



PENNSYLVANIA VEGETABLE MARKETING AND RESEARCH PROGRAM

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Fresh Ideas

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The Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program is a state-wide marketing order established by a grower referendum, governed by a grower board and funded by grower assessments.

The Program's sole purpose is to serve the vegetable growers of Pennsylvania by promoting Pennsylvania-grown vegetables and funding practical vegetable production research.

A Year of Evaluating and Strategic Planning

This past year was a year of evaluating and strategic planning for the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program. Funded almost entirely by grants from the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program and from the state Department of Agriculture, the evaluation and planning processes will help set the future course for the both the Program and the Pennsylvania vegetable industry in general.

Jeff Manning, a nationally recognized expert on agricultural commodity promotions who was closely involved in the development of the highly successful "Got Milk!" promotion, initially for the California dairy industry and eventually for the national dairy industry, was hired to evaluate the Program's promotion efforts. After studying the reports and statistics on the Program's promotion efforts - distribution of point-of-purchase materials; press relations; recipe contest; website and "August is Pennsylvania Produce Month" - and after surveying several key industry leaders, Mr. Manning met with the Program's Board in State College in March 2014. His recommendation was that the Program concentrate all its promotion efforts on a month-long promotion of Pennsylvania vegetables during the month of August, emphasizing their availability at farmer's markets and roadside farm markets.

According to the Program Board began implementation of Mr. Manning's recommendations this year by discontinuing the press relations campaign and the recipe contest. The "August is Pennsylvania Produce Month" promotion was continued as before with plans to expand it in 2015 with SCBG funds in 2015. The Board does plan to continue its distribution of point-of-purchase materials

although the Board hopes to make it more self-sustaining financially.

The Program in partnership with the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA), also went through a strategic planning process. The strategic planning process, conducted by Penn State Extension, consisted of four regional focus groups designed to collect stakeholder input on challenges and priorities, followed by a day-long

strategic planning session at State College with PVGA Directors, Program Board members and other stakeholders including auction representatives, extension educators and Penn State researchers. The result is a plan with five key goals focusing on



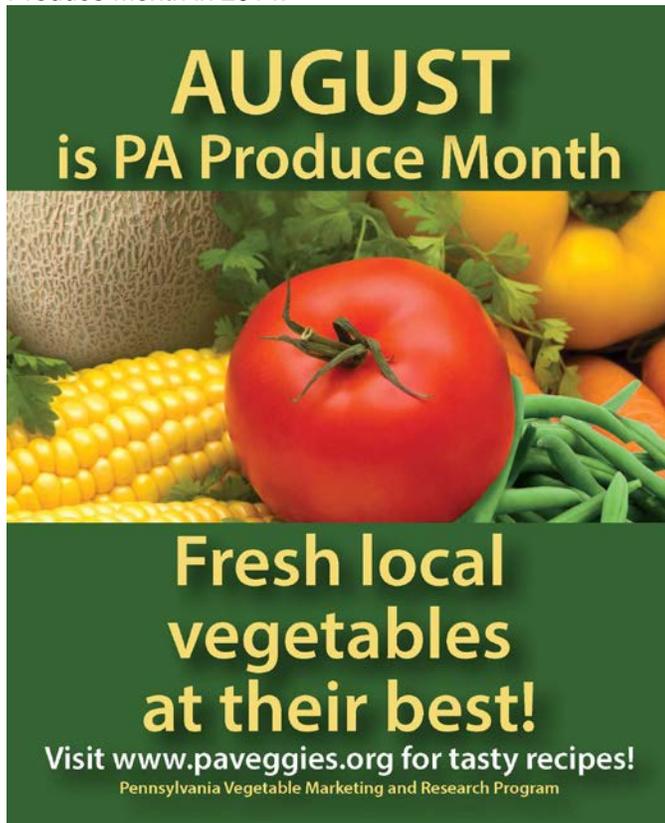
marketing, research, education, advocacy and crisis management. There are objectives and strategies for each goal. For example, the marketing goal includes increasing the number of Good-Agricultural-Practices-(GAP)-certified growers. Another example under the advocacy goal is to provide workshops and other tools to help PVGA members with grassroots advocacy.

