

SENATOR MIKE WAUGH'S

Agricultural UPDATE



Winter 2009

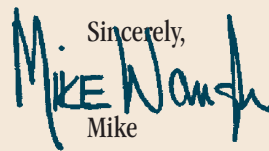
www.senatorwaugh.com

Greetings!

With the new year comes a new two-year legislative session, so as we gear up for the start of the 2009-2010 session, I wanted to take some time to update you on the many happenings both in Harrisburg and York County with respect to agriculture.

Although my role as Majority Caucus Chairman called for me to step down as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee in the 2007-2008 session, Senator Mike Brubaker has led the Committee with great enthusiasm and commitment. I have served as his Vice Chair and enjoy working with him in an effort to benefit all of you.

I hope you will find the information in this newsletter to be helpful, but if you have any questions or need further details on any of the topics, please do not hesitate to contact me!

Sincerely,

Mike

Legislative Committee Issues Report

The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee issued a report pertaining to their review of the Agriculture Conservation Easement (ACE) Purchase Program, as required by Senate Resolution 195 of 2007.

ACE is one of the most successful farmland protection programs in the country, but it is important to ensure that we are conducting the program in a manner that will result in continued success. Therefore, the Committee was called upon to take a detailed look at all aspects of the program and present a report of their findings.

Some of the Committee's findings include the potential need for additional

state funds, possibly using the state real estate transfer taxes or conservation tax credits, or amending the law to allow counties to use state dollars in order to obtain transfer of development rights.

I am certain that many of the concerns that were raised throughout the Committee's review will be addressed in the upcoming session. While I know we will not be able to tackle all matters legislatively, it is worth exploring our options to maintain a strong farmland preservation program.

If you'd like to view the complete report online, it can be found at: <http://lbfc.legis.state.pa.us/reports/2008/20.pdf>.



2009 PA FARM SHOW A SUCCESS!

*Congratulations to all on another great year at the Farm Show!
Check the website for more results at: www.farmshow.state.pa.us.*

"CORE 4" BROCHURES AVAILABLE

Together with numerous partner organizations, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the Natural Resources Conservation Service produced a brochure entitled "Core Conservation Practices for Your Farm," which is available through my office upon request.

Highlighted in the brochure are four core conservation practices – Creating a Nutrient Management Plan and Following It, Planting Cover Crops, Establishing Streamside Buffers, and Planting with No-Till or Low-Till.

If you would like a copy or feel members of an organization could benefit from this brochure, it is available for downloading from my website at www.senatorwaugh.com or you can contact me to request hard copies.

SIGN UP FOR E-NEWS

Visit my website and click on the "Sign up for E-News" button in the right-hand column in order to stay connected!

TV Shows Highlight Many Facets of Agriculture

Over the last few months, I have had the pleasure of utilizing my television show, "The Mike Waugh Report," to highlight agriculture-related initiatives in the 28th Senatorial District.

In September, I visited Tom's convenience store in Spring Grove to discuss the availability of e85 with Bob Astor, Wholesale Fuels Business Manager for Shipley Fuels Marketing. RabbitTransit's Executive Director, Rich Farr, also joined me to talk about the use of biofuels in their fleet of buses.

October presented a double opportunity. First, in preparation for York County's Tour

de Tanks event in March, I visited Seven Valleys Vineyard and Winery. Owner Lynn Hunter took me on a tour of the winemaking process beginning in the vineyards where employees were harvesting grapes. Watch for this show to air early this year! Next, I headed to Central Market in York City to discuss with numerous guests a proposed Shared Kitchen Incubator, which will allow entrepreneurs access to a commercial kitchen in order to develop food items ranging from soups to cakes to hot sauces while using Pennsylvania products.

Visit my website at www.senatorwaugh.com/multimedia to view all of these shows!



Senator Waugh discusses e85 fuel at Tom's convenience store with Shipley Fuels' Tom Astor.

REAP Requests Surpass Funding

In its second year, the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program continued to prove successful with requests received on the first day exceeding the available \$10 million.

The State Conservation Commission (SCC) collected 421 applications on opening

day and the requests totaled \$12 million. Eleven days later, the application period closed, and a total of 458 applications had been received with \$13.5 million in requests. In the end, the \$10 million in tax credits was allocated to 351 applicants.

Brubaker Announces Agritainment Legislation

Senator Mike Brubaker, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, announced in November his intentions to introduce legislation that will promote agriculture entertainment activities, or agritainment.

Agritainment usually consists of recreational and educational activities located on farms, such as corn mazes, pick-your-own crop harvests, hay rides and farm vacations. While these activities allow for both the public to learn about agriculture and the

farmers to generate additional income, there is a great deal of liability that comes along with opening one's farm to visitors.

Brubaker's legislation would protect farm owners from civil liability in cases where no party is at fault. The right for an individual to sue would be preserved if an owner is grossly negligent, displays willful disregard for safety or intentionally causes injury. Look for this bill to be introduced in the new session!

WAUGH RECEIVES CONSERVATION AWARD

As many of you know, I have committed myself over the years to improving conservation practices, and I was honored to be recognized, along with Rep. Ron Miller, by the York County Conservation District as the 2008 Outstanding Legislator of the Year.

It is humbling to be acknowledged for the work many of us are striving to accomplish in order to protect our environment and conserve our natural resources. As a Senator, I have been afforded the opportunity to participate in conservation tours, attend the Conservation District's annual Envirothon, and support and sponsor legislative measures to benefit conservation efforts. In addition, I have been able to extend my work on this issue to a regional level through my position on the Chesapeake Bay Commission.

To recognize the Conservation District for its work throughout the years, I also presented them with a Senate citation congratulating the organization on its 60th anniversary. Along with me, Senator Pat Vance, Senator Gib Armstrong, Senator Jeff Piccola, and Senator Terry Punt sponsored the citation.

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