

Agriculture Newsletter
Winter 2023



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**Farmer Winter Meeting**

**Thursday, February 16, 2023**

**9:30am - 11:30am**

**At the Jefferson Conservation District Office**

1514 Route 28 Brookville PA 15825

Located 1/4 mile North of Exit 81 of I-80 on Route 28 in front of the Jefferson Co. Fairgrounds

This meeting will provide updates and an overview of new and existing financial assistance programs available for conservation projects on the farm through the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Jefferson Conservation District. In many cases, more than one program can support conservation projects you are looking to complete. The meeting will also provide a refresher on Manure Management and Ag Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan requirements. Programs that will be highlighted include:

- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program
- Agri-Link Low Interest Loan Program
- Resource Enhancement And Protection Program
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- Conservation Stewardship Program

**Free to Attend, Refreshments Provided**

**Register by Feb 14th at 814-849-7463 or email**

**megan@jeffersonconservation.com**

**Free Soil Test Kits Available**

*Financial and other support for the CREP Outreach Program Office Mini-grant Program is provided by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. through a Growing Greener Watershed Protection grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and with additional support from USDA-NRCS.*







## Soil Health Meeting

The PA No-Till Alliance is holding a Soil Health Meeting in Western PA on **February 2, 2023** at the Blooming Valley UM Church (24740 State St., Meadville PA, 16335) from 8:00am - 4:00pm. Topics of discussion include *Managing Your Soil for Higher Profits*, *Top Tips for Planting Green*, *Using Variable Rate Technology*, and many more. Cost is only \$10 per person at the door. For questions, contact Jay Howes at 717-574-4510 or [jhowes@pennag.com](mailto:jhowes@pennag.com). You can register online at <https://bit.ly/3PIJ4fW>.



## Western PA Grazing Conference

The 25th Annual Western PA Grazing Conference will be held on **Thursday, March 16, 2023** at the Trinity Point Church of God in Clarion, PA (180 W. Trinity Drive Clarion PA 16214) from 8:30am –5:00pm (doors open at 7:30am) with a special evening session held on **Wednesday, March 15, 2023** from 6:30pm - 8:00pm. Troy Bishopp, “The Grass Whisperer” of Bishopp Family Farms in Deansboro, NY is the keynote speaker this year.

Cost to attend on March 16th is \$45 (includes a continental breakfast and a hot lunch), and \$20 for the evening session on March 15th. Checks are payable to the Clarion Conservation District. Registration deadline is March 8th. For more information or to register, visit [www.westernpagrazing.com](http://www.westernpagrazing.com). For questions, contact the Clarion Conservation District at 814-227-5530 or the Jefferson Conservation District at 814-849-7463.

The conference is organized by the Western PA Grazing Conference Committee. Members include NRCS, Jefferson and Clarion Conservation Districts, Penn State Extension, NW and SW PA Project Grass, and local farmers.



## Penn State Extension Ag Webinars

Listed below are several upcoming webinars available through Penn State Extension. For more information or to register for any of these, visit [extension.psu.edu](http://extension.psu.edu) or call 1-877-345-0691.

**February 3rd, 9am-10am:** *Making Cover Crops Pay: Cover Crop Effects on Soil Biology*. Learn about the effects cover crops can have on soil biology, how to improve soil health, and more! FREE

**February 8th, 1pm-3:30pm:** *Maintaining Streamside Plantings - Ensuring Successful Buffers*. Earn Core, PC, Cat. 05, 06, 10, 18, 23 pesticide credits as you learn how to successfully maintain newly planted trees and shrubs along a riparian buffer, prevent weeds, and repair any damage caused by storms and wildlife. \$10 per person.

**February 10th, 9am-10am:** *Making Cover Crops Pay: Cover Crops and Compaction Alleviation*. Learn which cover crops to plant to loosen a hard pan, discuss a variety of cover crop species, and the benefit of each crop. FREE

**February 13th, 12pm-1pm:** *The Importance of Application Setbacks for Protecting Private Drinking Water Resources*. Review the setbacks of surface water and groundwater contamination, how it occurs, and the guidelines on protecting our sources of drinking water. FREE



## PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program

The PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) was recently created under the PA Clean Streams Fund. The purpose of the program is to assist farmers and landowners in the design and installation of agricultural conservation best management practices (BMPs) that will reduce or prevent nutrient and sediment losses from their farms and improve water quality and soil health across the Commonwealth. BMPs applied for through the program must be part of a Manure Management/Nutrient Management and/or Agricultural Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan/Conservation Plan.

The Jefferson County Conservation District recently signed a delegation agreement with the State Conservation Commission (SCC) to help administer the program in the county. More details on the program will be announced at the Farmer's Winter Meeting on February 16th at the District office.



## REAP 2022-2023 Round Closed

The State Conservation Commission stopped accepting applications for the 2022-2023 REAP round in mid-Nov. 2022 as the funding had been depleted for that round. This is the fastest the funding has been allocated in any given round since 2008. The 2023-2024 REAP round is anticipated to be available early August 2023.



