



# Centre County Farm Bureau *Newsletter*

## *From the Desk of the President C. Allen Ishler*

It has been interesting spring, wet weather delaying crops being planted and getting hay made between the showers. All and all a typical Centre County spring!

We have a variety of activities coming up for your county farm bureau this summer. Please plan to step up help out and get involved. Your board members appreciate any help you can give.

First and for most please remember the summer picnic 7pm July 9, 2015 at the Lions Club Park in Centre Hall. Remember to bring donations to the auction to help support our Ag in the Classroom teacher education initiative. Also please bring a covered dish or dessert to share. RSVP is mandatory so we can have a count to order enough of chicken for those attending. To make reservations please contact either Evalene Ishler (422-8776) or Cinda Corl (308-2455) by Monday, June 29th, 2015.

Next, our golf tournament is up and running for August 17, 2015. Again we'll need some member help with this event. You don't need to know a thing about golf to help out. Please contact any one the board members to sign up to help. Andy Bater (917) 270-5193 is chairman of the event and would like to hear from you if you can provide any assistance. Some jobs will only require an hour or 2 of your time.

We will be doing the policy development exercise at the picnic again this year. This effort is very helpful to get information for the board when establishing policy for the year. Please come prepared to share your issues. Additionally, don't forget the Policy Development meeting at the Grange Fair Office Tuesday September 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the October dinner meeting. We will be at the New Hope Church, Spring Mills. Please plan to attend. We will begin at 7pm Thursday October 8, 2015. I hope to see all of you there.

Thank You for your continued support of your Centre County Farm Bureau. You have built a successful organization. With your continued support we will continue to grow. Please support our local Allied Industries. They always support our efforts.

Till we meet again, *Allen*

### **Flawed Water Rule Finalized**

The Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved their flawed "waters of the U.S." rule, (WOTUS) which significantly expands federal authority under the Clean Water Act. The move comes months after receiving thousands of comments from farmers and state and local governments expressing grave concern over the rule. Now, miles of small creeks, streams, ditches and dry land could fall under federal jurisdiction—land features that were previously subject to state and local oversight. Farm Bureau is reviewing the WOTUS rule, but doubts either agency addressed farmers' significant concerns about the rule.

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“The process used to produce this rule was flawed. The EPA’s proposal transgressed clear legal boundaries set for it by Congress and the Courts and dealt more with regulating land use than protecting our nation’s valuable water resources,” said American Farm Bureau Federation President Bob Stallman. “EPA’s decision to mount an aggressive advocacy campaign during the comment period has tainted what should have been an open and thoughtful deliberative process.”

Farm Bureau is also working with members on Congress on legislation to halt the agencies’ ability to enforce the rule. Recently, the House of Representatives passed the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act, sponsored by Rep. Bill Shuster, which would prevent the WOTUS rule from moving forward. The Senate is also considering similar legislation.

## Property Tax Reform Takes Significant Step Forward

Attempts to reform how school districts fund public education won a significant victory this month as the Pennsylvania House of Representatives voted for a measure to reduce property taxes. House members voted 109 to 86 in a bipartisan show of support to shift some of the school funding burden away from property taxes and instead use a mixture of personal income and sales tax. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

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House members supported a provision, introduced by Rep. Stan Saylor, a York County Republican, which calls for a dollar-for-dollar shift in property taxes with other funding sources. The provision was attached as an amendment to House Bill 504, which calls for an increase in sales tax exemption for timber operations. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau supported both the Saylor amendment and House Bill 504. PFB President Rick Ebert thanked lawmakers for addressing property tax reform, an issue that our organization has supported for decades.

“The legislation is a fair and equitable way to finance Pennsylvania’s public schools, because every dollar raised by increases in personal income taxes and the state sales tax would be used to provide property tax relief for landowners,” said PFB President Rick Ebert.

House Bill 504 will bring \$5 billion for property tax relief, or a 20-30 percent reduction in taxes depending on the school district, according to lawmakers. To achieve the reduction, the bill calls for increasing personal income taxes to 3.7 percent from its current 3.07 percent and increasing sales taxes to 7 percent from 6 percent. Current sales tax exemptions would remain. Personal income taxes would be used to reduce school district millage rates while sales taxes would be put to the homestead/farmstead exemptions. Saylor said the legislation has a built in mechanism to curtail future property tax increases. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau continues to support and advocate for the total elimination of property taxes. Farmers, many of whom are the largest taxpayers in a given school district, pay a disproportionate share of taxes, because they need land to sustain their operations. That’s why House Bill 504 is a good step forward, Ebert said.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has created a new website detailing information about the property tax reform at [www.pfb.com/propertytaxreform](http://www.pfb.com/propertytaxreform). At the site, visits can find information supplied by the House Finance Committee on how taxpayers in each school district might benefit from the property tax relief proposed in the House bill.

## We are Proud to Offer These Fine Services for Members!

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- Support agriculture and preservation of the farm
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- Promote career opportunities in agriculture

*Your generous donations help us toward our goal of creating a common stewardship of the economy of agriculture. Please see below to make a donation.*

\* May not be available in all areas.

## **Pennsylvania Farm Bureau**



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Farm Bureau Services and benefits are only offered to current FB members. Codes, websites and/or phone numbers listed must be used to qualify for discounts.

## Don't Forget to RSVP for the Summer Picnic by June 29<sup>th</sup>

Evalene Ishler 422-8776 or Cinda Corl 238-8742

### **Board of Directors 2015**

Allen Ishler, President	814-422-8224
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Judith Meyer, State College	234 – 4500
Alan Anderson, State College	355-5486
Dian Min Jiang, State College	346-7293

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

June 11<sup>th</sup> – State Issues Forum

June 12<sup>th</sup> – Ag in the Classroom Applications Due

June 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> – FACE Conference

June 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> – Membership Chair Conference

**July 9<sup>th</sup> – Summer Picnic**

**August 17<sup>th</sup> – Centre County PFB Golf Tournament**

**September 8<sup>th</sup> – Policy Development Meeting 7pm**

**October 8<sup>th</sup> – Fall Meeting Banquet 7pm**