

GYF DECEMBER NEWS

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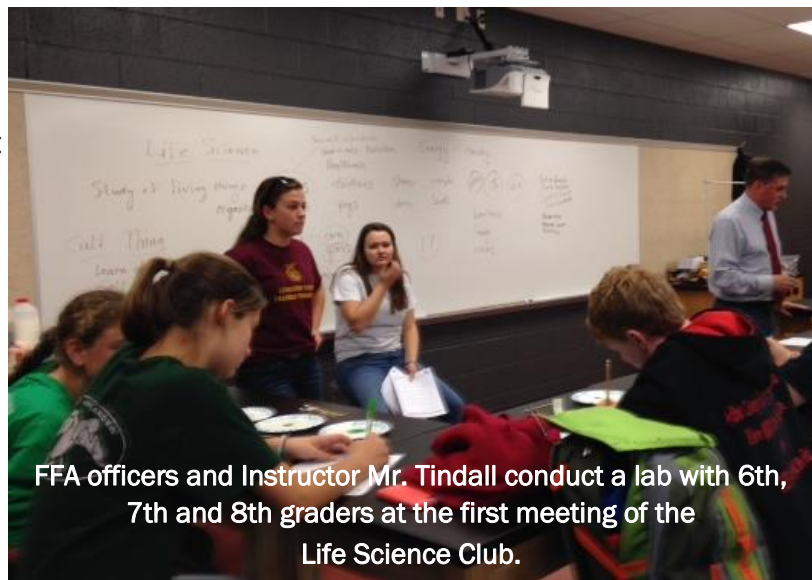
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Ag Fd Returns to Gettysburg Middle School

It's been a number of years since students in grades 6-8 were able to have an ag experience through a school club at Gettysburg Middle School. This fall, thanks to some enthusiastic high school FFA members, that changed. Early in the school year several FFA officers proposed that a Life Science Club be initiated at GAMS to give students an opportunity to sample ag education and interact with animals. A strong draw to the club's early activities was the opportunity to "Adopt a Calf". Although the program was conceived to introduce urban kids to food production, many Adams County kids also do not have ready access to farm animals.

During the first club meeting middle school students conducted a lab activity to demonstrate the differing physical properties of milk dependent on milk fat content. Students compared the diffusion of colored liquid in skim, 2% and whole milk. This hands-on activity was valuable practice in use of the scientific method as students honed their observation skills and performed replications of the experiment. The second club meeting will take students to the JoBo Holstein Dairy farm operated by the John and Bonnie Hess family. Students will tour the farm and meet their adopted calf. As the calf matures students will receive information from JoBo about their adoptee's health, behavior, care and eventually inclusion in the dairy herd.



FFA officers and Instructor Mr. Tindall conduct a lab with 6th, 7th and 8th graders at the first meeting of the Life Science Club.

Membership in the club is open to all Gettysburg Area Middle School students. Meetings are generally held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 3 p.m. to 4:30. For more information contact William Tindall 334-6254, ext 6285.

DATES TO NOTE .

December 10

Soybean Production workshop, Ag Heritage Building – Rooms 7 & 8, 185 Franklin Farm Lane, Chambersburg, PA . To register: <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/crops/courses/soybean-production-workshops>

December 15, 7:30 a.m.

Ag Issues Breakfast with guest speaker Sherri Clayton, Adams Co. director of planning, “Trademarking the Region– How Your Farm Can Benefit from Collective Marketing”. Ag Center, Old Harrisburg Rd, Gettysburg

Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m.-3:00

Grain Marketing Meeting, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, register by 12/14 at <http://www.cvent.com/events/grain-marketing-seminar/event>

December 17, 7:30 p.m.

GYF officer meeting at Kammerer farm, 101 Hunt-Hampton Rd. All members welcome

Dec. 29, 9 am– noon

PYFA board meeting, Kutztown, call Deb K. or Bill T. to carpool

January 8, 7:00-9:00

GYF/FFA friends and family bowling at Edgewood. Pizza and drinks provided. Please bring snacks to share.

Jan 19, Feb 2,

Feb 16, Mar 1, 2016

GYF Winter Classes at GHS in the ag classroom, 7:30-9:00. See article.



WINTER CLASSES

At GHS Ag Classroom
7:30-9:00

Tuesday January 19

“Working with Life Force Energy in Agriculture”

Presenter: Marcia Brown
Friends and family welcome
Refreshments provided

Tuesday February 2

“Interpreting Soil Test Results, Beyond NPK”

Presenter: Dean Collamer
Bring recent soil test results if you’d like to ask questions

Tuesday, February 16

“How to Fund Retirement Without Selling the Farm”

Presenters: Shawn Abma, possibly others
Refreshments hosted by Thrivent Financial

Tuesday, March 1

Topic to be scheduled. Please share any suggestions or ideas.

GRAIN MARKETING NOT YOUR FAVORITE TASK?

You’re not alone if you’d rather go to the dentist than market grain, but its one of the necessities of financial success. If marketing is challenging in stable times, high volatility might tempt you to throw in the towel. Here are a few simple ideas that will help build a marketing framework from Stratton Equity Coop.

