



Beef Bytes
October 1, 2013

Greetings from Versant Strategies:

As the fall legislative session gathers momentum this week, it may be helpful to review the legislative tracking provided by Versant. Attached, you will find a lengthy document that lists all the bills and co-sponsorship memos that are being followed for your particular interest. Note, the HB means House Bill while SB means Senate Bill. The HCO and SCO indicate House or Senate Co-Sponsorship Memos which have not yet been introduced as bills. Please keep in mind that only a very small percentage of bills (less than ten percent and closer to five) ever reach the Governor's desk for consideration. We can provide you with an updated version of this piece anytime.

The legislative update below shows only movement since the last newsletter. This could mean being placed on a voting calendar or a committee meeting agenda. You may see some bills noted on consecutive weeks in the News You Can Use because the meeting at which the bill is being considered is a few weeks away from the weekly update you are receiving.

Also, included in the newsletter are press clips and the tongue in cheek capitol round up. We can tailor the newsletter to your needs. Further, you can add announcements for us to include by sending them to us prior to noon on Monday.

Have a good week and let us know how we can serve you.

MeeCee

Articles of Interest

CBE News

The PA Center for Beef Excellence is proud to support Pennsylvania cattle producers at the 2013 Keystone International Livestock Expo. One event that is always popular is the Keystone Barbeque Contest, featuring a variety of divisions for chefs to show off their cooking skills with meats produced right in Pennsylvania. Be sure to check it out!

Pennsylvania News:

[Keystone International Livestock Expo](#)

The 2013 Keystone International Livestock Exposition is set to run September 28-October 6 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. Exhibitors from around the country will show

cattle, hogs, lambs and horses. Saturday, October 5 will include sales for both purebred heifers and show calves.

[Gas Lease Battle](#)

An expected settlement between Chesapeake Energy and a group of Pennsylvania landowners may not come to pass, and the issue could still end up in court. The landowners recently filed a complaint that the proposed payment is too low, and asked the court to intervene. The difference comes due to expenses that were deducted from checks before the landowners were paid.

National News:

[Climate Change and Grain Production](#)

A study shows some of the effects of climate change on US and global grain production. Changes to weather patterns are already having an effect on the crop mix across the country and will continue to impact what areas are prominent in growing corn and other crops. There may be a shift from the Mississippi basin to the Great Lakes and Pacific Northwest for grain transport.

[Futures Market Rejects Zilmax](#)

The Chicago Mercantile Exchange announced that after October 7 it will no longer accept cattle that have been fed Zilmax for contract fulfillment. This follows decisions by several large meatpackers to stop slaughtering cattle that have received the supplement. These cattle are no longer 'marketable' and therefore cannot be used against a contract.

[Rural Economy Outlook](#)

Analysts are predicting a slight downturn in the rural economy. This is due to uncertainty over the farm bill and budget as well as falling crop prices. Farmland values and employment opportunities are still strong, but both fell somewhat in the models.

Global News:

[Beef in Argentina](#)

Argentina was once a major exporter of beef products and a competitor to the US beef industry, but government policies in recent years have destroyed many marketing opportunities. These policies included banning exports and imposing an export tax to keep domestic beef prices affordable. These are valuable lessons as the US develops export policies.

[Climate Change Practices](#)

The United Nations claims that livestock producers can reduce greenhouse gas emissions on their operations by utilizing common technologies in livestock feeding and manure handling. If some changes also increase production, it would be a win-win situation with benefits for total food production and profitability as well.

Cattle Management Articles:

[Selecting for Carcass Traits](#)

Beef producers can use ultrasound to measure carcass traits even on live animals, helping with selection for high performance and profitable cattle. The data can also be used to determine Expected Progeny Differences and selection indexes to compare animals. Selection should never be single-trait focused, but done with an emphasis on total performance.

[When to Castrate](#)

Bull calves may be heavier than steers at weaning, but data suggest that calves castrated at or after weaning actually take longer to finish and weigh less at slaughter than calves castrated early in life. In addition, there is less stress and health concern when calves are castrated soon after birth or within the first three months.

[Culling Cows](#)

Producers can receive significant income from the sales of cull cows, but there are several factors to consider when deciding which cows to cull. These include pregnancy status, disposition, performance, health and more. Most cows will pay for themselves by about 6 years of age, but careful culling should improve herd performance.

