



JEFFERSON COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conserving Natural Resources for Our Future

Agriculture Newsletter Fall 2026



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Grazing Field Day

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

9:00am - 3:30pm

At the Meadowlark Farm

1540 McGill Rd. Corsica PA 15829

Featuring:

Steve Campbell
of Tailor Made Cattle
&

Russ Wilson
of Wilson Land & Cattle Co.

Meadowlark Farm is a regenerative, registered South Poll cattle operation owned and operated by Scott and Shelley Allen.

Steve Campbell will discuss "Making you Herd's Genetic Code Fit Your Zip Code - a framework for identifying low-maintenance, high-fertility, grass-efficient cattle" while

Russ Wilson will present on "Planning for Winter: Tips for Stockpiling Forage" - Practical cost-saving advice for the grazer to reduce hay consumption". Participants will have the opportunity to get a close look at the South Poll Cattle Breed and time for Q&A.

Contact the Jefferson County Conservation District to register by October 7th at 814-849-7463 or megan@jeffersonconservation.com.

Cost to attend is \$20.00 to attend, with lunch provided.

We hope to see you there!





Resource Enhancement And Protection Program

The State Conservation Commission has established a deadline of **October 30, 2026** to submit REAP applications. Through Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program, farmers, landowners, and businesses earn tax credits for implementing "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) that will enhance farm production and protect natural resources. REAP tax credits may be used to pay PA income tax for any individual or entity that has PA income tax obligations, dollar-for-dollar, for up to 15 years from the date of issuance. The credits can be sold or transferred one year after issuance. Agricultural operations are eligible for up to \$250,000 of REAP tax credits in a 7-year period. Non-ag businesses and individuals can earn PA REAP tax credits by sponsoring an eligible project. Contact the District or visit the website www.agriculture.pa.gov, click on the search icon and type "REAP" for more information.

Eligibility Requirements:

The applicant must be an individual or business subject to Pennsylvania income taxation such as Personal Income Tax, Corporate Net Income Tax, or Bank Shares Tax.

An agricultural operation must have the following to be eligible to receive REAP funding:

- Current Agricultural Erosion and Sediment Control (E&S) Plans - meeting Chapter 102.4 requirements of the PA Clean Stream Law - for all acres operated.
- A current Nutrient or Manure Management Plan meeting the standards of Chapter 83(Act 38) or Chapter 91 of the PA Clean Streams Law (if animals are present or manure is applied).
- Full implementation of BMPs related to managing runoff from Animal Concentration Areas (ACAs), if applicable. ACA-related BMPs must be implemented before tax credits can be awarded for any other REAP-eligible BMPs (excluding Plans).



Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP)

The Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) through FSA will provide assistance to producers for necessary expenses due to losses of revenue, quality or production of crops due to weather related events in 2023 and 2024.

Stage 1: Producers with indemnified losses can apply during the first stage. Stage 1 will leverage existing Federal Crop Insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) data as the basis for calculating payments.

Stage 2: Producers with non-indemnified (including shallow losses), uncovered (uninsured), and quality losses can apply for Stage 2 assistance.

The Deadline to apply for Stage 1 & 2 has been extended to September 30, 2026.



Composting Mortalities

The PA Domestic Animal Act requires domestic animal mortalities to be disposed of within 48 hours. One of the accepted, and preferred methods of disposal is composting as it is low-cost, practical, and can be done year-around.

Composting involves the mixing of a high carbon material (i.e., woodchips) with a nitrogen material (i.e., livestock). An optimal C:N (Carbon to Nitrogen) ratio is 25:1 in order for microbes to efficiently help break down material. Listed below are a few general guidelines on how to properly compost your animals.

- When determining a mortality composting location, choose a well-drained area that's at least 200' away from water sources (including surface waters and drinking water sources).
- Start with a 2' layer of a bulky material high in carbon in a windrow, keeping 2' of compostable material around the animal.
- Place the mortality in the middle of the pile. The abdomen can be cut to speed up decomposition, and to prevent bloating which can cause cover material to come off and expose the animal.
- Do not stack large animal mortalities on top of one another.
- Cover the mortality with 2' of compostable material such as hay or sawdust.
- Allow the pile to sit for 3 – 12 months, depending on the size of the livestock. Larger animals need more time to decompose.
- Turn the compost to see if the animal has completely degraded. Note: bones of mature animals may still remain.
- Internal temperatures of the compost should reach ~130-150°F. Temperatures at this level help kill off pathogens. The heat is the result bacterial activity aiding in decomposition.
- Once the mortality has fully decomposed, the compost can be field applied once bones are removed or used as material in another compost pile.

