

# AG QUARTERLY

October 2025



BERKS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Kimberly Fies | Amanda Burkard-Sell | Mary Shah  
Clyde Myers | Ashley Griesemer | Sam Bond | Rachel Painter | Emily Goense



## WHAT WE DO

The Berks County Department of Agriculture promotes agriculture in Berks County by preserving farmland, invigorating agricultural economic development, and connecting our community to agricultural resources.

## WHO WE ARE

We are a department of the County of Berks, established in 2015 to serve Berks County residents. We are dedicated to ensuring a thriving agricultural industry in Berks County.

### **Credits**

Content and editing by Berks County Dept. of Agriculture staff; template design by Rick Royer, Berks County Planning.  
Cover photo credit: Eric Maier



Preservation Spotlight.....	4
Tercha Farms	
Preservation Stats.....	5
Q2 Highlights.....	6
Our Work in Numbers.....	8
2025 Objectives.....	9
Ag Fact.....	11
Upcoming.....	12



2025 Berks County Dairy Princess, Brinley Hess and Lil' Dairy Miss, Jordie Kelchner

## Tercha Farms - Tercha Family

Settlement #s 83, 128, & 734

*Excerpts from "A Lifetime of Involvement in Agriculture" by Clyde A. B. Myers as published in the Reading Eagle.*



- Tercha Farms is operated by Robert & Melinda Tercha, who are the third generation. They grow corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay on their 320 preserved acres in Longswamp Township (with a small portion in Lehigh County).
- Products are sold to FM Browns and Ron Kurtz Grain Hauling, supporting the local agriculture economy.
- The Terchas support the future of agriculture in the county as active members of the Kutztown Young Farmers, Farm Bureau, and Tipton Pioneer Grange, along with renting land to a beginning farmer.

***"Existing farmers need to help the next generation get started in farming. Along with Land Preservation, the real responsibility of the farming future is on the shoulders of the current farmers. They must allow and encourage their children to help make decisions on the farm and keep them involved if they want them to stay on the farm."***

**Please see our website for full articles on preserved farms.**





# AG LAND PRESERVATION STATS

5

## 2025 Report



839

Farms  
Preserved

79903.8  
Acres  
Preserved

### 2025 Totals:

Farms preserved: 8

Acres preserved: 589.70

### Program Total:

County invested: \$85.7M

State invested: \$95.9M

Landowner Donated Value: \$42.2 M

The Berks County Department of Agriculture oversees the administration of the Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACE) Program, which permanently preserves Berks County's farmland. Berks County is a leader in both the state and the nation for preserved farms and celebrated the approval of over 80,000 acres of forever farmland, some of which will be settled later this year.

# Q3 HIGHLIGHTS

6

## Berks County Farm Market & Festival

The Berks County Department of Agriculture partnered with the Berks County Parks & Recreation Department to present Berk County's first Pop-up Farmer's Market in conjunction with a Farm History Festival at the Berks County Heritage Center, as part of the Celebration of America 250 PA Berks.

Participants were treated to demonstrations, wagon rides and tours of the buildings and grounds, including the garden area which is maintained by Penn State Extension Master Gardeners. 20 vendors and food trucks offered various local good for sale. Over Home Alpacas came with a mama alpaca and her baby cria. Danny Spec provided entertaining music and dialog while Jennifer Yount gave grilled corn salad recipe demonstrations with samples through out the day. There was even a stilt-walking scarecrow to top things off!



This initiative was to help introduce Berks County residents to some of the local products available to them which can be found on the Berks County Local Food Map. This map contains links to over 260 locations in Berks County to purchase local products direct from farmers and producers. Visit [www.growtogetherberks.com/directory](http://www.growtogetherberks.com/directory) to see what you can find near you.



# Q3 HIGHLIGHTS

7

## Fair Participation

The Berks County Department of Ag is a sponsor of our local community fairs each year. You can find our booth packed with information at Kempton Fair (June), Berks County Fair (July), Kutztown Fair (August), & Oley Fair (September).



