



# Centre County Farm Bureau *Newsletter*

*From the Desk of the President and Vice-President  
C. Allen Ishler and Bethany Coursen*

As spring quickly approaches, your Board of Directors has been busy determining the goals and vision for the county Bureau for the year ahead. As you may know, the Centre County Farm Bureau (CCFB) has a yearly obligation to financially assist in the maintenance and staffing of the state run Mobile Ag Education Science Lab program (<https://www.pfb.com/mobile-ag-labs/mobile-ag-ed-science-labs>). These labs have provided agricultural education to nearly 900,000 students in the past 12 years, students who may not have otherwise had access or exposure to agriculture in their typical educational settings. In addition to the Mobile Ag Ed Science Labs, CCFB has also supported scholarships, Collegiate Farm Bureau, PSU Block and Bridle, The FARMtastic Book program, F.A.C.E. Leadership Conference and Ag in the Classroom programs. The auction held at our summer picnic along with our county golf tournament has helped us to meet those obligations for the last few years.

While the auction and golf tournament have been successful, this year we are attempting to do something new that we hope will get more of our membership involved and engaged in the process. This year, instead of the golf tournament and in addition to the auction, we have organized a ticket raffle built upon generous donations from individuals and businesses within our community. Included with your newsletter, you will find 4 raffle tickets, which we are asking all members to sell. Information and instructions are included on the tickets. The drawing will be held at our annual summer picnic at the Lion's Club in Centre Hall on July 12, 2016. While you do not need to be present to win, we encourage all members to join us for a fun evening for a great cause! Keep your eye out for our next newsletter which will include details about the picnic and how and when to RSVP.

If you are interested/able to sell more than the 4 raffle tickets that we sent to you, additional tickets are available upon request (contact [centrecountyfb@gmail.com](mailto:centrecountyfb@gmail.com)), from any of the Directors (see backside of newsletter for list and contact info) or they can be picked up at our annual spring banquet which will be held April 7, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the New Hope Church in Spring Mills. To RSVP for the spring banquet, call Evalene Ishler at 814-422-8776 or Cinda Corl at 814-238-8742 by March 28<sup>th</sup>. It is our hope that everyone gets engaged in this raffle. Remember, the more tickets sold, the more funds we will have available for promoting agriculture within our county and state!

Beyond the ticket raffle, we have other news and updates to share. We are happy to report that we were able to sponsor the Block and Bridle and Collegiate Cattlewomen clubs on campus again this year with their effort to educate students on the benefits of keeping animal protein in their diet. As an alternative to the annual "Meat Out" day on campus the clubs host a "Meat In" day for the students. In addition to this, we also support their Annual Blood Drive, which with cooperation and collaboration from the local Red Cross has been one of the largest annual one-day blood drives on campus.

Lastly, this is the time of year when Farm Bureau is starting to think about policy development, which is one of our primary focuses as an organization. If any member has a policy issue they would like Farm Bureau to bring forward or support, please contact me, or one of the other Directors, with your ideas.

I would like to thank our newly appointed Vice-President, Bethany Coursen with helping me write the President's Letter this month and all of the Directors for their continued work and support on the upcoming raffle and our other projects in the coming months. I look forward to seeing you at the Spring Banquet.

Until we meet again,

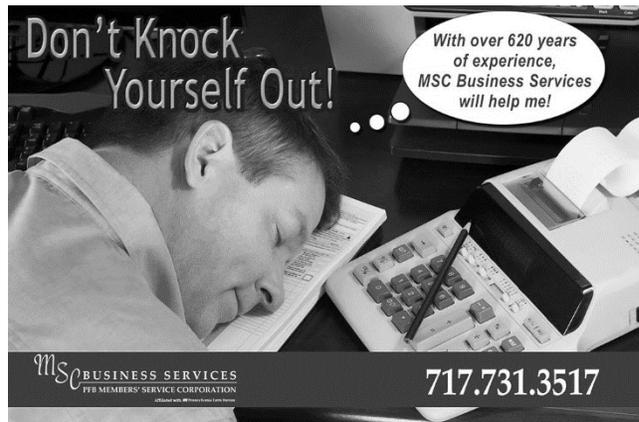
*Allen*

## Ag Plastics Recycling Operation in Centre County

Article by Laura Young

Plastics use in agriculture is continually on the rise due to the durability, flexibility and low cost of the material and are used in a variety of ways with new applications constantly surfacing. Some examples of plastics used in agriculture include: greenhouse covers, crop mulching, irrigation drip lines and wrapping hay. Other materials that are plastics-based but may be less obvious examples are bale twine, feedbags and netwrap. While these options decrease costs and assist with production, they also create a waste stream which requires management. According to a survey conducted by Penn State Cooperative Extension, 60% of farmers indicated that ag plastics were "usually burned, used or buried on the farm". A better option than burning or burying exists, which is recycling and Centre County farmers and businesses are fortunate in that they have a nearby ag plastics recycling option. S&S Plastic Recovery, located on 129 Broad Street, Rebersburg, PA and run by the Sam Esh Family, including his son Shem, handles such plastics. In a conversation with Sam recently, he shared some information about how his business works and some basic "need to know" items.

The basic flow of operations is simple. Individuals drop plastic off at his business, there is no charge for the service and no payment is made for dropping off plastic. Dropped off films get sorted and baled. Bales are loaded onto shipping containers and this process continues until the shipping container is full (representing about 44,000lbs). Sam and his son work with brokers, with whom he discusses market value and prices until a decision is made on where to send the plastics. The broker arrives and picks up the shipping container. While Sam doesn't always know where the plastics are headed or how they are being used, he knows that the plastics are often or at least sometimes ending up in China. While it's good they are being used, he would love to see the process stay closer to home. An exciting development surfaced recently when a business from the state of Indiana contacted Sam.



