

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 13, 2025

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**Governor Shapiro Visits Penn State's Annual Ag Progress Days,
Highlighting His Administration's Historic Investments in Ag
Innovation to Support Pennsylvania's Farmers, Growers, and
Producers**

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.

The Governor's [2025-26 proposed budget](#) builds on his Administration's historic accomplishments — spurring innovation, connecting Pennsylvanians with healthy, locally produced food, and maintaining over \$61 million in the first-in-the-nation HPAI Recovery Fund to support poultry farmers.



Pennsylvania Furnace, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** joined **Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding**, Penn State University leadership, elected officials, and hundreds of agricultural leaders and producers at the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences' annual **Ag Progress Days** luncheon to highlight his Administration's ongoing commitment to supporting Pennsylvania's farmers, growers, and producers — and the Shapiro Administration's continued investments in the Commonwealth's agricultural industry.

Pennsylvania's agriculture sector is a major economic driver for the Commonwealth — contributing \$132 billion annually to the economy and supporting nearly 600,000 jobs. The Governor's first two budgets delivered historic support for Pennsylvania agriculture, and his [2025-26 proposed budget](#) builds on that progress with investments to spur innovation, protect against animal disease, and strengthen the Commonwealth's food supply chain.

"Pennsylvania farmers, growers, and producers are the backbone of this Commonwealth — they do the noble work of putting food on our tables every day," said **Governor Shapiro**. "Over the last two years, I've spent a lot of time on farms across the Commonwealth, listening to our farmers and seeing firsthand both the challenges they face and the incredible work they do to power our economy. We've made historic investments to help them innovate and grow — 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 that lower costs, open new markets, and strengthen the entire agricultural industry — and under my Administration, Pennsylvania will continue leading the way in driving economic growth in our agriculture sector and I will keep fighting for our farming families."

Since taking office, Governor Shapiro has brought Democrats and Republicans together to invest in new technologies, strengthen supply chains, and expand economic opportunity for farmers, growers, and producers. Pennsylvania is home to more than 50,000 farms, all of which play a critical role in feeding families, supporting rural communities, and sustaining the Commonwealth's rich agricultural heritage.

The Governor's first-in-the-nation [Agricultural Innovation Grant Program](#) and other targeted investments are creating jobs, driving economic growth, and keeping Pennsylvania at the forefront of agricultural innovation. The Governor [announced](#) the first set of Agricultural Innovation grants in February at Penn State, supporting 88 awardees from 45 counties, representing 31 Pennsylvania-produced commodities and 40 areas of innovation. These projects include technologies that improve efficiency, generate energy while reducing nutrient waste, and support crops that store carbon or replace non-renewable resources.

"Pennsylvania remains a national leader in agriculture because of Governor Shapiro's commitment to investing in our farmers, our land, and our communities," said **Secretary Redding**. "His leadership honors our Commonwealth's proud agricultural heritage while driving bold, bipartisan action that ensures a stronger, more resilient future for the

generations to come. At Ag Progress Days, you can see that future taking shape — where innovation meets tradition and Pennsylvania stands as a steadfast partner to our farmers in keeping agriculture growing strong.”

Ag Progress Days – Pennsylvania’s largest outdoor agricultural exposition – draws more than 400 exhibitors from across the United States and Canada. Hosted by Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences, the three-day event showcases cutting-edge agricultural research, education programs, and innovations in farm equipment and technology.

Delivering for Pennsylvania’s Agricultural Economy

Agriculture is a key sector of Pennsylvania’s economy, contributing \$132 billion annually and supporting over 600,000 jobs. Under Governor Shapiro’s leadership, the Commonwealth has made historic investments in Pennsylvania agriculture:

- Created the first statewide [Economic Development Strategy](#) in nearly two decades with agriculture at the forefront
- Fully funded the PA Farm Bill at **\$13.8 million** annually — supporting workforce development, processing expansion, and market access
- Invested **\$1 million to launch the Organic Center of Excellence**, empowering organic farmers and establishing the **PA Preferred Organic™** brand
- Launched the [Agricultural Innovation Grant Program](#), securing \$10 million in the 2024-25 budget. In its first year, the Shapiro Administration [provided grants](#) to 88 farms and organizations in 45 counties
- Preserved more than **415 farms and 35,000 acres** of farmland with more than \$125 million in state funding
- Set aside over **\$65 million** to mitigate Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, supporting poultry farmers and disease monitoring
- Opened a **state-of-the-art animal health lab** in Western Pennsylvania to enhance disease testing and biosecurity
- Expanded the **Fresh Food Financing Initiative** with \$2 million to increase access to local food and support small businesses
- Invested **\$35 million** to continue Clean Streams Fund support for Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)

In his [2025-26 proposed budget](#), **Governor Shapiro** has called for additional investments, including:

- **\$13 million** more for the [Agricultural Innovation Grant Program](#)
- **\$4 million** expansion of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System
- **\$4 million** increase to the State Food Purchase Program
- **\$2 million** to fully operate the new state animal diagnostic lab

The **Shapiro Administration** has also [taken swift action](#) to defend Pennsylvania farmers when the federal government unlawfully terminated the \$13 million **Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) Program**, which supports 189 Pennsylvania farms

and 14 local food banks. The Commonwealth has taken the matter to federal court, where a ruling is pending.

Governor Shapiro's leadership is ensuring Pennsylvania remains a national leader in agriculture — building a more resilient agricultural economy, safeguarding the food supply, and securing a prosperous future for Pennsylvania's farming communities.

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

For more information on **Governor Shapiro's** budget and agriculture initiatives, visit shapirobudget.pa.gov.

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