



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 16, 2026

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Governor Shapiro Unveils Pennsylvania's First-Ever Strategic Plan for Agriculture to Support Farmers, Drive Economic Growth, and Strengthen Global Competitiveness

The ten-year plan outlines the necessary steps to address four critical industry needs including access to capital, efficiency and profitability, modernization and innovation, and public engagement.

With more than 48,800 farms contributing over \$153 billion a year to the economy and supporting nearly 600,000 jobs, agriculture is foundational to Pennsylvania's heritage and future.

Since taking office, Governor Shapiro has prioritized strengthening both agriculture and food security — helping farmers, families, and communities thrive.

Read the full Strategic Plan for Agriculture at pa.gov/AgStrategicPlan.





Chester Springs, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro**, **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) Secretary Russell Redding**, and **Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Rick Siger** visited Milky Way Farm in Chester County to unveil Pennsylvania’s **first-ever, 10-year [Strategic Plan for Agriculture](#)**. Through this plan, the Shapiro Administration is working to support farmers and ag producers and ensure one of the Commonwealth’s largest industries remains profitable and globally competitive.

With **more than 48,800 farms supporting 600,000 jobs and driving more than \$153.2 billion in annual economic output**, agriculture is one of Pennsylvania’s largest industries. Understanding that impact, this plan outlines the necessary steps to address and improve four critical industry needs including **access to capital; efficiency and profitability; modernization and innovation; and public engagement**.

“When I took office, I made a commitment to put agriculture at the center of my Administration’s work to grow our economy and create opportunity, and we’ve done that,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “We’re investing in our farmers and our ag industry, addressing the unique challenges our farmers face, and growing and expanding this sector faster than ever before — but I know that farmers continue to face real challenges like federal trade policies, high costs, and a lack of reliable, high-speed internet. This plan provides a 10-year roadmap to build a stronger agricultural industry that will have the resources to thrive with a government that has their backs every step of the way — because our future runs right through Pennsylvania’s farmlands.”

After the Governor launched his [10-Year Economic Development Strategy](#) — which recognizes Pennsylvania’s agriculture and food industry as a major driver of economic growth — **Secretary Redding** began working with the **Office of Transformation and Opportunity** to develop this strategic plan, ensuring the next generation of Pennsylvania farmers can continue to succeed.

“Feeding all Pennsylvanians and fueling our economy is the driving force behind Pennsylvania’s new plan, and the more than \$268 million the Shapiro Administration has invested in agriculture since January 2023,” said **Agriculture Secretary Redding**. “The Shapiro Administration has recognized since the beginning that when agriculture thrives, we all thrive. That focus is driving us toward a Pennsylvania where innovation, resilience, and opportunity feed lasting prosperity. This 10-year plan is the roadmap.”

“Pennsylvania now has a blueprint for action that will serve the agriculture sector for the next decade — and it is absolutely critical because our entire state economy relies on the strength of our agriculture,” said **DCED Secretary Siger**. “Today’s release of the strategic plan is the start of a process to reinvigorate, revitalize, and futurize the entire agriculture ecosystem. We know this model works — we used this same approach in the 10-Year Economic Development Strategy we released in 2023. I’m excited to roll up our sleeves and make its vision a reality alongside Secretary Redding and his terrific team.”

Today’s announcement was made at the Chester Springs Creamery, a family-run business on the fourth-generation **Milky Way Farm**, owned and run by the Matthews family. The historic dairy farm is one of 2,378 that have been permanently preserved throughout Pennsylvania and was designated as a prestigious Century Farm in 2025 by the Shapiro Administration.

“The 103 acres of land where we stand today has been actively farmed for more than 300 years—and nurtured by our family for over a century. We understand the deep strength of an agricultural heritage rooted in hard work, passion for animal welfare, pride in producing quality products, and planning for the future,” said **Carolyn Eaglehouse, Co-Owner, Milky Way Farm**. “Like all businesses, farming practices must be ever-changing to adapt to new ideas and opportunities. This strategic plan identifies key pillars of growth and charts a clear and ambitious path forward — one that all of us at Milky Way Farm are deeply proud to stand behind.”

Milky Way Farm has 40 milking cows, ships out approximately 45,000 gallons of milk per month, and relies on agritourism through the creamery to generate income and employ technology like robotic milkers to increase efficiency and production. The Shapiro Administration also awarded the farm with a **\$15,000 [Farm Vitality Grant](#)** to help cover legal consulting and restructuring fees as ownership of the farm is passed down to the next generation of the Matthews family.

Building a Stronger Future for Pennsylvania Families and Farmers

As a result of the Shapiro Administration’s extensive collaboration and community engagement, the **[Strategic Plan for Agriculture](#) lays out five strategic priorities** to build a stronger, more competitive, and more connected agriculture industry:

- **Support Careers in Food and Agriculture** – Build the next generation of agricultural talent by aligning education, innovation, and workplace supports that make agriculture a career of choice.
- **Champion Industry Modernization & Resilience** – Strengthen competitiveness through innovation, technology, and infrastructure that improve efficiency, profitability, and adaptability to change.
- **Expand Market Access** – Expand Pennsylvania’s reach and recognition by connecting producers and consumers, building regional supply chains, and elevating the Pennsylvania agriculture brand.