## Penn State University Ag Progress Day Visit

The Berks County Dept of Ag was invited to join Commissioner Leinbach and students from Schuylkill Valley FFA and their advisor at Ag Progress days. We listened to several speakers discuss the future of agriculture in the State and nationally. PA Secretary of Ag, Russel Redding and Governor Shapiro spoke with the FFA students and thanked them for their role in the future of agriculture.



## Executive Director Honored

Executive Director, Kim Fies, was honored with the Berks County Conservation District Chair's Award at their annual Banquet on July 28<sup>th</sup>. The award was presented to Fies for her commitment and dedication to the agriculture industry and her support of local farmers. Staff was in attendance to celebrate Fies and the other award winners, including Hamburg teacher Sherry Fuhrmann, who had been nominated by the Department for the Environmental Educator of the Year. It was a wonderful night to recognize some important members of Berks County's agriculture community.

# OUR WORK IN NUMBERS

8



## 2025 Q3 Online Presence

Our staff continue to promote agriculture and share resources with thousands of Berks County residents via Facebook, the online Local Food Map, and the Berks Ag Event Calendar.

**6412** GrowTogether  
Website Users

**8779** Food Map &  
Events Calendar  
Views

**264** Local Farms &  
Vendors Listed  
on Food Map

**118** AgEvents  
on Calendar

**55,146** Facebook  
Page Views

**106** Facebook  
Posts



## 2025 Third Quarter Events

**500+** Berks County Farm  
Market & Festival  
attendees

**60+** Journalists & Social  
Media Influencers  
learned about Berks  
Ag at the MATPRA  
conference dinner

**2000+** Promotional items &  
informational  
literature handed out  
at 5 fairs & festivals

**70%** Increase in Social  
Media Views



# 2025 OBJECTIVES

## Third Quarter Update

Our team has continued to make key advances on our annual objectives in 2025.

### Continue strengthening the agricultural land preservation program.

- Completed the selection process for the 2025 ranking.
- Conducted Agricultural Conservation Easement settlements on 2 farms totaling 217.4 acres
- Represented Berks County's leading ACE Program at milestone events in York and Cumberland Counties

### Refining Department of Agriculture's strategy, function, and branding.

- Participating in Farm Bureau meeting and special events to enhance our messaging and goals.
- Participated in a municipal joint planning session to discuss agriculture programs and trends as they relate to zoning and ordinances.

### Continue to promote the diverse ag career opportunities.

- Coordinated with Manufacture Resource Center to expand Ag industries participation in the What's So Cool competition, resulting in Giorgi Mushroom participating this year.

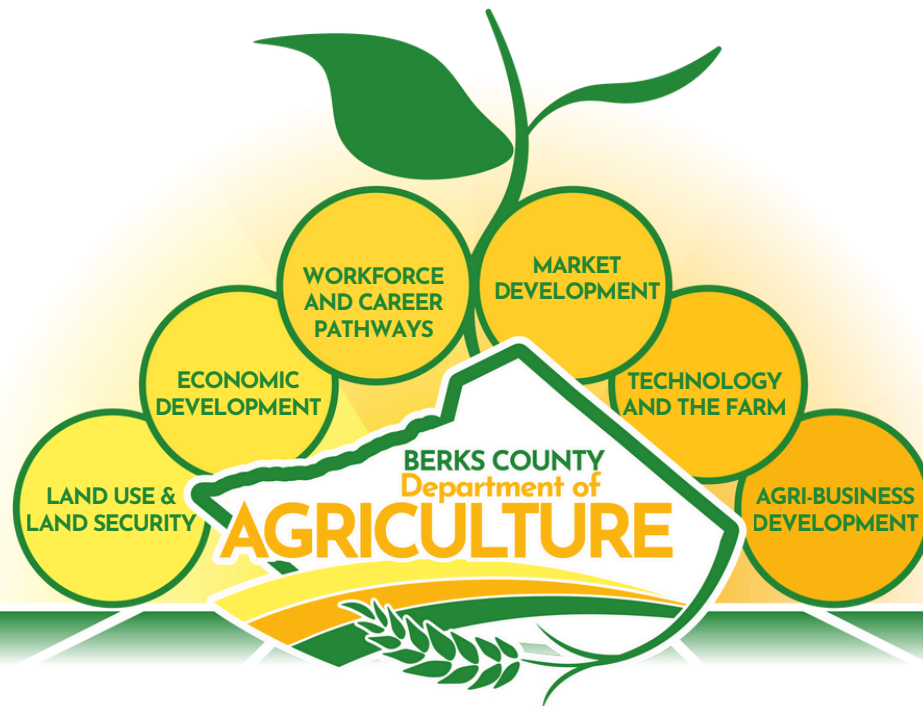
### Facilitate exposure of our value added producers to wider audience.

