



Pennsylvania State Grange

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2025 PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANGE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2025-2026 STATE BUDGET

The Pennsylvania State Grange has been a vocal advocate for Agriculture line items in the state spending plan, and will continue to do so in 2025. Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State Extension, and the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine funding line items are a priority for the Grange.

PROPERTY TAXES

Legislation passed on December 14, 2023 with language inserted into the fiscal code that exempts ALL Grange Halls from property taxes. The State Grange continues to work to ensure it is implemented in all counties. While many counties have given swift approval for the exemption, others have pushed back. The Grange strongly advocates for ALL counties to recognize exemption.

SUNDAY HUNTING

The Pennsylvania State Grange strongly opposes a further expansion of Sunday Hunting. When the General Assembly passed expanded hunting in 2019, the Grange remained steadfast against the legislation up until passage.

Sunday hunting is once again on the forefront of state legislators' minds with two bills having been debated in the 2023-24 session. The Pennsylvania State Grange remained opposed while other agricultural organizations relented, and supported the expansion. The Grange reaffirmed this opposition at their state convention in October 2024, and will continue to oppose any additional expansion of Sunday Hunting

DAIRY

The Pennsylvania State Grange is invested in supporting the Dairy Industry in Pennsylvania. Grange members have repeatedly testified to the PA Milk Board in support of maintaining the current over order premium until a better program can be implemented.

The Grange is committed to collaborating with other stakeholders to work towards a dairy policy that will benefit the dairy industry in Pennsylvania and looks forward to continuing meaningful dialogue to that end.

In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity—Grange Motto

Pennsylvania State Grange strongly supports the Center for Dairy Excellence and efforts to expand processing of dairy products in the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania State Grange advocates that whole milk be served in school meal programs and that imposters be prevented from using the word ‘milk’ to identify their product. We support Dairy Keystone Opportunity Zones to attract business investment in regional dairy processing facilities to reduce fluid milk transportation costs and get farmers more over-order premium dollars because their milk is processed in-state. In addition, the Pennsylvania State Grange was chosen as a member of the PA Dairy Future Commission established by Act 66 of 2019, which issued a comprehensive list of policy options for the Dairy Industry in 2020.

Other dairy issues include: supporting resolutions that direct the FDA to enforce their rule about mislabeling of milk; backing legislation which exempts milk haulers from Interstate traffic prohibitions when there is a weather emergency – NOTE: This was vetoed by Governor Wolf in the 2019-20 session

The Grange advocated for legislation which the General Assembly passed in 2021 that makes Pennsylvania milk more competitive in the U.S. market (lab-evidenced shelf life). This legislation was a recommendation of the Dairy Futures Commission. Grange saw success of this advocacy when SB 434 was signed into law that will extend milk’s sell by date.

The Grange will be partnering with a coalition of stakeholders in 2025 to work on policy making a fairer system for all dairy farmers.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION and CAREERS

Pennsylvania State Grange continues to lobby for support of agricultural education and agricultural careers. We want to ensure that the Dept. of Education financially supports the Commission for Agricultural Education Excellence financially and that any legislation creating inter-agency job-finding resources have the PA Department of Agriculture as a formal member. To this end, the Pennsylvania State Grange is participating in a series of calls and workshops with both the PA Department of Agriculture as well as PA Department of Labor & Industry to not only identify needs but to implement practical workforce development. \

The Grange met with Penn State Extension in December of 2024 to discuss partnership in workforce development.

In addition, the Grange supports programs that give financial relief from student loan debt through forgiveness for students who study agriculture and enter agricultural fields

BROADBAND: Cell Phone and Internet Access to High-Speed Broadband

This has been the top legislative priority of the Pennsylvania State Grange for many years.

Broadband is critical to rural Pennsylvania – in educating our kids, enabling Telemedicine to be effective, farmers being more efficient agricultural producers, and promoting economic growth by giving prospective employers the technology they need in order to invest in rural PA.

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The Grange led the efforts to secure universal access to high-speed Broadband. Sadly, the COVID-19 crisis starkly demonstrated how devastating it is to be on the wrong side of the Digital Divide. If there was a silver lining, it was that legislators became more aware of the need. Several developments have occurred legislatively, and PA State Grange was there.

The Pennsylvania State Grange saw a big success to its advocacy on Broadband when HB2071 establishing a Broadband authority passed the General Assembly and signed by the Governor in December of 2021.

The Pennsylvania State Grange sits on the Outreach and Education Subcommittee on the Broadband Authority.

SOLAR

The Pennsylvania State Grange has been the number one organization at the forefront of Large-Scale Solar facilities. Beginning at the Farm Show, the Grange held a panel on the issues surrounding solar. The Grange has been asked to help develop policy and legislation in the Capitol surrounding the development of Commercial Solar operations and has been asked to be on an advisory board with Tom Murphy of Penn State to study the issue.

The Grange looks to work with the General Assembly in 2025 to become more invested in land use issues involving solar.

AGING

PA State Grange requests the state of Pennsylvania to increase the funding for the Area Agency on Aging, Senior Action Centers and Meal programs such as “Meals on Wheels” to cover their costs of operation.

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF PENNSYLVANIA AGRICULTURAL LAND

In October of 2023, the Pennsylvania State Grange identified the need to study the foreign ownership of prime farmland in Pennsylvania. To that end, the Grange is partnering with members of the General Assembly in 2025 to work on legislation to address concerns of ownership.

HEALTH FOR RURAL PA

Internet medical care (Telemedicine) is crucial to rural residents needing access to fewer medical facilities and doctors. This allows health care providers to monitor conditions, observe symptoms, and direct treatment. Pennsylvania State Grange supports Telemedicine but emphasizes that access to high-speed Broadband makes it work.

Pennsylvania State Grange was happy to see legislation by Sen. Vogel pass which Grange supported to require insurance companies to cover telehealth visits. The Grange will continue to support all aspects of telehealth.

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AGRITOURISM LIABILITY

Pennsylvania State Grange worked hard to help legislators understand the urgent need for many farmers, particularly dairy farmers, to diversify income. Rep. Barb Gleim's HB 101 was passed by the Pennsylvania House and Senate and signed into law as Act 27 of 2021. Agri-tourism and Agri-entertainment are promising but the fear of frivolous lawsuits held farmers back.

The Grange continues to work on issues surrounding the law and in addition, is working with other groups and the Department of Agriculture on its interpretation of the law as it relates to hayrides.

EMMINENT DOMAIN. The Pennsylvania State Grange lobbies to curb the use of eminent domain to take farmland.

HUNGER. The Grange works with other agricultural groups to increase State Budget funding for the PA Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) which integrates fresh farm products into food banks.

MARCELLUS SHALE ROYALTIES

Pennsylvania State Grange urges adoption of legislation to make sure property owners receive the full Marcellus Shale Gas royalties that are owed them per state law.

RIGHT TO FARM. The Grange opposes municipality efforts to prevent or restrict normal farming practices.

TRANSPARENCY. The Grange works to enhance the people's right to know by working to preserve the state mandate that municipalities must advertise in newspapers re legal notices.

TRANSPORTATION. The Grange supported legislation banning hand held devices banned while driving and was pleased to see legislation passed in 2024.

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