



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Governor's Press Office, ra-qvgovpress@pa.gov

**Governor Shapiro Delivers Keynote at Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
State Legislative Conference in Harrisburg, Highlighting His
Administration's Historic Investments in Agriculture to Support the
Commonwealth's Farmers, Growers, and Producers**

Governor Shapiro is prioritizing investments in Pennsylvania's farmers and the agricultural industry – a key driver of the Commonwealth's economy that supports over 600,000 jobs and contributes \$132 billion annually and in one of the five pillars of opportunity in the Shapiro Administration's economic development strategy.

The Shapiro Administration is committed to strengthening Pennsylvania's agriculture sector by investing in innovation, cutting costs for agricultural businesses, and standing up for farmers — especially as federal funding cuts and new tariffs create uncertainty and drive up prices.

The Shapiro Administration has led an aggressive and proactive response to Hi-Path Avian Influenza – and still has over \$61 million on hand in its first-in-the-nation HPAI Recovery Fund to support poultry farmers.



Harrisburg, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** delivered the keynote address at the annual **Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) State Legislative Conference**, speaking to agricultural industry leaders from all across the Commonwealth about his Administration’s strong record of supporting Pennsylvania’s farmers. During his remarks, the Governor reaffirmed his commitment to investing in the Commonwealth’s agricultural industry, and warned of the risks posed by new federal tariffs and cuts to U.S. Department of Agriculture programs that support farmers and food banks.

Governor Shapiro emphasized that agriculture is at the center of his Administration's efforts to create economic opportunity across Pennsylvania. The Governor's [Economic Development Strategy](#) – the first statewide economic development plan in nearly two decades – puts agriculture at the forefront, recognizing that a thriving agricultural industry is essential to the Commonwealth's economic growth. The **Shapiro Administration** has consistently prioritized investments that strengthen and support the agriculture sector.

"Over the last two years, I've spent a lot of time on farms across Pennsylvania, listening to our farmers and seeing firsthand the challenges they face and the incredible work they do to power our economy and put food on our tables. I kept those conversations top of mind as we developed the Commonwealth's first Economic Development Strategy in nearly 20 years – and I made sure agriculture is front and center in that plan," said **Governor Shapiro**. "My Administration has made real investments in the future of agriculture – from funding the PA Farm Bill, to launching the first-in-the-nation Agricultural Innovation Grant Program, to opening new Centers of Excellence, and expanding PA Preferred. We've delivered commonsense solutions to help farmers lower costs, preserve farmland, open new markets, address the real challenges they face, and strengthen the entire agricultural industry. Pennsylvania is leading the way in driving economic growth in our agriculture sector, and I will keep fighting for our farming families."

Founded in 1950, the PFB is the Commonwealth's largest farm organization, representing over 30,000 farms and rural families. PFB advocates for policies that support agriculture and rural life, serving a membership that includes farms, craft breweries, distilleries, wineries, cideries, farm-to-table restaurants, and agritourism.

"Pennsylvania farmers have the ear of Governor Shapiro," said **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) Secretary Russell Redding**. "He recognized early on that agriculture was not just the foundation of our past, but the key to our future success. Investing in agriculture – in our strengths, and the challenges ahead – is the right choice for rural Pennsylvania and for all of the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has been a powerful voice for Pennsylvania's farmers in the legislature. We hope they will stand in support of the Governor's 2025-26 budget proposals that invest in the future of Pennsylvania's farms."

Since taking office, **Governor Shapiro** has prioritized supporting and growing Pennsylvania's agricultural industry — bringing Democrats and Republicans together to invest in new technologies, strengthen supply chains, and drive economic growth for farmers, growers, and producers. The Commonwealth is home to more than **53,000 farms** that contribute **\$132 billion** to the economy and support nearly **600,000 jobs**.

According to the latest [USDA Census of Agriculture](#), Pennsylvania farmers are using land more efficiently — **earning 2.7 times more per acre** than the national average. Since the last census, **average net farm income in the Commonwealth has increased by 59 percent**, and the **value of products sold has grown by 33 percent**. More Pennsylvania farms are also turning to renewable energy, agritourism, organic

production, and precision agriculture — all of which help farmers lower costs, meet consumer demand, and thrive in the industry.