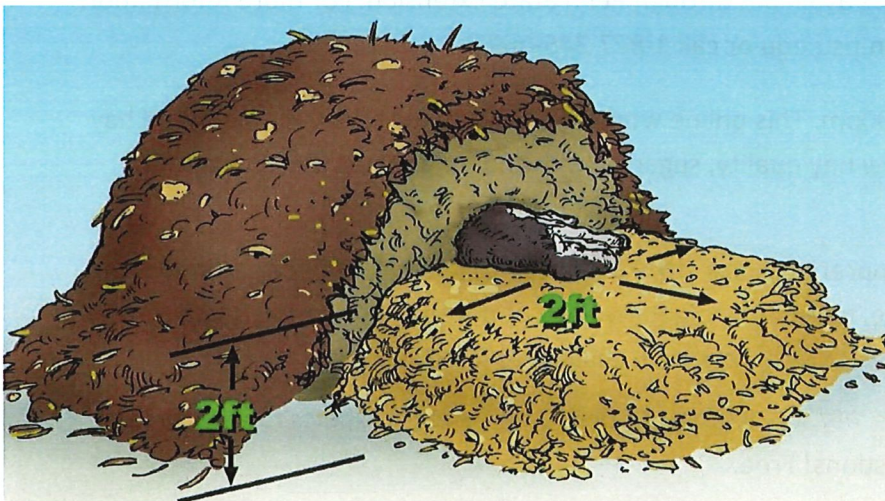


Figure 1: Compost Pile Illustration

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents/cornellcompostguide.pdf>

Resources

- Mortality Composting Guidelines <http://extension.psu.edu/animals/health/composting/mortality-composting-guidelines>
- On-Farm Mortality Composting: Management Principles and Information Resources <https://extension.psu.edu/on-farm-mortality-composting-management-principles-and-information-resources>
- Horse Mortality: Carcass Disposal Alternatives <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/horsefs.pdf>



Managing Animal Concentration Areas

ACAs are defined as areas that cannot maintain vegetation due to animal congregation (barnyards, sacrifice lots, watering areas, exercise lots, etc.). They have the potential to pollute waterways from excess soil and manure runoff, and cause animal health problems. Listed below are several guidelines to follow listed in the Department of Environmental Protection's Manure Management Manual to help keep your animals healthy and protect nearby waterways from contamination:

- Divert clean water flow from upslope fields, driveways, barn roofs, etc. away from the ACA.
- Direct polluted runoff or allow it to flow from the ACA area into a storage facility or best management practice such as a correctly sized and well maintained vegetative filter strip.
- Limit animal access to surface waters to only properly implemented livestock crossings. Animals may not have free access to streams adjacent to or within ACAs.
- Minimize the size of denuded areas.
- Keep areas where animals congregate (such as feed racks, shade, and gates) as far away from a water body as practical to prevent manure runoff into surface water. It is recommended to keep ACAs at least 100' away from surface water, unless a vegetated buffer of at least 35' in width is used.
- Relocate movable structures creating ACAs, such as hay rings, at least annually where practical, to minimize ACA development and manure concentration.
- Routinely remove accumulated manure from ACAs to minimize potential for pollutional discharges.



Penn State Extension Upcoming Webinars

Listed below are a couple upcoming webinars available through Penn State Extension. For more information or to register for any of these, visit extension.psu.edu or call 1-877-345-0691.

- Horse Hay Workshop: 10/06/2026 at 6:00pm. This online workshop helps horse owners understand hay production, storage, and buying, and how hay quality, sugars, mold, and toxic plants impact equine nutrient. Cost \$10.00.
- AgWorks: Introduction to Agricultural Apprenticeships. 10/22/2026 at 10:00am. Explore apprenticeship opportunities in Pennsylvania agriculture, learn how to get involved or develop a program, and discover how apprenticeships can help employers address workforce challenges. Free.
- Advice from the Woods: Ask Our Experts. 09/30/2026 at 12:00pm. Join Forestry experts for this virtual event and ask your forestry-related questions! Free.