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Agriculture Secretary Visits Lawrence County Championship Beef Farm to Highlight Benefits of Governor Shapiro's Proposed \$5 Million Investment to Expand Veterinary Lab Services

Enon Valley, PA – Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee Chair Senator Elder Vogel, Jr. visited **Old English Acres**, home of champion Limousin beef cattle in Enon Valley, Lawrence County, to see how the farm's business investments would be more secure with the \$5 million veterinary lab system expansion **Governor Josh Shapiro** proposed in his 2024-25 budget.

"Old English Acres owner Ed Clark has invested his life and livelihood in raising some of the finest, most valuable beef cattle available," **Secretary Redding said**. "Delivering a livestock test sample out of state or to State College to the closest veterinary lab in our state system can mean a costly delay and a risk to his investment. The **Shapiro Administration** has made it a top priority to invest in robust, thriving economy fed by a strong agriculture industry all across Pennsylvania. This investment would expand the services offered by our world class Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System, lowering costs, and feeding the growth counties like Lawrence are seeing."

According to recently released [U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture figures](#), in the past five years Lawrence County has seen a 100% increase in the value of products grown and raised on its 585 farms, most of which are family-owned. Farm income has increased 120% and net cash income has increased 122%. At the same time, production costs have increased 94%, narrowing their profit margin. Business risks have also increased due to severe weather, market volatility, and labor shortages. Costs increase further when farmers must travel greater distances to obtain the services they need.

"Animal health and welfare is a top priority for our farmers as they take pride in the animals they raise and the products they provide to the public," said Sen. Vogel. "Many farmers here in western Pennsylvania, like Ed Clark and myself, have been burdened in needing to travel great distances to take test samples to veterinary labs because our region lacked a local state veterinary lab. Through the proposed \$5 million investment, a

new state veterinary animal diagnostic lab would be established and alleviate our regional farmers from costly travels and delayed testing results.”

Governor Josh Shapiro’s proposed [2024-25 budget](#) invests in protecting farmers’ risks, building infrastructure to grow opportunities, and spurring innovation in Pennsylvania’s \$132.5 billion agriculture industry. Proposed investments include:

- **\$5 million** to expand services of the [Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System’s](#) three current veterinary labs into western Pennsylvania to provide much needed testing capacity, and speed diagnosis and mitigation of future animal disease outbreaks.
- **\$1.7 million** in cloud computing solutions and migration of state laboratory data to a more advanced information management system.
- **\$10.3 million** in agriculture innovation to help support and attract new agricultural businesses, including energy and conservation endeavors, and to continue to build the future of American agriculture right here in Pennsylvania.
- **\$5.6 million** to help dairy farmers enroll in Dairy Margin Coverage protection to cushion businesses against harmful price fluctuations.

Find more information in Governor Shapiro's [full budget in brief here](#).

Read how Governor Shapiro’s new Economic Development Strategy invests in growing Pennsylvania’s future through a strong, vibrant, and innovative agriculture industry at [PAGetsItDone.com](#)

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