There, they are working to set up an ag plastics recycling process that will handle the entire process from cleaning to recycling. If this unfolds the way he hopes, the plastics he gathers will stay “closer to home” reducing a significant amount of transport and cost in the process. Sam said that he and his family have been in this business for about 10 years and they are at a point where they are moving 3-4 shipping containers per year (that’s 176,000 lbs of plastic!)

Sounds simple, right? It is, but there are other things to consider that help the operation run smoothly. Sam indicated that “clean and dry plastics are the ideal”, but he understands that is not always feasible. Sam said, “we know there will always be some debris on the plastics, but the cleaner the better”. Once received, Sam and his son sort the plastics by type. Once sorted, a baler is used to compact the plastics, which helps to condense the load and to extract moisture. Sam said that it “gets more complicated when the plastics are dirty and wet and the dirt is holding onto the moisture”. The biggest issue he has seen over the years specifically relates to ag plastics. He said that he has observed farmers driving skid loaders across large areas to pick up the plastics and in the process the plastics are getting dragged through mud or manure. In these cases, the plastics become too contaminated to recycle and disposal on Sam’s part is required, which costs money. To help keep this resource in our County available and to keep costs low enough for Sam and his son to continue this operation, it is important for farmers and businesses to be mindful of these issues.

With Sam’s help, we made a list of the plastics that can be recycled at his business. **Sam indicated that people who have never recycled with him before must call and leave a message with contact information (call 814 349 8646 – option #5).** Sam or his son will call back and discuss your plastics drop off to make sure it’s the right kind of plastic and that you know where to take it. Remember, “clean and dry plastics are the ideal”.

<b>S&amp;S Plastic Recovery in Rebersburg, PA - Call for drop-off or questions - 814 349 8646</b>	
<b>Plastics Recyclable at S&amp;S</b>	<b>Plastics NOT Recyclable at S&amp;S</b>
White bail wrap Ag bag plastic Feedbags Plastic twine Shrink wrap Silo Liners Greenhouse plastic/film Netwrap off of hay bales	Plant pots and trays from greenhouse operations Hard plastics (e.g., buckets, crates, pipes, etc.) Household plastics (e.g., saran, ziplocks, etc.)  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contact the Centre County Transfer Station for other options - (814) 238-7005</b></p>

Reference: <http://extension.psu.edu/publications/c-8>.

## **Farmers Need to Lend Their Voices to Extension Budget Mess**

Without swift action, Penn State Extension offices across the state could close their doors. "This is very real. The unthinkable could happen from inaction at this point," said Richard Roush, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State. "Someone has to take assertive action to stop this train wreck from occurring. Inaction will lead to disaster." Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is calling on our members to contact their elected officials including Gov. Tom Wolf to urge restoration of funding to Penn State Cooperative Extension before the agency is forced to take drastic steps. Gov. Wolf used his

line-item veto power late last year to eliminate funding to numerous agriculture programs in a budget lawmakers presented just before Christmas. Agriculture was hard hit by the line-item veto, including the elimination of \$50 million in funding approved by the General Assembly to Penn State for Extension and Research. Eliminating state funding to Penn State Extension-which uses that money to secure \$90 million in federal and local support-puts the future of Extension in jeopardy. Farmers can use PFB's ActNow tool to contact their state lawmakers and Gov. Wolf and tell them to support restoration of agriculture funding. **Visit <https://www.pfb.com/policy-pfb/take-action-resources/actnow>** to send a personalized message to your lawmaker. Pennsylvania agriculture would be hard hit without the continued support of Penn State Extension.

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Email: [FMS@pfb.com](mailto:FMS@pfb.com)      [www.msCBS.net](http://www.msCBS.net)

## Farm Bureau Encourages All Farmers in Bay Watershed to Complete BMP Survey

Penn State is distributing a survey aimed at counting the best management practices that Pennsylvania farmers have put in place on farms in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has partnered with Penn State and other state agencies in developing the survey and the process for handling of the data collected through the survey. Farmers will be asked to provide information on the types of

BMPs used on their farm, such as cover crops or no-till planting. "We need all farmers in the bay watershed to take part in this survey and provide information on what they are doing to manage the soil and nutrients on their farm," said PFB President Rick Ebert. Penn State is sending out letters encouraging farmers to participate in the survey and directing them to the website <http://src.survey.psu.edu/farmbmp/>. Each letter has a five-digit code that farmers must use to complete the survey. The survey is intended for farmers operating within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Farmers who have not yet completed the electronic survey will likely soon receive a copy in the mail. For more information, and to view a video of the survey, visit [www.pfb.com/pennstatesurvey](http://www.pfb.com/pennstatesurvey).

**Remember to RSVP for the spring banquet, call Evalene Ishler at 814-422-8776 or Cinda Corl at 814-238-8742 by March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**Happy Easter from your Centre County PFB Board of Directors**

**Board of Directors 2015-2016**

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Judith Meyer, State College	234 – 4500
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Dian Min Jiang, State College	346-7293

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- April 7<sup>th</sup>: Spring Meeting at New Hope Church
- July 12<sup>th</sup>: Summer Picnic at Centre Hall Lions Club – Raffle Drawing & Auction
- October 11<sup>th</sup>: Fall Meeting at New Hope Church