- 09-30-2013 [**USDA - Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup for the Week Ending September 29, 2013**](#)
(Press Release)
- 09-27-2013 [**Inside PDA for September 27, 2013**](#)
(Press Release)
- 09-27-2013 [**Farmers face labor shortages in the fields**](#)
FRESNO, Calif. -- With the harvest in full swing on the West Coast, farmers in California and other states say they can't find enough people to pick high value crops such as grapes, peppers, apples and pears... - [AP](#)
- 09-27-2013 [**Senate funding bill strips controversial provision on genetically modified crops**](#)
The short-term spending plan moving through the Senate would eliminate legislative language that allows farmers to continue growing genetically modified crops even if a court has blocked their use. The Farmer Assurance Provision — dubbed the Monsanto Protection Act by... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-25-2013 [**Time Short, House Says It Seeks a New Farm Bill**](#)
WASHINGTON — House leaders on Tuesday said they were working with their Senate counterparts toward a new five-year farm bill, just days after the House pushed through a bill that would slash billions of dollars from the food stamp program. But with only a few days left before the current farm bill expires at the... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-24-2013 [**PENNVEST, DEP Announce Final Nutrient Credit Trading Auction for 2013**](#)
(Press Release)

Legislative Activity

See attachment for all bills being tracked since beginning of 2013/14 session and current status of those bills. Questions? Call us.

Capitol Review

In Other News

- 09-30-2013 [**Newly insured will be met with shortage of care providers**](#)
As Pennsylvanians begin to shop on Tuesday for government-subsidized insurance, health care providers question whether they can accommodate the anticipated influx of patients. "We're going to be inundated with patients," said Dr. Jeannette South-Paul, a family doctor at UPMC's Matilda Theiss Health Center in... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-30-2013 [**Q&A: Tuesday a big day in health care law rollout**](#)
Q. What's happening Tuesday?.. - [AP](#)
- 09-30-2013 [**FARMERS SPEAK OUT**](#)
The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau says moving food from the farm to the supermarket, processor or feed mill is becoming more costly for farmers across Pennsylvania because of the state's deteriorating road and bridge system. Despite the likelihood of higher user fees or taxes, farmers are urging the... - [Indiana Gazette](#)
- 09-30-2013 [**Products with ready-to-eat chicken and ham, including salads, are recalled over possible Listeria contamination**](#)
More than 19,000 pounds of ready-to-eat chicken and ham products are being recalled because of possible Listeria bacteria contamination. The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service says the foods were distributed to retailers and food services nationwide. The items include several kinds... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 09-27-2013 [**Ask Well: Is It Safe to Eat Soy?**](#)
Soy has been a dietary staple in Asia for many centuries. Some studies have found that it may offer some cardiovascular benefits, though the evidence at this point is more suggestive than conclusive. As far as any downside, most of the health concerns about soy stem from its... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-26-2013 [**DOS: Oct. 7 is Deadline to Register to Vote in Municipal Election**](#)
(Press Release)
- 09-26-2013 [**Farm-to-Table Dinner at Seed Farm**](#)
FARM-TO-TABLE DINNER Chef Lee Chizmar, co-owner of Bolete, will showcase late summer bounty at the The Seed Farm's annual Farm-to-Table Dinner. The event, 4- 8 p.m. Oct. 6, will include farm tours, live music by a guitar and fiddle duo, and a silent auction featuring dinner for eight at Bolete, a year of organic... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-26-2013 [**Average Pennsylvania costs for marketplace health plans unveiled**](#)
Pennsylvanians got their first glimpse Wednesday at how much it could cost to buy coverage on the Health Insurance Marketplace. It's not as much as some experts predicted. A single 27-year-old Pennsylvania resident who earns \$25,000 a year will pay an average of \$109 a month for the cheapest plan available and \$145 a... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-26-2013 [**Colo. Farmers Arrested in Fatal Listeria Outbreak**](#)
DENVER — The owners of a Colorado cantaloupe farm have been arrested on charges stemming from a listeria outbreak in 2011 that killed 33 people... / Federal prosecutors say brothers Eric and Ryan Jensen were arrested Thursday on charges of introducing adulterated food into interstate... - [AP](#)
- 09-25-2013 [**Bills to shrink size of Pa. Legislature advances in state House**](#)

After seeing his proposal to amend the state Constitution to shrink both chambers of the General Assembly pass the House only to die in the Senate last session, state House Speaker Sam Smith is trying again using a different approach. Rather than having one bill call for shrinking both chambers, Smith,... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

09-24-2013 [**PDA: Public Invited to Enjoy Keystone Classic Barbeque State Championship**](#)
(Press Release)

09-24-2013 [**Pension reform, property tax shifts and cyber-schools top PA House leader's fall agenda**](#)

House Majority Leader Mike Turzai is not the King of Pennsylvania. But he does run the state House's voting schedule, so it's worth noting that Turzai paid a lot of lip service in a Harrisburg speech Monday to modernizing the state's pension systems, property tax reform and... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

09-24-2013 [**Turzai calls for up-or-down vote on \\$2.5 billion PA transportation package**](#)
HARRISBURG — As majority leader in the state House, Rep. Mike Turzai gets to decide what comes to the floor for a vote. If he wants it, he'll get it. And Turzai, a Republican from Allegheny, apparently wants a vote on a \$2.5 billion transportation infrastructure spending plan. And he wants it soon.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)