

AG ONE Newsletter

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AG ONE is a periodic newsletter on legislation, regulations and agricultural topics produced by Phillips Associates expressly for the Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations (PSCFO), an organization of over 60 organizations sharing an interest in promoting Pennsylvania's Number One industry, Agriculture. Questions or comments should go to PSCFO leadership or to 717/232-9665 or email to xenobun@aol.com. AG ONE Newsletter, PA State Council of Farm Organizations, 26 North Ninth Street, Lemoyne, PA 17043. Material may be cited as long as PSCFO is given appropriate credit.

Dear Reader:

I hope you will attend the Council meeting on Tuesday February 6, the day Governor Tom Wolfe presents his State Budget to the General Assembly. The Council agenda includes remarks by PA Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding describing PDA priorities and the Budget for FY 2018-19, a conversation with Executive Directors of the House and Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committees, and informal presentations to update you on the agriculture institutions of higher learning. And of course, it is our Annual Meeting, followed by the Cornucopia: A Taste of Pennsylvania Legislative Reception – all at the State Capitol! Regards, *Vince Phillips*

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RETURNS TO HARRISBURG

The PA General Assembly has resumed work in the New Year. Advancing the spring agenda were two high-profile House Republican priorities: a work requirement for non-disabled Medicaid recipients and regulatory reforms per a report issued by the Majority Chair of the House State Government Committee Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler). *Note that a principal target of the State Government Committee report is the Susquehanna River Basin Commission.* Also on the House side, the House Appropriations Committee is continuing its hearings with various state agencies on the Special Funds they control. Underlying these hearings is the conviction shared by many House Republicans that PA's Special Funds could be utilized to help balance the State Budget instead of having tax increases or additional borrowing by the state.

On the Senate agenda for third consideration (passage) is Senate Bill 792 (Alloway-R-Franklin) relating to application of turf grass fertilizer. Another Alloway bill on third consideration is Senate Bill 799. It seeks to replace the current municipalities' storm sewer systems (MS4s) compliance with Chesapeake Bay nutrient reduction mandates with a private sector competitive bidding program. Payment would come after Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) certifies nutrient reduction.

LEGISLATOR UPDATES

- Filling the term of her late husband Dan McNeill, Jeanne McNeill (D-Lehigh) was sworn in as Representative from the 133th district on January 2, 2018. She was appointed to serve on House Environmental Resources & Energy, Game & Fisheries, Labor & Industry, and Local Government Committees.
- Rep. Pam Snyder (D-Greene/Fayette/Washington) is the newest Democratic member of the House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee. She, along with Republican Kristin Phillips-Hill (York) sponsored four bills targeting expansion of Broadband access for rural Pennsylvanians. Rep. Phillips-Hill spoke at a Farm Show panel to which the video link follows: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0FPvXdYuP4&feature=youtu.be>

PVGA OFFERS FUTURE OF AGRITOURISM EVENT

Among programs offered by the PA Vegetable Growers' Association at its annual conference in Hershey is a special program January 30 on the impact municipalities are having on agritourism. Examined are conflicts between local ordinances and PA laws protecting normal farming activities: The Right to Farm Act; Agricultural Area Security Law; Municipalities Planning Code; Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act (Clean and Green); Farmland Preservation / Conservation Easement programs. Presenting will be Extension's John Berry and former Deputy Attorney General Susan Bucknam. Details: John Berry, johnberry@psu.edu, 610.554.2561 (*Thanks to January 20, 2018 PVGA Update newsletter*)

FEBRUARY FSMA WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED

The Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations (PSCFO) in cooperation with the PA Department of Agriculture will be holding community service seminars on February 26, 2018 in Windsor (York County) and March 1, 2018, in Bedford to inform farmers/agriculture producers about their compliance requirements under the federal Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Material is directed at vegetable/produce growers. It will also cover elements of a farm risk management plan which includes food safety, Crop Insurance, and information on what to ask an insurance agent to make sure that farmers' insurance needs are met. These two workshops mark the third and fourth of the series presented by the PA Department of Agriculture and the PA State Council of Farm Organizations. The others were held in Tamaqua (Schuylkill County) and Kutztown (Berks County). For more information, please contact Vince Phillips at PSCFO 717-232-9665, [xenobun@aol.com](mailto: xenobun@aol.com) or Lynn Herman at 814-880-2272, [lherman77@comcast.net](mailto: lherman77@comcast.net).

REGULATORY NOTE: Comments on DEP proposed changes to the General Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (PAG-12) are due by February 20, 2018. Among other changes would be using a crop year October 1 – September 30 instead of a calendar year. Details: <https://pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol48/48-3/115.html>

MORE SCHOLARSHIPS

- **(Due February 1)** America's Farmers Grow Ag Leaders program sponsored by the Monsanto Fund is accepting applications from those 23 years of age or younger who are enrolled in trade schools or college. Details: www.GrowAgLeaders.com
- PA Association of Environmental Professionals is offering scholarships to students pursuing an environmental science or related major degree. **(Due February 5)** Details: Kristin Aiosa kaiosa@jmt.com
- PA Vegetable Growers Association Rudolph Grob Memorial Scholarship applicants must be enrolled in at least a two-year program and be child or grandchild to a PVGA member. **(Due March 31)** Details: 717-694-3596 <https://www.pvga.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/g-ldr-rec-scholarship-application-17.pdf>
- Open to high school seniors living in Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Wayne and Pike Counties who will major in fish, game or wildlife management, forestry, environmental planning and related fields is a scholarship offered by the Northeast PA Audubon Society. **(Due April 30)** Details: <http://www.nepaaudubon.org/?s=college+scholarships>
- Angus Foundation is offering scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students. Applicants must have an active membership in the American Angus Association. **(Due May 1)** Details: Milford Jenkins 816-383-5100; mjenkins@angusfoundation.org