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January 11, 2023

Agriculture Secretary, Innovators Celebrate Agriculture's Strong Roots, Remarkable Progress During 2023 Farm Show Public Officials Day

Harrisburg, PA – Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding was joined by Governor-elect Josh Shapiro today to address hundreds at the 2023 Farm Show Public Officials Day luncheon. At the event, innovators in agriculture shared their stories of progress in Pennsylvania's agriculture and food industry under the Wolf Administration.

"This week we're celebrating the strong, healthy roots and remarkable progress we have made over the past eight years and the growth that the Wolf Administration's investments continue to feed," said Redding. "I have been honored and humbled to be part of an administration that has heard the voices of Pennsylvanians and responded, making agriculture and food security central priorities from day one."

The annual event brings local and federal policy makers together for a celebration of Pennsylvania's \$132.5 billion agriculture industry with the organizations and leaders who represent every sector and facet of the industry that impacts all of our lives.

Featured storytellers during the program included:

- Penn State University President Dr. Neeli Bendapudi, leader of the state's land grant institution and a key partner with the department and the industry in advancing animal, human, plant, and environment health and educating ag businesses, homeowners, and the agriculture leaders of tomorrow.
- Hayley and Stephanie Painter, co-owners of the PA Preferred® Painterland Sisters, who are bringing their fourth-generation organic dairy directly to consumers and taking their Tioga County family farm's legacy and innovating to meet demand and grow their bottom line. The family business exemplifies the roots of the PA Preferred Organic initiative which was created under the PA Farm Bill to grow market opportunities for Pennsylvania farmers and keep PA a national leader in organic production.
- Julie Keene of PA Preferred Flinchbaugh Orchard and Farm Market, where the 2023 Farm Show theme was announced, is a perfect example of the strong roots and progressive conservation practices that feed a thriving business today and fuel the progress of tomorrow. The family's environmental stewardship and climate-smart practices have won them national recognition with the prestigious [2022 Leopold Award for Conservation](#), which was announced during this year's PA Farm Show.

- Garry Gilliam, founder and CEO of The Bridge, who is working to strengthen food access in urban areas. The Bridge, [a featured stop on last summer's tour of urban agriculture innovation](#), strives to bridge the gaps created by systematic inequities and empowers people through cooperation, collaboration, and community. The Bridge received a \$4 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant to create The JEDII Justice, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Center, which will include a rooftop garden, educational programming, and a community kitchen and fresh foods cafe.

For more information about progress in Pennsylvania agriculture, visit agriculture.pa.gov.

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