- **Promote Land Access & Responsible Planning** – Ensure land remains productive, protected, and within reach for the next generation through creative access, stewardship, and strategic land use planning.
- **Optimize Customer Service & Resource Availability** – Make Pennsylvania’s agricultural support network more accessible, coordinated, and customer-focused, ensuring every farmer, producer, and business can access resources for success.

“If we want the next generation to build their futures in agriculture, we have to build the pathways that make those futures possible and this plan recognizes that the future of agriculture isn't built through any one program or investment. It's built by connecting education to employment, employment to opportunity, and opportunity to lasting economic viability,” said **Hannah Kinney Smith, Executive Director, Pasa Sustainable Agriculture**. “Pennsylvania already leads the nation in the number of young farmers, and with this strategic plan, we have an opportunity to lead in something even more important: the resources they need to thrive.”

“Pennsylvania agriculture is far more than a business, it is a legacy heritage industry and is a vital economic engine that supports and strengthens rural communities, creates jobs, and supports a host of businesses that contribute over \$153 billion in annual economic output into our Commonwealth economy. Chester County has demonstrated what is possible when agriculture is viewed through an Economic Development lens and has established AgConnect, a public private partnership with our Chester County Commissioners, to implement our county's agricultural Economic Development strategic plan. Through this partnership we have been able to expand our public outreach, connecting more community members to our food producers with business growth opportunities,” said **Gary Smith, Executive Strategist, Chester County Economic Development Council**. “We applaud the Governor and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for recognizing agriculture as a critical component of Pennsylvania’s long-term economic future and developing this 10 year strategy. We look forward to working with the Commonwealth as a partner to turn this vision into meaningful economic opportunity for our Pennsylvania agricultural industry.”

To inform and create the [plan](#), PDA and DCED staff hosted three workgroups with external stakeholders to develop the plan’s recommendations. PDA also expanded their public engagement and held four listening sessions, in coordination with the four General Assembly’s Agriculture & Rural Affairs Chairs, to help gather additional feedback.

The **four regional sessions** brought together **more than 200 farmers, agribusiness leaders, educators, lenders, and industry stakeholders** from over 40 counties.

"Our agriculture industry continues to be one of our top state economic drivers. It is important that we keep building on this momentum especially since our farmers help make this a reality," said **Senator Elder Vogel Jr., Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee**. "This 10-year plan to help expand our agricultural

footprint is a great long-term vision to ensure we continue to make a meaningful impact here in the commonwealth."

"This plan isn't something that's going to sit on a shelf — it's got benchmarks and goals to build our economy on — thanks to the leadership of Governor Shapiro, Secretary Redding, and Secretary Siger," said **Senator Judy Schwank, Minority Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee**. "This is unheard of on the national stage, but we're in such a big agricultural market on the seaboard of this country, and we have the infrastructure, the pieces, and the people to take this plan and make something happen with it."

"I'd like to thank Governor Shapiro and Sec. Redding for leading the development of the Strategic Plan for Agriculture," said **Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski, PA's 121st House District**. "When executed, the strategic developments, partnerships, and investments detailed throughout will serve the over 47,000 farms across our Commonwealth that contribute to the agriculture industry's \$12 billion economic footprint in our state's economy."

Governor Shapiro and his Administration are committed to strengthening both agriculture and food security — helping farmers, families, and communities thrive.

Going forward, the **Shapiro Administration** will begin using this plan to **guide strategic decisions, align investments, and direct the Commonwealth's resources where they can make the greatest difference**. That work will include analyzing the Commonwealth's existing programs to identify gaps for enhanced opportunity that will help accomplish each of the five, outlined priorities.

Find the complete plan, including success stories, industry perspectives, and recommendations for action in each priority area at pa.gov/AgStrategicPlan.

Investing in Pennsylvania's Legacy of Agricultural Excellence

Since taking office, **Governor Shapiro** has worked to spur Pennsylvania's agricultural and economic momentum by investing in long-term growth to ensure that farms and agribusinesses across the Commonwealth can compete and win by:

- **Investing [\\$30 million through Pennsylvania's Agricultural Innovation Grant Program](#)** — a first of its kind in the nation — to help farmers adopt technology that improves efficiency, addresses workforce challenges, strengthens sustainability and grows their businesses.
- **Expanding Pennsylvania's Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System** with a historic investment in the new [Keystone Lab at Penn State Beaver](#).
- **Creating [five new apprenticeship programs](#)** that help serve the agriculture industry while ensuring future generations of farmers continue succeeding.

- **Investing \$13.8 million each year in the [PA Farm Bill](#)**, supporting youth education and workforce development initiatives aimed at helping students and employers in both rural and communities to compete.
- **[Leading the nation in farmland preservation](#)**, with **6,781 farms and 671,082 acres in 58 counties protected permanently** for agricultural use.
- **Investing \$4.1 million annually** to support the **Centers of Excellence in [Plant, Beef, Poultry & Livestock](#), and [Dairy](#)** sectors to provide farmers and producers with resources and services that enhance the long-term vitality of Pennsylvania farms.

Last month, the Governor also secured a historic **\$1.2 billion investment** from Chobani to establish its first dairy product manufacturing operation in PA. As the **largest ever private-sector investment in PA agriculture industry**, Chobani's investment will create 900 full-time jobs and expand opportunities for more than 4,000 dairy farmers — including the Milky Way Farm.

Read the full Strategic Plan for Agriculture [here](#) and learn more about Governor Shapiro's support for Pennsylvania farmers and leading agriculture industry [here](#).

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