At the State College planning session, participants developed this statement of core values, which describes the Pennsylvania vegetable industry. *We are a diversified industry using a variety of production and marketing methods to supply fresh and processing vegetables. As primarily family farms, we share a respect for our heritage and way of life and a responsibility for environmental stewardship. Our growers sell directly to consumers through roadside farm markets, community farmer's*

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August Celebrated as Pennsylvania Produce Month

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Program conducted its ninth celebration of August as Pennsylvania Produce Month in 2014.



To encourage greater participation in Produce Month, the Program mailed six small PA Produce Month posters to 335 growers who ordered the Program's other point-of-purchase materials. About 65 growers ordered the Produce Month kit which included two large posters and 20 special Produce Month price cards. Over 320 Produce Month kits were shipped to the various produce auctions

Planning and Evaluation

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markets, and CSA's as well as working with auctions, cooperatives, retailers, restaurants, wholesalers, brokers, processors and others to market and distribute our products. Our stakeholders include our suppliers, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Penn State Extension educators and researchers, and other agricultural organizations. Our most important stakeholders are our customers who enjoy and have come to depend on our great tasting fresh vegetables year after year.

Both the Program and PVGA will be using the goals and strategies developed at the state-wide session to guide the workplans of the two groups in the coming years. In many cases the Program's and Association's activities were already working toward those goals but some new strategies have been suggested and will hopefully be developed in the coming years.

across the state where they were available to growers and to the non-grower marketers who purchase produce at the auctions.

The Program also offered the PA Produce Month posters and price cards to the major supermarket chains in the state. Posters and/or price cards were requested for about 360 stores by Acme Markets, Karns, Lancaster Family-Owned Markets, Redner's Warehouse Markets, ShopRite (Wakefern) and SuperValu as well as Four Seasons Produce.

Originally the Program planned to use \$10,000 in SCBG funding to continue the radio advertising for PA Produce Month that it has done the past several years. The Board decided to hold that funding to help launch a new and improved August promotion in 2015.

Point-of-Purchase Items Shipped to Growers

The Program shipped point-of-purchase materials to 414 growers for the 2014 season. Informational "How to Use" cards on less well known crops (beets, eggplant, kale, leeks, spaghetti squash, summer squash, Swiss chard, and winter squash) were shipped for the first time this year. Plastic "T-shirt" shopping bags were purchased and will be available to growers for the 2015 season.

The "T-shirt" bags contain the following imprint in dark green on one side and the PA Preferred logo in blue and gold on the other side. They are expected to be offered for \$25 per thousand plus shipping.



PENNSYLVANIA

Vegetable Marketing & Research Program

Some items, like the banner and "PA Preferred" price paddles could only be distributed to growers who are licensed by the Department of Agriculture to use the "PA Preferred" logo. The Department of Agriculture has

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Program Helps to Fund 15 Research Projects.

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Board allocated \$20,000 in assessment funds for vegetable research in 2014. In cooperation with the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, which contributed an additional \$56,000 from its General Fund and \$4,000 from the Simply Sweet Onion growers, the two vegetable growers organizations will be funding 15 different projects. The Association's research funds are earned by the members at the Farm Show and Ag Progress Days Food Booths. The approved projects total about \$80,000.

The projects funded are listed below. Projects marked with an asterisk "*" were only approved for partial funding.