## Winter Manure Spreading Guidelines

Manure management regulations define winter as any one of the following:

- \* December 15 to February 28
- \* Anytime the ground is frozen  $\geq$  4 inches
- \* Anytime the ground is snow covered

During any one of these conditions, there are certain restrictions when applying manure to fields to control any runoff from reaching and polluting waterways. Winter spreading is not recommended by DEP, but is permitted following the guidelines listed below (these guidelines are derived from DEP's Manure Management Manual).

- \* The maximum application rate is 5,000 gallons/acre of liquid manure, or 20 tons/acre dry non-poultry manure, or 3 tons/acre of dry poultry manure. Note: maximum rates permitted could be lower depending on soil and manure analyses results.
- \* Keep 100' setback from an above ground inlet to an agricultural drainage system where surface water flow is toward the above ground inlet.
- \* All fields must have at least 25% crop residue or an established and growing cover crop.
- \* No application is permitted on fields with slopes  $>$ 15%. NRCS soil survey slope designations of "A", "B", "C" are acceptable for winter application determinations.
- \* The 100' setback from environmentally sensitive areas such as streams, lakes, ponds **cannot** be reduced as it can in non-winter months if certain management practices are implemented.

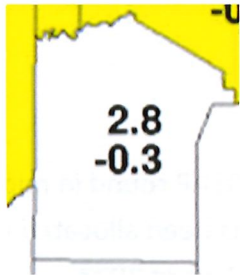




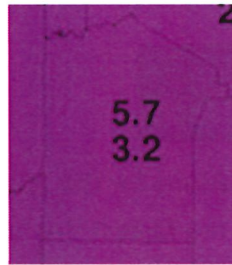
# 2022 Rainfall Review

| Departures from Average |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Amounts in Inches       |                  |
| Greater than 75% Below  | 51% to 75% Below |
| 26% to 50% Below        | 11% to 25% Below |
| 10% Below to 10% Above  | 11% to 25% Above |
| 26% to 50% Above        | 51% to 75% Above |
| Greater than 75% Above  |                  |

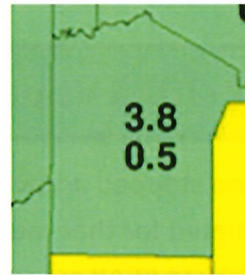
The data below was extracted from the National Weather Service Website ([https://www.weather.gov/marfc/Precipitation\\_Departures](https://www.weather.gov/marfc/Precipitation_Departures)). The data shows month to month mean areal precipitation (top #) and the departure from average (bottom #) in inches for Jefferson County in 2022. (Data sets are for general information only).



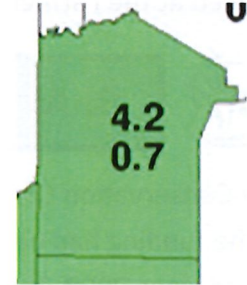
January  
01/01/22 - 01/31/22



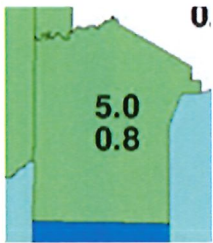
February  
02/01/22 - 02/28/22



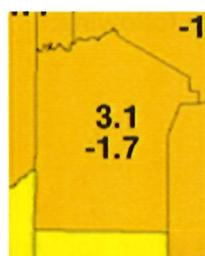
March  
03/01/22 - 03/31/22



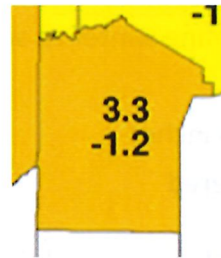
April  
04/01/22 - 04/30/22



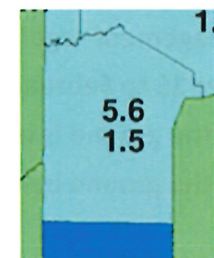
May  
05/01/22 - 05/31/22



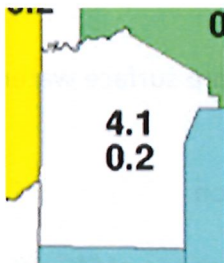
June  
06/01/22 - 06/30/22



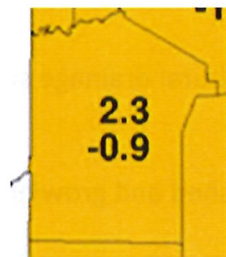
July  
07/01/22 - 07/31/22



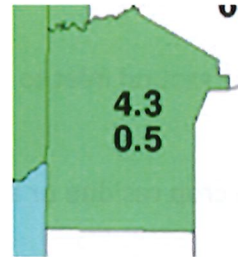
August  
08/01/22 - 08/31/22



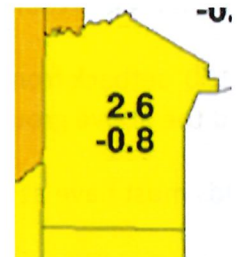
September  
09/01/22 - 09/30/22



October  
10/01/22 - 10/31/22



November  
11/01/22 - 11/30/22



December  
12/01/22 - 12/31/22