



# GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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## **Shapiro Administration Preserves More Farms in Pennsylvania Than Any Other State in the Nation**

*Since the Shapiro Administration began, Pennsylvania has invested more than \$140 million to preserve 472 new farms and 39,273 prime acres of farmland across the state.*

*Pennsylvania has protected 6,621 farms and 658,681 acres in 58 counties from future development, investing more than \$1.78 billion in state, county, and local funds.*

*Agriculture is a cornerstone of Pennsylvania's economy — contributing \$132 billion annually and supporting nearly 600,000 jobs — and the Shapiro Administration is strengthening the sector by investing in innovation, cutting costs for agricultural businesses, and standing up for farmers.*



**Lebanon, PA –** Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding** visited **Talview Dairy Farm** in Lebanon County to celebrate a major milestone in Pennsylvania’s history — the preservation of more than **6,600 farms and 650,000 acres** of farmland for agricultural use across the Commonwealth, the **most farms of any state in the nation**. The [Farmland Preservation Program](#) is a collaborative effort between state and local governments and nonprofit organizations, united in the goal of preserving prime farmland for future generations.

At Talview Dairy, the Governor also reaffirmed his Administration’s commitment to the farmers, growers, and producers who feed our families and power our economy, highlighting Pennsylvania’s national leadership in farmland preservation and agricultural innovation.

“With today’s milestone, Pennsylvania has helped preserve more than 6,600 farms — more than any other state in the nation,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “That means our family farms can stay farms forever — preserving this way of life and creating more

opportunity for multigenerational farmers like the Copenhavers, who are a central part of Pennsylvania's economy. Agriculture plays an essential role in the economic future of our Commonwealth and by investing in preservation, innovation, and conservation — we're making sure that this critical sector remains one of Pennsylvania's strongest industries for generations to come."

The Copenhaver family, who operate Talview Dairy, represent the sixth generation to farm this land. They are one of the thousands of families who have partnered with state and local governments to permanently protect Pennsylvania farmland from development — ensuring that productive agricultural land remains available for future generations.

Since Governor Shapiro took office, Pennsylvania has invested **more than \$140 million** to preserve **472 new farms and 39,273 acres** of prime farmland across the Commonwealth. Just last week, the Commonwealth [invested](#) **over \$5.7 million** to protect **2,079 acres** on **24 farms** in **14 counties**, ensuring those farms will remain farms forever.

Pennsylvania leads the nation in preserved farms — with **6,621 farms and 658,681 acres** protected across **58 counties** since voters overwhelmingly approved the creation of the Commonwealth's [Farmland Preservation Program](#) in 1988. To date, Pennsylvania has invested **more than \$1.78 billion** in partnership with county and local governments to safeguard agricultural land from sprawl and development.

"A farm is the highest and best use of land," said **Secretary Redding**. "When farmland is sold to become warehouses or housing developments, it's gone forever. By preserving high-quality farmland, we're keeping a promise to future generations that Pennsylvania will continue to feed our nation and strengthen our economy."

"Preserving farms by buying development rights is one of the most powerful tools we have to ensure the future of our state economy," said **Bureau of Farmland Preservation Director Stephanie Zimmerman**. "'No farms, no food' is the simplest way of putting it. We do the critical work of protecting Pennsylvania farms every day, hand-in-hand with county and local governments and Pennsylvania farm families."

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Pennsylvania's economy — contributing **\$132 billion** annually and supporting nearly **600,000 jobs**. Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, the Commonwealth has made historic investments to strengthen the agriculture sector, spur innovation, protect against animal disease, and ensure farming remains a viable career for the next generation.

Through the [Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program \(ACAP\)](#), more than **2,000 Pennsylvania farmers** have received financial and technical support to adopt conservation practices that improve water and soil health — strengthening both their operations and the environment.

The **Copenhaver family's** preserved farm is a testament to how these investments make a difference. With support from the state's farmland preservation program, as well as the **Center for Dairy Excellence** and **Penn State Extension**, the family has built a more secure future for their business and for the next generation of Pennsylvania farmers.

"We're not just securing the future of farming for the next generation — we're preserving green space, protecting our agricultural heritage, and keeping local food, local jobs, and community at the heart of our economy," said **Brent Copenhaver, Owner of Talview Dairy Farm**. "When you protect a farm, you're not only saving open space — you're safeguarding the values, work ethic, and opportunities that farms pass down from generation to generation."

"Lebanon County has preserved approximately 22,000 acres of farmland since the inception of its Ag Land Preservation Program and has 2,000 additional acres currently in process of preservation," said **Lebanon County Farm Preservation Board Chairman Paul Bametzreider**. "The people of Lebanon County are one with the land of the county and are very grateful to the Commonwealth and the Department of Agriculture for all their assistance in helping meet this goal."

### **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
- Set aside over **\$65 million** to mitigate Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, supporting poultry farmers and disease monitoring
- Established 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 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 Pennsylvania's **Farmland Preservation Program** and investments in a secure, sustainable future for Pennsylvania agriculture at [agriculture.pa.gov](https://agriculture.pa.gov).

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

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