

AG ISSUES UPDATE

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Farm Bureau updates

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Applauds Agriculture's Inclusion in 2022-23 State Budget

CAMP HILL – Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is pleased that the 2022-23 state budget will institute a program for conservation funding on farms, with \$220 million in funding to create the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) to the clean streams fund, aimed at reducing nutrient and sediment runoff, which comes as a huge victory for farmers as PFB's biggest legislative ask of the year.

While information regarding how the funds will be administered to county conservation districts is not yet available, a burden will be lifted off a lot of farmers that can now implement their best land management practices on their properties to keep the environmental impacts to a minimum.

As a whole, conservation districts will receive an increase of \$6.8 million, with \$5 million coming from the Department of Environmental Protection and the other \$1.8 million coming through the Department of Agriculture.

The 2022-23 state budget also notably includes \$32 million to help combat avian influenza, with \$25 million of the funding coming in the form of indemnity payments to the impacted farmers. An additional \$6 million is available to increase laboratory surveillance activities while another \$1 million was allocated for additional staffing for the Department of Agriculture.

An increase of funds to the Animal Health and Diagnostic Commission was also a part of the 2022-23 budget, which is a win for Pennsylvania farmers. When the original budget proposal was rolled out the program was essentially going to be cut, but the final iteration of the budget saw the commission reinstated with an increase in funding.

Agricultural research and extension were given an increase of five percent, which is just shy of \$3 million worth of funding for the 2022-23 year.

The budget also reinstates a \$5 million general fund appropriation for the Farm Show, reducing the reliance on Race Horse Development Fund dollars. The budget increases funding for the State Food Purchase Program by \$2 million as well, to provide emergency food assistance and purchase surplus agricultural products.

Overall, the Department of Agriculture will see just shy of a 30 percent increase this year in funding.

Other Source Updates

H-2A and H-2B Services Announce Merger

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — másLabor, the nation's leading provider of comprehensive services for employers participating in the H-2A and H-2B nonimmigrant visa programs, has announced a merger with AgWorks H2, LLC ("AgWorks") a Georgia-based H-2A and H-2B consulting firm that ranks among the nation's top providers.

"AgWorks has a proven success model, with a deep compliance focus and highly knowledgeable leadership," said Edward Silva, CEO of másLabor, who recently purchased másLabor in July 2021. "But as we and the market continue to evolve and grow, there are clear benefits to integration, shared systems and knowledge, and more active collaboration."

One such benefit is the economy of scale. Together, the two companies obtain approvals for their clients to employ over 60,000 foreign workers per year – more than the next three largest service providers combined. This gives the companies unique insight into issues faced by clients in every geography and industry.

Under the new structure, AgWorks will expand its service offerings to align with those offered by másLabor, including assistance with domestic job applicants, comprehensive audit services, and other visa categories. The companies will also consolidate their compliance teams to provide clients with expertise and best practices unrivaled in the industry. Finally, integration also comes with a significant investment in technology to provide clients with a more efficient and effective process throughout. – *Morning Ag Clips July 28th, 2022*

International Trade : International Trade Commission Votes Against Fertilizer Ingredient Tariffs.

On July 18, 2022, The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) voted against imposing tariffs on urea ammonium nitrate imports from Russia, Trinidad, and Tobago based upon alleged price-dumping. The USITC determined that the import of urea ammonium nitrate from these countries does not injure or threaten U.S. industry, and therefore tariffs are not necessary. According to the USITC, 14% of UAN consumed in the U.S. in 2021 for fertilizer manufacturing was imported by the three countries at issue, valued at \$700 million. Its use was articulated by USITC as follows: "Urea ammonium nitrate solutions (UAN) are a class of nitrogen fertilizers primarily composed of urea, ammonium nitrate, and water. The production of UAN uses natural gas as the primary input to manufacture ammonia, which is subsequently and separately transformed into urea and ammonium nitrate. These two kinds of nitrogen fertilizers are then mixed in roughly equal amounts with water to yield a solution with 28-32 percent nitrogen content. Urea and ammonium nitrate provide crop nutrition at different stages of plant growth. As a liquid, UAN can easily be blended with other fertilizers and pesticides during application." - *Penn State Agricultural Law Weekly review, July 22nd, 2022*