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Governor Wolf: New Report Reveals \$132.5 Billion Economic Impact for Pennsylvania Agriculture, Outlines Strategic Growth Opportunities

Harrisburg, PA – Today the Wolf Administration released a new economic impact report for Pennsylvania’s leading agriculture industry, in coordination with Team Pennsylvania and eConsult Solutions Inc., and Governor Tom Wolf made one thing clear: agriculture is fundamental to Pennsylvania’s economy.

“Since the founding of the commonwealth agriculture has been a cornerstone of our state’s economy. We rely on the people who power the industry and the food they produce to sustain our lives,” said Gov. Wolf. “This report shows us plainly what we all realized over the past year: agriculture is vital to our lives and our economy. Pennsylvanians and policy-makers alike should do everything in their power to support it.”

The new report for Pennsylvania agriculture’s economic impact shows that the industry has a \$132.5 billion annual economic impact and supports more than 590,000 jobs paying nearly \$33 billion in wages annually. The report also makes strategic recommendations intended to help guide Pennsylvania’s agriculture industry as it continues to navigate an ever-changing marketplace.

Since the [last report](#) was issued in January 2018, Governor Wolf quickly set to work utilizing the recommendations to write a [six-point plan](#) for Pennsylvania agriculture that led to the proposal and funding of the first-ever [Pennsylvania Farm Bill](#) in 2019. The historic package of comprehensive legislation has since invested \$37.2 million into Pennsylvania agriculture. In addition to providing a diverse array of grant programs to meet the needs of the industry identified in the 2018 report, the PA Farm Bill included legislation to remove regulatory burdens and provide service support to the industry. In the governor’s 2021-22 budget plan, the PA Farm Bill is once again [proposed to be funded at \\$13.6 million](#).

Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding and Ryan Unger, president and CEO of Team Pennsylvania, were joined by state Senate Democratic Agriculture Chairwoman Judy Schwank at Bell & Evans today to discuss the new report and recommendations.

“When we used the last report to support the industry with the Pennsylvania Farm Bill, we didn’t know what was coming for us in 2020,” Redding said. “But our efforts to proactively address the opportunities for growth and threats to success quickly strengthened the resilience of the industry and helped many producers to pivot quickly with the rapidly changing markets and demands.

“We saw the industry tested, then we saw its strength as it persevered. Their survival and their prosperity is a testament to the Pennsylvania Farm Bill and the true grit of Pennsylvania’s farmers and agribusinesses,” added Redding.

The report includes an in-depth analysis of the eight major subsectors of Pennsylvania agriculture, including poultry and egg production; dairy production; beef production; other animals including pigs, sheep, and goats; fruit and vegetable production; hardwoods and wood production; nursery, landscaping, and related activities; and food manufacturing.

“Armed with this updated data, we will lean on the leadership of our Agricultural Advisory Board to strive for improved economic vitality of agriculture. As a public-private partner for the commonwealth, we will support our agricultural community as we emerge from the pandemic and capitalize on what we believe will be significant economic investment in the months and years ahead,” Unger said.

An especially important part of the report is the review of future impacts that includes an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on Pennsylvania agriculture and priorities for recovery. These impacts highlight a need to focus on building on strengths, addressing weaknesses, seizing opportunities, and confronting threats facing the industry.

“The pandemic unearthed glaring issues in how our food travels from farms to our grocery stores and then to our tables,” Schwank said. “I’m glad to see a section of this report dedicated to recognizing the difficulties the pandemic presented Pennsylvania’s agriculture sector and how so many of our farmers, producers and distributors rose to the challenge. This report presents ways for us to continue to support this vital industry and I look forward to helping enact some of those changes.”

Pennsylvania has laid a strong base of policy for the future of the agricultural industry PA Farm Bill and other innovative policy and economic development strategies. For more information on the Wolf Administration’s work to strengthen the resilience of Pennsylvania agriculture visit agriculture.pa.gov.

Full report: [Economic Impact of Agriculture in Pennsylvania, 2021 Update\[DE1\]](#)

Note: Photo and video of the event available at PAcast.com.

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