



FARM CALENDAR

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Tuesday, October 21

Plants and Pets, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 7 p.m.- 9 p.m., (717) 270-4391.
 ADADC District Meeting, New York St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Co-hocton, N.Y., noon, (585) 384-5726.
 Lancaster Autumn Pasture Walk, David P. King farm, Cherry Hill Road, Ronks, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., (717) 687-5611.
 Horse Basics, Extension Office, Cecil County Courthouse, Elkton, Md., 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Also Oct. 23, (410) 996-5280.
 Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar, Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Harrisburg, thru Oct. 23, (509) 585-5460.
 Schuylkill County Fall Compost Workshop, Cooperative Extension Building, 9 a.m.-noon, (570) 622-4225. Also Oct. 25.
 Maryland Field Day on Soil Compaction, Charles Will Farm, Williamsport, Md., 10 a.m., (301)

791-1304.
 Northern Tier Hardwood Association Annual Meeting, Williamstown Inn, Wysox, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 22

National Meeting on Poultry Health and Processing, thru Oct. 24, Clarion Resort Fountainbleau Hotel, Ocean City, Md., (302) 856-9037.
 Field Loss and Barnyard Evaluation Workshop, thru Oct. 23, Dauphin County Ag Center, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Oct. 23 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
 ADADC District Meeting New York, Old Mill Restaurant, Mechanicville, N.Y., 7 p.m.
 Forestry Taxation and Financial Planning Workshop, Williamsport Radisson Hotel, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., (814) 863-0401.
 Rural Geospatial Innovations Conference, Penn State Conference Center, State College, thru Oct. 25, (717) 394-6851.
 Horse Pasture Management Meeting, York County 4-H Center, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (717) 840-7408.
 Lancaster Poultry Association Banquet, Willow Valley, 6:30 p.m., (717) 394-6851.

Thursday, October 23

12th Annual Pa. Urban and Community Forestry Conference, Tofftree

Resort, State College, thru Oct. 24, (814) 863-7941.

ADADC District Meeting, West Potsdam Fire Hall, West Potsdam, 7:30 p.m., (814) 863-7941.
 ADADC District Meeting, Copenhagen Fire Dept. Copenhagen, N.Y., 7:15 p.m., (315) 782-6778j.
 ADADC District Meeting, Sunset Restaurant, Auburn, N.Y., 7 p.m., (315) 689-7643.

Fall Composting Workshop Peace Valley Nature Center, Doylestown, 7 p.m. Also Oct. 30, Doylestown Municipal Building, Doylestown, 7 p.m., (215) 345-3283.

Ag Choice Farm Credit, ACA Stockholders Meeting, Penn State Conference Center, State College, 11:30 a.m.

Maryland State Veterinary Board Meeting, Maryland Dept. of Ag, Annapolis, 9 a.m., (410) 841-5862.

Friday, October 24

Pa. State 4-H Horse Show, thru Oct. 26, (814) 863-3657.

NEEDS program for nutrient and environmental education, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., (814) 863-3912.

Calf Sense Workshop, Greenwood Farms, Mifflin County, (888) 373-7232.

Pa. State Grange Annual Session, Exton, thru Oct. 28.

Lebanon County Holstein Annual Meeting, Tulpehocken UCC, Richland, 7 p.m.

Watershed Planning Conference, State College, (717) 730-6951.

Ag Issues Forum, Armstrong Manor, Lititz Pike, Lancaster, 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m.

Saturday, October 25

Pa. Sheep and Wool Growers' Association Annual meeting, Penn State, University Park.

State 4-H Model Horse Show, Farm Show Complex.

Pa. State Grange Conference, thru Oct. 28, Inn at Chester Springs, Exton, (800) 552-3865, 10 a.m.

Schuylkill County Fall Compost Workshop, cooperative extension building, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., (570) 622-4225.

Dauphin County Cooperative Extension Annual meeting, Ag and Research Center, Dauphin, 6 p.m., (717) 921-880.

Delmarva Driving Club's Fall Harvest, Pepperbox, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., (302) 875-4971.

Invasive Plants Workshop and Tour for Woodland Owners, Franklin County extension office, Chambersburg, 8:30 a.m.-noon, (717) 263-9226.

Maryland Shorthorn Association's Dynamic Duo Spotlight Sale, Frederick Fairgrounds, 6 p.m., (301) 898-5152.



OPINION

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tem and economy. "American agriculture is highly sophisticated. However, it still remains vulnerable to introduction of foreign animal disease."

Among the diseases of great concern are African swine fever, FMD, and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), sometimes referred to as "mad cow disease."

"Allowing a foreign disease agent into our livestock could have disastrous effects on all aspects" of our food system, from on-farm production, food processing and retailing to consumer safety and confidence, he said.

Jayarao said foreign disease organisms could enter the country with imported animals or animal-based food products, insects and migratory birds, used farm machinery, or feedstuffs. "Travelers who do not respect customs regulations or do not declare their goods pose the greatest source of risk," he said.

Gildow warned the committee of the potentially far-reaching effects that an introduced plant pathogen could have on agricultural crops. "The deliberate release of a super virulent or genetically modified plant pathogen able to destroy large areas of a major food crop could have long-lasting economic and psychological effects," he said. "Immediately following the release of the pathogen, growers would suffer economic losses associated with increased costs of attempted control measures. At the end of the season, growers would suffer reduced yields for sale."

"In some cases, the occurrence of a new pathogen may trigger quarantine embargoes, eliminating national or international markets. If the pathogen produces a toxin, public confidence in food safety could become an issue."

Gildow said to achieve adequate levels of biosecurity for Pennsylvania crops, additional state funding is needed for university research and infrastructure. "Improved disease diagnostic facilities... (and) biocontainment facilities are required," he said. "We need support to educate and train personnel in biosecurity. We need to develop a secure communications network with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, with regional and county-based surveillance personnel and with other diagnostic labs located at land-grant universities. Support of research on plant disease resistance... is needed in order to identify naturally occurring resistance genes against major foreign pathogens."

Filson emphasized Penn State Cooperative Extension's long tradition of helping the state's citizens deal with emergency situations. Extension has a network of communications (satellite downlinks, computers) in every county that allows rapid, two-way communications and sharing of important information.

Pennsylvania stands at a strategic point for distribution, with 40 percent of the nation's population lying within a 500-mile radius of Harrisburg. This combination of production, processing and distribution is unique and — for someone intent upon food or fiber as a target for disrupting the economy and society — places Pennsylvania in the cross-hairs.

Every farm should have a plan, too. We don't want to sound any kind of panic, but plans such as these are critical in these strange and trying times.

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