- Co-Hosted first pop-up farmers market where 20 vendors were visited by over 500 consumers.

## Berks County Department of Agriculture GROWING BERKS FOCUS AREAS

### Want to know more?

Don't hesitate to reach out - we'd love to hear from you.



## Can't have Baseball without agriculture

### The anatomy of a baseball

About 80,000 Rawlings baseballs are produced for Major League Baseball each year in Costa Rica. **How they're constructed:**

**The pill:** A cork surrounded by two rubber coverings

Four layers of **yarn**,  
Four-ply **gray wool**

Three-ply  
**white wool**

Three-ply  
**gray wool**

White  
**poly/  
cotton**

Two pieces  
of **cowhide**  
are glued  
to the ball;  
88 inches of  
red thread  
comprise the  
108 stitches

**Weight:**

5.0 oz. to 5.25 oz.

**Diameter:**

2.86" to 2.94"

**Circumference:**

9" to 9.25"

■ Rubbed with Delaware River mud for off-white appearance and better grip



Although Cowhide and Steerhide leather are the most popular leathers for baseball gloves, other types of leather exist. Each type has its own set of characteristics and advantages

**Pigskin Leather** - Pigskin leather baseball gloves offer a unique combination of affordability, durability, and flexibility

**Full-Grain Leather** - Full-grain cattle leather baseball gloves are made from the top layer of the hide, preserving the natural grain pattern. This gives every glove a unique appearance and is the toughest part of the animal's hide

**Kip Leather** -

Kip leather baseball gloves are premium quality gloves. They are a top choice for professional and elite players. Kip leather comes from the hides of young cattle, making it soft and lightweight

## Plus bats are made from maple or ash





**Would you like to partner with us for future events? Give us a call or email us: 610-378-1844 or [DeptofAg@BerksPA.gov](mailto:DeptofAg@BerksPA.gov)**

## **Superintendents Day | October 7, 2025**

**Audience:** School superintendents and administrators

**Description:** One-day tour of the agribusiness industry of Berks County for administrators to better understand the agriculture industry and career opportunities for students.

**Partners:** BCIU and local agribusinesses

## **R-BAR Advocacy Breakfast | October 14, 2025**

**Audience:** Berks County realtors

**Description:** The Department is partnering with R-BAR to help host their annual Legislative / Government Affairs breakfast and will discuss the Growing Berks Plan and how agriculture and preservation are part of SMART Growth.

**Partners:** Reading-Berks Association of Realtors

## **Agriculture & Natural Resources Career & Job Fair | November 13, 2025**

**Audience:** Berks County High School Students and Job Seekers

**Description:** Exhibitors from various agriculture and natural resources careers connect with students and job seekers to showcase the varied careers in the industry and provide career opportunities and internships.

**Partners:** Local agribusinesses, colleges and universities, and agency partners

## **Agriculture Tire Collection | November 20, 2025**

**Audience:** Berks County Farmers

**Description:** Free tire collection and recycling event that allows farmers to bring old tractor and large truck tires to stop the spread of mosquito borne illnesses and benefit the environment along with removing the tires from areas of the farm that can be better utilized for ag activities.



**CONTACT US OR STOP BY!**

610-378-1844 | [DeptofAg@BerksPA.gov](mailto:DeptofAg@BerksPA.gov)  
1238 County Welfare Rd., Leesport, PA 19533  
Office hours: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
[www.berskpa.gov/departments/agriculture](http://www.berskpa.gov/departments/agriculture)