



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 8, 2024

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**Shapiro Administration Awards Nearly \$500,000 in PA Farm Bill
Grants to Prepare Next Generation for Success in Ag**
47 Projects in 24 Counties Will Connect Students with Opportunities

Harrisburg, PA – Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding today announced \$498,161 in PA Farm Bill Agriculture & Youth Grants awarded to 47 organizations in 24 counties, funding projects that prepare youth to succeed in Pennsylvania’s \$132.5 billion agriculture industry. Students and educators from **Fox Chase Farm**, the School District of Philadelphia’s 112-acre demonstration farm, and **Variety – the Children’s Charity of the Delaware Valley** joined Secretary Redding to make the announcement in the 2024 PA Farm Show’s *So You Want to Be a Farmer* area, where anyone can learn how to raise food or flowers for fun, for profit, or for a new career.

“To meet increasingly complex challenges tied to climate and marketplace changes, and rapidly evolving technology, Pennsylvania’s agriculture employers need innovative problem-solvers,” **Secretary Redding said**. “The **Shapiro Administration** is committed to making sure young people have the freedom to choose their own paths, and the preparation to pursue the opportunities ahead of them. These grants feed the hungry minds of those who will feed us tomorrow.”

The Shapiro Administration’s [commonsense, bi-partisan budget](#) for 2023-24 funds a fifth year of Ag & Youth Grants through the PA Farm Bill. Since 2019, Ag & Youth Grants have invested just under \$2 million in 194 projects statewide. Overall, more than \$150 million in projects and initiatives to grow Pennsylvania’s agriculture industry have been funded through the PA Farm Bill.

Grants awarded today support projects in Allegheny, Berks, Blair, Bucks, Butler, Chester, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Erie, Forest, Greene, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Perry, Philadelphia, Union, Washington, and Westmoreland counties.

Fox Chase Farm received a \$25,000 matching grant to fund an automated, mobile chicken house.

“This cutting-edge addition not only symbolizes the latest technology in free-range poultry production but also serves as a dynamic educational tool, aligning with the ever-evolving landscape of poultry science,” said **Dr. Mandy Manna**, leader of innovative agricultural education programs for the **School District of Philadelphia**. “We are not just cultivating futures; we are nurturing the next generation of agricultural leaders and placing the promise of innovation directly into the hands of our students. Together, we are building a legacy of excellence in agriculture education.”

The 2023-24 budget invests another **\$13.8 million** in the PA Farm Bill, continuing support for Pennsylvania’s [Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence](#), and supporting youth education and workforce development initiatives including the largest increase ever in basic K-12 education funding, expanded apprenticeships and career and technology training, and continued work to expand broadband internet access to allow students and employers in rural communities to compete.

“This grant will support Variety’s vocational programs for youth and young adults with disabilities,” said **Variety – the Children’s Charity of the Delaware Valley CEO Dominique Bernardo**, another grant recipient. “Our gardens and greenhouse are living classrooms, where students learn valuable skills to prepare them for permanent employment in the community. Ultimately, grant funds help connect our community with surrounding communities who visit our pop-up shops to purchase food grown by our participants and local food pantries who receive donated food.”

PA Farm Bill [Ag and Youth Grants](#) provide direct funding of up to \$7,500 and matching grants of up to \$25,000 to support projects, programs, and equipment purchases by youth-run organizations, and those with programs that benefit youth or promote agriculture, community leadership, vocational training, and peer networking. Past funded projects include agriculture career seminars and field trips, agricultural safety training, capital projects, and equipment purchases aimed at leading students to opportunities in agriculture and building the future workforce Pennsylvania’s agriculture industry needs.

