse pests. Photo, UMass Floriculture

Outside Weeds: Check weeds around the greenhouse perimeter for aphids and other pests. When weather permits, use horticultural oil on weeds outside, around the greenhouse perimeter to smother over-wintering pests such as aphids. Clean up the weeds in the fall to prevent pests next spring.

Fallow Greenhouses: Finally, pest populations will be reduced significantly with a fallow period of four weeks, but having an empty greenhouse for even two weeks can help.

Pesticide Use: If planning to use biological control, it is important to phase out the use of pest control materials in the organophosphate, carbamate, and pyrethroid chemical classes prior to releasing natural enemies since many materials in these chemical classes can persist for up to four months in the greenhouse. Beneficials should not be released onto plants previously treated with incompatible pesticides because residue will be toxic to the natural enemies. For more information on the compatibility of pest control materials with natural enemies refer to on-line databases, such as Koppert Biological Systems (<https://www.koppert.com>), or Biobest Sustainable Crop Management (<http://www.biobestgroup.com>). Check under "Side Effects." Biobest also has a free smartphone app for pesticide side effects. Information is available on their website.

Plan to release beneficial predators and parasitoids early in the crop before pests build to outbreak levels. Read up on using biologicals from the list of fact sheets (some with videos) on the UMass and UConn Extension websites: http://ipm.uconn.edu/pa_greenhouse and <http://extension.umass.edu/floriculture/fact-sheets/pestmanagement>. Our greenhouse pest guide web-based app is another good resource with options for biological control. See: <http://greenhousepestguide.umass.edu>. If you plan to use banker plants to rear and distribute natural enemies, they also need to be started early.

Contact suppliers/distributors of biological control agents early, before the spring growing season. Most companies offer

(continued on page 27)

GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION

CLASSIFIEDS

Getting Started... (continued from page 26)

assistance either over the phone or through a regional technical representative to get you started and will help with release rates. Other considerations include having someone available when shipments arrive and checking shipments for viability (remember they are living organisms).

Here is a partial list of suppliers or distributors of natural enemies used by greenhouse growers in Connecticut and Massachusetts:

- IPM Laboratories, Inc., Lock NY, www.ipmlabs.com Contact: ipminfo@ipmlabs.com, (315) 497-2063
- Syngenta Bioline, CA, www.syngentabioline.com Contact: info@syngentabioline.com (805) 986-8265 or (978) 851-4346 (Griffin Greenhouse Supply)
- Koppert Inc. MI, www.koppert.com Contact: info@koppertonline.com, 1-800-928-8827
- Biobest Biological Systems. www.biobest.be Contact: info@biobest.ca or info@biobest-usa.com, (519) 322-2178 or (855) 224-6237.
- Beneficial Insectary, CA, www.insectary.com, www.greenmethods.com Contact: info@insectary.com, 1-800-447-3715
- Applied Bionomics, BC Canada, www.appliedbio-nomics.com Contact: brianabl@telus.net, (250) 656-2123

Ms. Pundt is with the Univ. of Connecticut Extension and Ms. Smith was with the Univ. of Massachusetts Extension (retired). From the Vegetable Notes for Vegetable Farmers in Massachusetts, Univ. of Mass. Extension, Vol. 29, No. 26,

December 7, 2017.

Equipment

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Publications

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