

GYF MARCH NEWS

SPRING TOUR * MARCH 12**

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It's a common mistake to overlook the treasures in your own backyard and so this year's Gettysburg Young Farmer spring tour will feature visits to three Upper Adams businesses. The local flavor of the 2015 tour will help us appreciate the innovative, growing ag businesses right here "in our own backyard."

We will meet at the Cameo Restaurant, formerly known as Shanks, at 1425 Carlisle Rd., Aspers at 9:00 A.M. We have permission to use their parking lot so that we can carpool to the first 2 stops. We will be returning to the Cameo for lunch.

First business on the tour is **Keystone Fur Dressing, Inc** at 1495 Carlisle Rd. Aspers. For over 40 years Keystone has offered area taxidermists quality tanning services. The owner has kindly offered to show us the workrooms and processes involved in today's environmentally sound tanning processes.



Just a stone's throw up the road is **Big Hill Ciderworks**, a much newer business. Big Hill was founded by Troy Lehman and Ben Kishbaugh, two independent farmers looking to make good ciders. Big Hill began in the Spring of 2013 when they poured concrete in what is now the Ciderworks building. Their products are available in restaurants and pubs from Chester County to Chambersburg. In Gettysburg you can pick up a bottle at Tommy's Pizza on Steinwehr Ave. Ben will meet us, give us a tour of the ciderworks and talk about the process of cidermaking as well as their innovative business model. Although their tasting room is not yet open to the public, we will be able to taste their ciders and purchase some to take home.



Twin Springs Fruit Farm, Orrtanna, has grown to become a second generation producer and marketer of fresh fruit and vegetables. For over 30 years they have supplied Washington D.C. area customers with some of Adams County's finest fruits and vegetables. The production end of their business includes orchards, field crops, and greenhouse crops. In the spring of 2014 they completed construction of a 4th large greenhouse which is heated by a new "green" biomass heating plant. With the addition of this newest greenhouse they have 0.75 acres under plastic to meet the growing urban demand.



SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILED SCHEDULE

DATES TO NOTE.

March 12

Spring tour of Upper Adams ag businesses, see article

March 25, 9 A.M.-NOON

Dairy Culturing workshop at GHS

March 25, 6:00 P.M.

Grain Marketing meeting, York, Pa.

March 30

PYFA board meeting, Farm Show building Harrisburg, 9 a.m.—3 p.m.

April 13

GYF Scholarship applications due

April 17

FFA/GYF Spring Banquet and Awards Presentation

SCHEDULE FOR SPRING TOUR

9:00 Meet at Cameo Drive In Restaurant, Rt. 34 near Bendersville

9:15 Depart for tour at Keystone Fur Dressing, Inc.

10:30 Depart Keystone for tour at BigHill Ciderworks

12:15 Depart BigHill for lunch at Cameo

1:30 Depart Cameo for tour of Twin Springs Fruit Farm

3:30 Depart Twin Springs Fruit Farm to return to Cameo or home

* All participants are responsible for cost of your own lunch. Please wear appropriate footwear for icy, snowy areas around buildings.

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* I'd like to have an approximate count of participants if you know you will be joining us. Call 334-2760 or 321-6217 or email. Don't hesitate to join us at the last minute if you can't commit ahead.



DAIRY BEST MILKING PRACTICES WORKSHOP On Farm Culturing— March 25, 9 am-12pm

Attend this workshop to improve production and decrease cost of mastitis treatment by learning how to implement an On-Farm Mastitis Culturing program. Participants will acquire the proper techniques for collecting milk cultures, setting up cultures for on-farm identification and the knowledge to identify bacteria growth. Mastitis is one of the most costly diseases on a dairy, and past participants have benefited from this workshop – with 77 percent decreasing their Somatic Cell Count by an average of 133,000 cells/ml.

This hands-on workshop is designed for dairy producers, employees and industry representatives.

Presented by Amber N. Yutzy, PSU Cooperative Extension Dairy Herd Health Educator. No cost for workshop but registration is requested by March 20.

**Workshop will be held at Gettysburg High School, Ag Shop,
Call 334-2760 or email dkammerer@gettysburg.k12.pa.us to sign up**

OPENING DOORS FOR NEW & BEGINNING FARMERS



Agricultural leaders and policy makers on the state and national level are concerned about who is going to be producing American food and fiber in future generations. The average age of American farmers is now 57 years and has increased from 54 to 57 between 1997 and 2007 (USDA, 2007 Census of Agriculture). The percentage of population engaged in farming is also predicted to decrease. Will farming become an heirloom occupation?

To avoid the decline of agriculture due to lack of farm operators, numerous organizations are promoting the entry of young and beginning farmers into the industry by providing education, mentoring and preferential financing. These organizations include governmental agencies, both state and federal, ag cooperatives, universities, and non-profits. The intended recipients of benefits include “young or beginning” farmers, those with less than 10 years experience, “small” farmers, those whose gross receipts are limited, usually around 250K/year, female farmers and veterans interested in launching a farm business.

Here’s a sample of what’s available:

Education/mentoring:

Pa Farm Link, a non-profit supported by a partnership of Pa. farm interests, dedicated to creating farming opportunities for the next generation. Online resources include a “Find a farm/Find a farmer” program to facilitate matching retiring farmers with those beginning. Pa. Farm Link also hosts numerous resources relating to transitioning farms from generation to generation. See their website at www.pafarmlink.org.

Ag Biz Masters, an educational learning series sponsored by Ag Choice Farm Credit which teaches

business and financial management.

Over a period of 2 years participants complete 5 online modules and attend 2 in-person regional sessions. For more information contact the Cumberland Valley or York Ag Choice team at 717-263-3315 (Cumberland) or 717-792-2641 (York)

Start2Farm, a service of the National Agricultural Library, USDA, is a great place to start researching a career in agriculture. Enter the website as a new farmer or experienced farmer. Customize the information you wish to view according to category, technical, financial, education or networking, location and degree of experience. Check out Start2Farm.gov

Financing:

Pa Next Generation Farmer loan program, a financing option available through the Pa. Department of Community and Economic Development which uses federal tax-exempt mortgage financing to reduce a farmer’s interest rate for capital purchases, such as the purchase of farm land or agricultural machinery and equipment. [Next Generation farmer website.](#)

USDA/FSA, Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Loan Program, authorized by the federal Agriculture Act of 2014, to offer micro loans to small and beginning operators. The terms of these loans accommodate the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations by modifying its Operating Loan (OL) application, eligibility and security requirements. The program offers more flexible access to credit for smaller farming operations like specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). Learn more at this [FSA website.](#)

GRAIN MARKETING MEETING

AgChoice and PSU Extension have been sponsoring Grain Marketing meetings for area producers. The last one scheduled for this spring is Wednesday, March 25. Topics to be discussed are current market trends and 2015 crop pricing strategies. John Berry, PSU Extension Grain Marketing specialist will be present to moderate the discussion.

Meeting are held at the Meadow Hill Restaurant, 2935 East Prospect Rd, York, Pa. Dinner at 6 p.m. is at a cost of \$13.75, or join the group for the informational session only beginning at 7 p.m.

Please RSVP to Tom Earp at 717-215-4101.

Gettysburg Young
Farmer Educational
Assoc.

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



NOTE THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ✓ **Thursday, March 12**, Spring Tour of Upper Adams Ag Businesses
- ✓ **Wednesday, March 25**, On-Farm Culturing Workshop for Dairy Producers at Gettysburg High School ag shop, register by March 20