Grant recipients, funded projects, and funding amount by county are as follows:

Allegheny

Forbes Road Career and Technology Center, \$7,478

Berks

Kutztown Area School District, Science Equipment for KAHS Agriculture Program, \$7,500

Schuylkill Valley School District, Schuylkill Valley High School FFA Grant, \$5,842
Schuylkill Valley Agricultural Program Expansion, \$20,000

Berks and Bucks

Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation, \$7,500

Blair

Williamsburg Community Junior Senior High School, Overhauling Small Gas Engines, \$7,500

Spring Cove School District, Agriculture Curriculum Update, \$7,493

Tyrone Area School District - Tyrone Area FFA Chapter, Apparatuses for Agricultural Education, \$7,468

Hollidaysburg Area School District, Tiger Victory Garden, \$7,500

Bucks

Upper Bucks County Technical School, \$25,000

Butler

Butler Area School District, IHS Ag Lab, Butler, \$25,000

Chester

Chester County Intermediate Unit Animal and Veterinary Science Programs, \$6,875

Chester County 4-H Center, \$9,500

Octorara Area School District, Ag Mechanic's Welding Equipment, \$7,500

Columbia

Millville Area School District -- Bridging the Gap Between Agriculture Students and Rural Veterinarians, \$7,500

Cumberland

West Shore School District -- Apiary Education in the West Shore, \$6,143

Big Spring School District, \$7,500

Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation -- Mobile Agriculture Education Science Lab Program, \$25,000

Cumberland and Dauphin

Harrisburg University -- Improving Food Security through CEA Education in Urban School Districts, \$7,416

Delaware

Garrett Williamson -- School to Farm Field Trips, \$7,500

Erie

Erie County Technical School -- CTE Greenhouse Project, \$25,00

Forest

Forest Area School District -- Student Greenhouse and Gardens, \$6,500

Greene

West Greene School District -- Central Weld Fume Control System, Ag Mechanics, \$25,000

Huntingdon

Southern Huntingdon County School District --Southern Huntingdon Vernier Sensors, \$7,500

Lancaster

Elizabethtown Community Fair, \$6,750

Elizabethtown Area School District, \$17,836

The Edible Classroom -- Spring Garden Program Supplies, \$7,452

Pequea Valley School District -- Pequea Valley Hydroponics, \$7,500

Conestoga Valley School District -- Controlled Environment Agriculture with Reverse Osmosis, \$7,404

Thaddeus Stevens Foundation -- Agriculture Education and Workforce Development on Diesel Agriculture Equipment, \$7,500

Millersville University of Pennsylvania -- Sustainable Agriculture Design Competition, \$7,499

Lawrence

Lawrence County Social Services -- Ag Exploration, \$7,500

Lebanon

Eastern Lebanon County School District -- Widefield Zoom Stereo Microscopes, \$3,826

Lehigh

Salisbury Township School District-- Growing our Understanding, \$7,500

Flint Hill Farm Educational Center -- Invitation to Explore Dairy Careers, Creating Added Value Project, \$7,120

Montgomery

Variety the Children's Charity of the Delaware Valley -- Inclusive Agricultural Vocational Training for Youth with Disabilities, \$7,500

Norristown Area School District- Stewart Middle School -- Blockson Middle School Garden, \$1,500

Montgomery and Chester

Trellis for Tomorrow -- SEED Skills Program, \$7,500

Perry

LEAF Project, Youth-Directed No Till Program, \$7,500

Greenwood School District -- Ag Mechanization Safety and Operation Enhancement, \$24,700

Philadelphia

Fairmount Food Forest -- Fairmount Food Forest and Strawberry Mansion High School Culinary Arts Value-Added Products, \$7,500

The School District of Philadelphia -- Agriculture & Related Sciences Seminar for School District of Philadelphia High School Seniors, \$7,500
The School District of Philadelphia -- Fox Chase Farm Mobile Hen House, \$25,000

Union

SUN Area Technical Institute -- Student Education and Awareness Bee Project, \$4,500

Washington

California Area School District -- Building a Hive of Learning: A Honey Hut Proposal, \$7,359
Trinity Area School District – Trinity High School, \$7,500

Westmoreland

Central Westmoreland Career & Technology Center -- FFA Phoenix Falls, \$25,000

Learn more about opportunities in agriculture at agriculture.pa.gov/kidsarethefuture.

Find a [map of previous grant recipients](#) and details of other PA Farm Bill grants and initiatives to grow and sustain Pennsylvania agriculture at agriculture.pa.gov/pafarmbill.

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