



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro Discusses Budget Investments in Pennsylvania Agriculture & Organics at Flinchbaugh's Orchard and Farm Market in York County

Governor Shapiro's budget includes \$1 million for the creation of an Organic Center for Excellence to continue the Commonwealth's tradition of leadership in organic agriculture.





Hellam, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Department of Agriculture Acting Secretary Russell Redding** toured Flinchbaugh's Orchard and Farm Market in Hellam, highlighting the Governor's plans to make critical investments in the future of Pennsylvania agriculture through funding to protect valuable farmland, further agricultural emergency preparedness and response, and expand organic farming through the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania's agriculture sector is a major economic driver for the Commonwealth, contributing \$132 billion a year to the economy and making up 1 in 10 jobs in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is also third in the nation for organic sales, with more than \$1 billion in sales last year and more than 1,100 certified organic farms across the Commonwealth – and [Governor Shapiro's budget](#) proposed a \$1 million investment for the creation of a new Organic Center of Excellence to build on Pennsylvania's history of organic leadership

"There is a direct connection between our farmers' hard work and the food on our kitchen tables and in our stores – and my budget includes investments that will support Pennsylvania farmers all across the Commonwealth," **said Governor Josh Shapiro**. "I believe Pennsylvania can be the top organic farming state in the nation, but we need to give our farmers the resources and support they need to make it happen. It's our responsibility to make sure the next generation of Flinchbaughs have the opportunity to continue that legacy – and we can only do it by working together."

"The Flinchbaughs have demonstrated that you can do things well alone, but with good partners, you can go farther. They have paid attention," **said Acting Secretary Russell Redding**. "Governor Shapiro is paying attention too. He has heard what farmers need to feed us every day, and his proposed budget investments will support our industry and help families like the Flinchbaughs stay open for business, not just tomorrow, but years down the road."

The Flinchbaugh Orchard and Farm Market has been in the Flinchbaugh family for three generations. Last year, the Flinchbaughs received the prestigious Leopold Conservation Award,

which recognizes farmers who go above and beyond to care for land, water, and wildlife habitats.

"Thank you, Governor Shapiro, for giving us an opportunity to meet with you, talk about what the agriculture industry needs, and sharing with us how the items in your budget will support agriculture and give us what we need in terms of resources to move forward in Pennsylvania," **said co-owner of Flinchbaugh's Orchard & Farm Market Mike Flinchbaugh.**

"This paints a portrait of the importance of our rural economy here in York County, and hopefully it provides additional context as to why Governor Shapiro's budget is important for rural Pennsylvania," **said York County Economic Alliance President & CEO Kevin Schreiber.** "It's also important to note – and the Governor was actually talking about this during the tour – that what is good for rural Pennsylvania is good for urban Pennsylvania. Financing farms, providing access to capital resources, and investing in broadband infrastructure to connect communities are all proposed in this budget and are vital to our Commonwealth's competitiveness."

Last month, Governor Shapiro [unveiled](#) his first budget proposal filled with commonsense solutions to the most pressing issues Pennsylvanians face. The Governor's budget proposes critical investments to support farmers and the agriculture industry, including:

- **\$31 million** to help poultry farmers impacted by the avian flu crisis pay for testing and get reimbursed.
- **\$13.8 million** to fully fund the [Pennsylvania Farm Bill](#) for the fifth year.
- **\$2.5 million** for the [Farmland Preservation Program](#) that helps ensure that resources for counties will be available to produce food and feed Pennsylvania's economy.
- A **\$2 million** investment in the Fresh Food Financing Initiative that will contribute to better health outcomes by improving access to PA-grown, processed, and produced foods.
- **\$1 million** to create a new Organic Center of Excellence, which will grow the state's ability to support this sector of the industry.
- **\$500,000** to create a Center for Plant Excellence that will expand supply chain opportunities and boost resources available to Pennsylvania's diverse plant industries.
- **\$200,000** investment for farmer mental health will provide support services such as a mental health hotline, specialized trainings, and outreach to the agricultural community.

Last month, **Senator Scott Martin** [joined](#) Governor Shapiro in Lancaster County to discuss the Administration's coordinated response to the avian flu crisis, saying, "The good news is this: between the industry communications and the absolute responsiveness of the Administration and the Governor's team, the citizens of...the Commonwealth...can have confidence that we're not only just committed to dealing with this in the here and now, but how best to prepare as we move forward to ensure that responsiveness and learning from how we can do things better."

After Governor Shapiro spoke at the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's 2023 Legislative Conference, **Rep. Dan Moul** [said](#), "I think this is a governor that Republicans and Democrats can both work very well with, especially in the agricultural community. Because I think this guy gets it, I really do."

Visit Governor Shapiro's budget [website](#) to learn more about his commonsense proposal.

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