



*Agriculture Newsletter*  
*Winter 2026*



**28th Annual Western PA  
Grazing Conference**

**Thursday, March 12, 2026**

8:30am - 5:00pm

*Doors open at 7:30am*

**At the Trinity Point Church of God**

180 W. Trinity Drive Clarion PA 16214



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Join us for an informative day filled with a diverse selection of presentations. The keynote speaker this year is Steve Kenyon of Greener Pastures Ranching, Ltd., from Alberta, Canada. Steve has been teaching sustainable grazing management along with agricultural economics for more than 20 years.

Topics of discussion will include:

- *Growing Soil*
- *Forages for Beef Cattle*
- *Managing Katahdin Sheep to Reduce Risk of Parasites*
- *Farm Succession Planning*
- *Complementary Incomes: Ideas for Income Streams Aside from Milk Sales*

These are just a few of the topics to be covered. Attendees will also have the opportunity to visit a variety of vendors and sponsors of the conference.





## 28th Annual Western PA Grazing Conference *continued*

Cost to attend is \$45 (includes a continental breakfast and a hot lunch). Free for ages 18 and younger. Registration deadline is March 5th. For more information or to register online, visit [www.westernpagrazing.com](http://www.westernpagrazing.com). For questions, contact the Jefferson Conservation District at 814-849-7463 or the Clarion Conservation District at 814-393-6147.

This year, we are also showing the *Roots So Deep Documentary (1&4)* for free the night before on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at the church from 6:30pm-9pm. The Roots so Deep Documentary is a 4 part documentary series that explores the world of adaptive cattle farmers and their conventional farming neighbors. You don't have to register for the conference to attend the documentary; all are welcome! The documentary will start promptly at 6:30, so please arrive ~15 minutes early to grab a snack/drink and choose your preferred seat!

The conference is organized by the Western PA Grazing Conference Committee. Members include the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Jefferson/Clarion/Clearfield Conservation Districts, Penn State Extension, Northwest & Southwest PA Project Grass, and local farmers.



## Additional Upcoming Events

02/04/2026 Penn State Extension Event - Crops Day. Topics include research updates, crop production insights, pest strategies, and pesticide safety. At the United Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall in Blairsville. Cost is \$10. To register by Feb. 2nd, call 877-345-0691.

02/27/2026 Farm Bureau Event - Nationwide Insurance Pesticide Spray Mtg. Registration 9:45am. Meeting 10am-12:15pm Light refreshments. At the Jefferson Co. Conservation District Office. Contact Susan Cooper to register at 814-541-7664.

03/06/2026 Farm Bureau Event—Legislative Brunch 10am-12pm At the Jefferson Co. Conservation District Office. Contact Susan Cooper to register at 814-541-7664.



## PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program

The PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) was 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 signed an agreement with the State Conservation Commission (SCC) to help administer the program in the county. Applications are being reviewed quarterly. The new round of applications are due **March 31, 2026**. Contact the District for more information.



## CHEMSWEEP Program

Through CHEMSWEEP, applicators can dispose of unwanted pesticides legally and often for free. Most waste pesticides are incinerated. The rest go to hazardous waste landfills. Every year, CHEMSWEEP operates in select counties. Jefferson County is one of the 19 counties in 2026 in which ag businesses and pesticide applicators can participate in the program.

A Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) inspector will verify pesticide inventories from farmers and licensed applicators. Then, PDA will arrange collections with a contractor, usually from July to October. CHEMSWEEP covers the first 2,000 pounds per participant.

The program only accepts pesticides registered in the Commonwealth. These are called Universal Waste Pesticides. They will be collected and disposed of according to regulations. The contractor becomes the official generator of your waste pesticides at collection.

To participate, complete the inventory submission form by **March 31, 2026** founds at: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/plants-land-water/plant-industry/environmental-programs/chemsweep>.

For more information on the CHEMSWEEP program, contact James Cunningham at (717) 772 - 5210 or [jgcunningh@pa.gov](mailto:jgcunningh@pa.gov).



## 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 allowable 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.

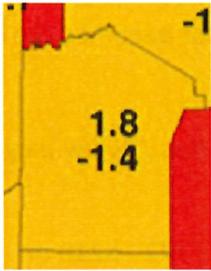
For more information on manure management guidelines, contact the District office or visit: <https://www.dep.pa.gov>.



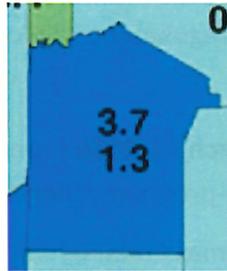
# 2025 Rainfall Review

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 2025. (Data sets are for general information only).

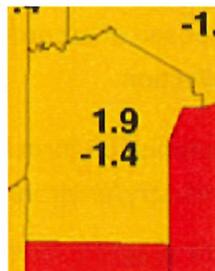
| Departures from Average |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Amounts in Inches       |                  |
| Greater than 75% Below  | 51% to 75% Below |
| 26% to 50% Below        | 11% to 25% Below |
| 10% Below to 10% Above  | 11% to 25% Above |
| 26% to 50% Above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



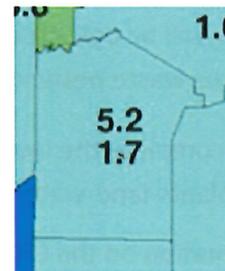
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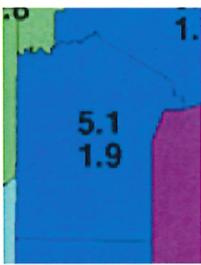
February



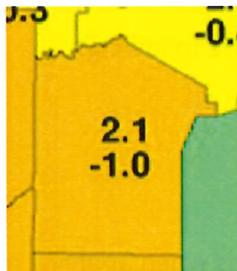
March



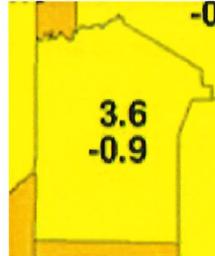
April



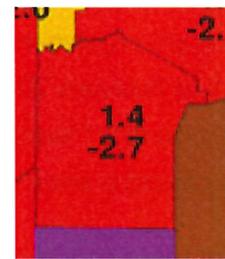
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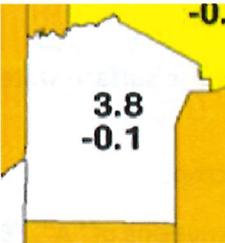
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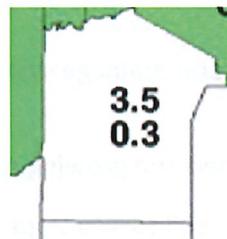
July



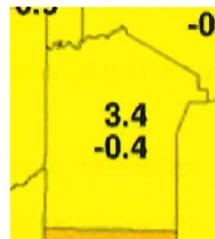
August



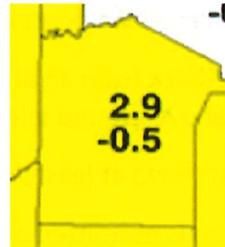
September



October



November



December