Leading Through a First-in-the-Nation Agricultural Innovation Grant Program

The **Shapiro Administration** launched the nation's first **Agricultural Innovation Grant Program** in 2024 and seeded it with **\$10 million** to modernize Pennsylvania's farms and agricultural businesses, providing funding to [88 agricultural businesses in 46 counties](#). In its first application period, the program received 159 applications requesting nearly \$70 million in funding. This year, the Governor's [2025-26 budget proposal](#) invests an additional **\$13 million** to attract new agricultural businesses and cement Pennsylvania's place as a national leader in agricultural innovation.

Cutting Red Tape and Moving at the Speed of Business

Governor Shapiro highlighted his Administration's efforts to streamline permitting and help farmers move more quickly. Under the PDA, food establishment renewal times have dropped by 88 percent, and overall processing times for permits, licenses, and certifications are now 70 percent faster than in 2022.

Governor Shapiro's Record of Delivering for Agriculture

Governor Shapiro has delivered strategic investments to support Pennsylvania's agriculture sector:

- **Farmland Preservation:** Continued Pennsylvania's national leadership in farmland preservation to protect agricultural land for future generations, preserving 333 farms and over 27,500 acres.
- **Hi-Path Avian Influenza Mitigation:** Secured over \$60 million to support poultry farmers recovering from outbreaks, including testing and loss reimbursements, and developed an aggressive and proactive surveillance testing system for poultry and dairy to help reduce the spread of the disease.
- **Organic Farming:** Established the Organic Center of Excellence with \$1 million in funding to empower organic farmers and businesses and signed legislation creating a PA Preferred Organic brand.
- **Fresh Food Financing Initiative:** Invested \$2 million to improve access to locally grown food, contributing to better health outcomes and supporting local economies.
- **Animal Health:** Launched a state-of-the-art animal health laboratory in western Pennsylvania to enhance biosecurity and provide rapid responses to disease outbreaks.
- **PA Farm Bill:** Fully funded the Pennsylvania Farm Bill with \$13.8 million for the sixth consecutive year.

Governor Shapiro has championed sustainable farming practices that balance economic growth with environmental stewardship:

- Supported the adoption of conservation techniques to protect soil, water, and air quality.
- Promoted practices to reduce nutrient runoff and improve water quality, particularly in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Expanded programs to help farmers implement precision agriculture and renewable energy solutions on their farms.

To ensure Pennsylvania remains a national leader in agriculture, **Governor Shapiro's [2025-26 budget proposals](#)** include increased funding for agricultural innovation, along with:

- **Investing \$2 million to sustain Pennsylvania's new animal testing laboratory** in the western part of the state, providing critical services to help farmers maintain healthy livestock.
- **An additional \$4 million to expand the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System**, connecting Pennsylvanians at risk of hunger with healthy, locally produced food.
- **A \$4 million increase for the State Food Purchase Program**, which provides emergency food assistance to low-income Pennsylvanians.

Standing Up for Farmers and Agricultural Businesses Against Harmful Federal Policies

Governor Shapiro warned that recent federal decisions threaten to undermine Pennsylvania's progress. The [abrupt cancellation](#) by the USDA of the **Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) Program** has cut \$13 million in grants that enabled local food banks to buy fresh food directly from 189 Pennsylvania farmers. The **Shapiro Administration** has formally [appealed](#) the decision and is fighting to reinstate those dollars in Pennsylvania.

New federal tariffs imposed last week also risk raising prices, provoking retaliatory measures from trade partners and jeopardizing key export sectors — including dairy and hardwood. Pennsylvania exports \$4 billion in agricultural products annually, including \$2.06 billion to Canada and \$220.4 million to Mexico. These tariffs threaten vital markets and create uncertainty for Pennsylvania's farmers and producers. Governor Shapiro addressed these concerns during a [visit](#) to a hardwood producer in Mifflin County last week.

While continuing to invest in agriculture, **Governor Shapiro** is standing up against harmful federal policies that make it harder for Pennsylvania's agricultural businesses to

compete. His Administration is working to build a more resilient agricultural economy, strengthen the food supply chain, and ensure a prosperous future for Pennsylvania's farming communities.

Learn more about the commonsense investments to in **Governor Shapiro's** 2025-26 budget proposal at shapirobudget.pa.gov and how the **Shapiro Administration** is [supporting Pennsylvania's farmers](#).

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