- ◆ **Get some outside perspective.** Someone else who is in your world, but not walking in your shoes might have some insight on things you’ve overlooked.
- ◆ **Be aware of the psychological traps of marketing.** “Anchoring” is a common trap which makes it hard to move away from your first instinct on something even when the situation changes. The “confirmation” trap is another hazard where you listen only to those who share your views.
- ◆ **Keep the thing, the main thing.** The formula for long term success, revenue in excess of costs, is simple and unchanging. A volatile market makes it hard to stay disciplined, but keeping your eye on this simple goal is essential.
- ◆ **Build a foundation for profit.** Know your cost of production so you have a firm starting point.
- ◆ **Take a stand.** Establish a firm offer and be prepared to act on your plan. Its too hard to predict when the next rally will occur and how long it will last.

Putting on the Ambassador's Hat



If you are in farming today you have grown accustomed to wearing many hats as you fulfill all the roles necessary to operate your business. There are the business roles of operation, financial, and human resource management, accounting, billing, and strategic planning. There's the animal husbandry role of livestock care and reproduction. It helps to be an agronomist as well as a safety officer, equipment mechanic, and marketing agent. You've acted as a researcher in trying innovative agronomic or mechanical practices. If you've hosted student field trips to your farm or mentored a young employee you've played the role of educator. Perhaps you've been the "token" farmer in a civic or church group. So we farmers are well adapted to being "jacks of all trades." Does your repertoire of roles include being an ambassador or advocate for agriculture?

It's not news to us that the percentage of Americans directly involved in production agriculture has declined into the single digits. Many use the figure of 2%. We are proud that so few can feed so many, but do we consider the consequence that 98% of our neighbors may have no clue to what is involved in agricultural enterprises?

In Adams County the number of dairies has fallen off to a mere handful which are still in operation. Cow numbers have remained high, but the number of operations is a fraction of what it was a generation ago. Farmland has been converted to residences, industrial sites, shopping, or open areas. Our county planning commission deemed farmland "blighted" to qualify the developers for reduced tax financing. Much of our county, especially areas surrounding population centers, is in a mixed use including agriculture, but not defined by it. Citizen opposition to growth in livestock ag businesses in Adams County has been in the newspaper multiple times in recent years.

Secretary Russell Redding mentioned this concern at a recent Ag Breakfast session. He noted that while in some Pa. counties there exists a public appreciation of farming that attitude seems absent locally. Public officials cite agriculture as an important economic driver, public support for preserving ag lands is strong, but how many non-farm supporters understand the basics of modern food and fiber production? We have many untold stories.

As our county welcomes more residential and commercial development, it is essential that agriculture retain a prominent role in Adams County economy and culture. It's time for farmers to add the advocate's hat to the stack. Farming needs a public face, a higher profile in the media and a voice to answer public concerns and questions. We farmers need to be advocates for agriculture as well as producers. Some initiatives have been started to achieve this end. PSU Extension educator Judy Chambers is developing a program to recruit farmers into running for public offices. We need to be at the table at the township and county planning level, on zoning boards and boards of commissioners. We need to create ways to connect to the public to educate non-farm residents about our operations. Would small roadside signs posted near fields inform the public as to the crop being grown, the intended use of the crop, or the environmental benefit? Imagine a posting that estimated the water recharge function of a no-till crop field, the nutrient distribution benefit of grazing cattle, or wildlife habitat maintained at zero public expense. How often have you seen a farmer interviewed in the Gettysburg Times "Getting to Know You" ? Would you be willing to participate in such an interview to answer questions about your farming?

This promotion is our task as farmers and part of our mission as Young Farmers. Just as we have commodity organizations to promote our foods and fiber, explain the safe production practices and market the goods, in Adams County we need to sell agriculture; we need to highlight all the cultural, environmental, scenic, life sustaining attributes of this amazing industry. If not us WHO?

PYFA Mission Statement:

"To educate and promote the agricultural industry"



**Gettysburg Young
Farmer Educational
Assoc.**

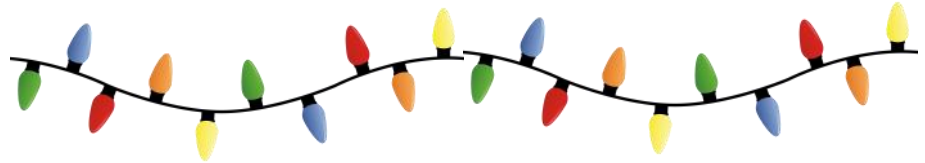
1130 Old Harrisburg Rd.
Gettysburg, Pa. 17325



*"Young farmers are any farmers
willing to learn"*



DECEMBER 15, AG BREAKFAST, 7:30 A.M.
AG CENTER, Old Harrisburg Rd. Gettysburg



DECEMBER 17, OFFICER MEETING, 7:30 P.M.
KAMMERER FARM, 101 Hunt-Hampton Rd. Gettysburg