

# GYF FEBRUARY NEWS

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### PYFA State Officers

Jason Rentzel, President  
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Dan Wilkinson, National Institute  
2019, co-chair

### Advisor

Deb Kammerer  
717-334-2760

## GYF Spring Tour March 9 2017 Keepin' it local!



### SCHEDULE:

- \* 8:30 Brownvalley Farm,  
295 Hickory Rd., Littlestown
- \* 9:30 Liberty View Creamery,  
467 Orphanage Rd, Littlestown
- \* 10:30 Stoney Point Farm Market,  
1318 Frederick Pike, Littlestown
- \* 11:30 Mason Dixon Distillery,  
331 East Water St., Gettysburg
- \* 1:30 Mason Dixon Farm Shop,  
1800 Mason Dixon Rd, Gettysburg

RSVP requested by Monday 3/6  
Call 717-334-2760 or email [dkammerer@gettysburg.k12.pa.us](mailto:dkammerer@gettysburg.k12.pa.us)



### TOURS:

Brownvalley Farm, meet briefly to discuss disbursement of balance of Monsanto funds, organize car pooling to sites

Liberty View Creamery, a 150 head goat dairy owned/operated by Matt Carman. Dairy includes an eight stall milking parlor and processing plant. Produce and process Grade A whole pasteurized creamline goat milk. One of only 3 federally inspected and approved plants in Pa processing Grade A goat milk.

Stoney Point Farm Market, a family owned and operated country farmers' market with over 85 years of experience in providing area residents with wholesome goods - primarily fresh cut meats, locally grown produce and homemade deli items.

Mason Dixon Distillery, small batch distillery using locally grown grains. Tour followed by lunch.

Mason Dixon Farm Shop, a multi generational large scale dairy operation demands a commercial scale up to date shop.

## Dates to Note

### **Feb. 21, Tuesday**

GYF class on Microbial Products, presented by Mark Shannan, CCA and rep for Pathway Biologic. 7:30 p.m., GHS ag classroom.

### **Feb. 22, Wednesday**

ACCD Soil Quality Day, contact B. Sneeringer at ACCD for registration and information 717-334-0636 or bsneeringer@adamscounty.us

### **March 9, Thursday**

GYF Spring Tour, see article, RSVP requested by Tuesday, March 7

### **April 21, Friday**

Spring Banquet, GYF/FFA, 6:30 at GHS cafeteria. More info to follow.



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

# Farm Leaders Welcome USDA Chief Nominee Sonny Perdue

The pick for USDA'S next leader came late in the nomination process. Ag communities were starting to wonder if they had been overlooked with nominees named for all cabinet posts except Agriculture. Perdue was the final choice and was announced just 2 days before inauguration.

A veterinarian by trade, Perdue was elected to serve Georgia as governor in 2003. He was raised on a crop and dairy farm and has first hand experience with grain production and sales. He owned and ran a company, Perdue Partners, which dealt in grain production and trading and served on the board of the National Feed and Grain Association from 2014 until his nomination.

NFGA President Randy Gordon said in a statement following Perdue's nomination that "Governor Perdue is an accomplished, innovative, problem-solving and proven public servant, and is an excellent choice to serve as secretary of agriculture."

Addition endorsements came from American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall who said "I have known Gov. Perdue for years. I've seen firsthand his commitment to the business of agriculture as we worked together on issues facing farmers and ranchers in our home state of Georgia. He understands the challenges facing rural America because that's where he was born and raised. He is a businessman who recognizes the impact immigration reform, trade agreements and regulation have on a farmer's bottom line and ability to stay in business from one season to the next."

National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson similarly affirmed Mr. Perdue as a "solid pick" but noted that his late nomination and confirmation would present a challenge in having to deal with Federal budget issues almost immediately. A statement from the National Chicken Council added to the endorsements, "As a veterinarian, agribusiness owner and a governor who established an agricultural advisory committee in Georgia, he understands and appreciates the importance of American agriculture both here and abroad."

Even with the support of major ag organizations behind him, Perdue will face a steep climb. The new agriculture secretary will have to build consensus with congressional Republicans who have proposed large cuts in nutrition programs and farm subsidies. Proposals to convert USDA's Food Stamp program, the largest antihunger initiative of the federal government, into block grants for states to run have met with resistance from advocates. A proposed update to the school lunch program in 2016 became deadlocked in Congress so that task is still on the list. Cotton and dairy farmers have complained that the 2014 Farm Law was insufficient to protect their operations from low market prices.

A new Farm Bill is due to be written in 2018 with many competing interests vying for larger pieces of an ever shrinking federal budget but at least Perdue's confirmation is expected to proceed smoothly.

# ***Microbes in Crop Production***

## ***Let's Take a Closer Look***

Plan to attend the Feb. 21st class at the Gettysburg High School to learn about this frontier technology in crop production products. Mark Shannan, CCA and representative for Pathway Microbial Technology will instruct us in the emerging use of added microbes in crop production systems.

Pathway Biologic is an applied microbial science company in the rapidly growing field of microbial products for use in plant production. Microbial science involves the use of microorganisms which when applied to seed, soil, plants, and fertilizer promotes plant growth by increasing the supply and availability of nutrients to the plant. (see [pathwaybiologic.com/agriculture/](http://pathwaybiologic.com/agriculture/) ). The addition of "polymicrobial blends" as Pathway terms these products is intended to boost soil value, optimize plant growth, increase crop performance, and improve the efficiency of fertilizer and water in the growing process.

Microbial research has recently captured the attention of major agricultural institutions. At Penn State University ongoing projects in microbiome research will benefit from the establishment of the Center for Microbiome Research. Neil Sharkey, PSU vice president for research, recently announced plans for the Center. Sharkey explained, "Researchers

have been studying the interactions between communities of microorganisms and their environments for over a century, but microbiome research has exploded recently with the emergence of new and relatively affordable technologies, allowing us to test hypotheses that previously were difficult to examine."

The Center will be a collaborative endeavor among several departments and colleges, including the the Food and Agriculture Microbiomes research group from the College of Ag Sciences and the Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences. The focus of the Food and Ag research cluster has been developing biological tools to improve human health and enhance plant and animal health and productivity. The Center is expected to improve collaboration among disciplines researching various aspects of microbe activity.

To staff the Center, PSU plans to hire additional staff including positions in the Dept. of Food Science and Dept of Plant Science. Plant Science researchers will be investigating microbial activity in plant root biology and rhizosphere interactions.

**Mark Your Calendar:**

**Tuesday, Feb 21, 7:30 p.m.**

**Gettysburg High School**

Ag Classroom

(enter from door near greenhouse in rear of building)