<u>Breeding Tomatoes for Early Blight and Late Blight Resistance and Other Desirable Horticultural Characteristics for Production in Pennsylvania</u>	
<i>Majid R. Foolad, Penn State Univ.</i>	\$12,000
<u>Efficacy of Biochemical and Microbial Biofungicides for the Management of Late Blight on Tomatoes</u>	
<i>Beth K. Gugino, Penn State Univ.</i>	\$3,280
<u>Plum / Roma Tomato Variety Trial 2014</u>	
<i>Steven Bogash, Penn State Extension</i>	\$4,919
<u>Western Flower Thrips Management in Field Staked Tomatoes</u>	
<i>Steven Bogash, Penn State Extension</i>	\$5,874
<u>Development of Insect Resistant Sweet Corn Cultivars</u>	
<i>Surinder Chopra and Shelby Fleischer, Penn State Univ.</i>	\$4,500
<u>Keeping Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Profitable: Statewide Broccoli Cultivar Trials</u>	
<i>Elsa Sánchez, Tim Elkner, Tom Butzler, Steve Bogash, Lee Stivers, Bob Pollock, Bill Lamont, Penn State Univ. and Extension</i>	\$10,548*
<u>Striped Cucumber Beetle (SCB) Management with Plant and Microbial Metabolites</u>	
<i>Shelby J. Fleischer and Tim Elkner, Penn State Univ. and Extension</i>	\$4,500
<u>Disease Resistant Pumpkin Variety Evaluation</u>	
<i>Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension</i>	4,000
<u>High Tunnel Trellised Cucumber Variety Trial, Year 2</u>	
<i>Steven Bogash, Penn State Extension</i>	\$2,786
<u>Colored Bell Pepper High Tunnel Economics Trial: Year 2</u>	
<i>Steven Bogash and Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension</i>	\$4,390
<u>Evaluating Potential Herbicides for Row-Middles with Plasticulture</u>	
<i>Mark VanGessel, Univ. of Delaware and Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Univ.</i>	\$5,000
<u>Developing Data to Support New Herbicide Registrations for Snap Beans</u>	
<i>Robin Bellinder, Cornell Univ.</i>	\$ 6,000
<u>Survey of Soilborne Snap Bean Pathogens in Pennsylvania and Establishment of a Research Plot Dedicated to Snap Bean Root Pathogen Research</u>	
<i>Beth Gugino, Penn State Univ.</i>	\$2,923

Survey of the Survival of *E. coli* from Manure under Field Conditions

Jeffrey LeJeune, Ohio State Univ. \$2,500

Continued Evaluation of the Effects of Inoculum Pressure and Onion Maturity at Harvest on Harvest and Post-Harvest Losses Due to Bacterial Diseases

Beth K. Gugino and Emily E. Pfeufer, Penn State Univ. \$6,779

2014 Research Reports Available

The reports from the above research projects will be available on the Program's website at www.paveggies.org as the reports become available. Growers who do not have access to the internet can order paper copies of the projects of interest to them – **see enclosed blue order form** or call the Program at 717-694-3596.

IPM Reports Published

The Program distributed a weekly two- to six-page IPM update on tomato fungicide and sweet corn insecticide scheduling and cucurbit disease information to 215 persons by electronic mail, 51 by fax and 117 growers by mail plus the produce auctions during the 2014 growing season.

Point-of-Purchase Materials

continued

discontinued its use of the "Simply Delicious" logo and is urging all agricultural producers to be licensed to use the "PA Preferred" logo.

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Program has considerable inventories of "Simply Delicious" point-of-purchase materials that it will continue to distribute to growers.

The following numbers of the different items were ordered by growers in 2014:

Banners	45
Binwrap	111
Restaurant Signs	12
Roadside Signs	130
Stickers for Roadside Signs	812
Clip-On Price Cards (pk of 10)	139
Price Cards (pk of 10)	277
Small Price Paddles (pk of 10)	306
Large Price Paddles (pk of 10)	102
Large PA Preferred Paddles (pk of 10)	78
PA Vegetables Brochures (pk of 100)	14
Fun & Healthy Facts Brochures (pk of 100)	33
Price Stickers (roll of 500)	130
Aprons	31
Shirts	82
Hats	4
Recipes Cards (50 of each of 16 recipes)	57
"How To Use" Information Cards	327

2014 Board Officers Re-elected for 2015

At their November meeting, the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program Board re-elected David Miller of York as chairman, James Hoopes of Ulysses as vice chairman and Christopher Powell as secretary-treasurer. They also welcomed Scott Hoffman of Northumberland to the Board as a grower representative from the central part of the state.

The Program's Board, which includes twelve grower members, has the primary decision-making authority for the Program. The Secretary of Agriculture appoints the Board members from nominations submitted by growers. The Secretary of Agriculture and a representative of the sales agents required to collect the assessment also sit on the Board. The Board members are entitled to per diem payments for their services but they have voted to refuse any payment for their service other than reimbursement for travel expenses.

Four growers are chosen from each of the three regions of the state. The following growers served on the Board during 2014:

Eastern Region

- Stephen Ganser, a retail fresh market grower from Kutztown, Berks Co.;
- Christopher High, a wholesale fresh market grower from Ephrata in Lancaster Co.
- Harry Hopkins, a retail and wholesale fresh market grower from Falls, Wyoming Co.;
- Christopher Powell, a retail and wholesale fresh market grower from Strasburg, Lancaster Co.;

Central Region

- Scott Hoffman, a field man for Furmano Foods in

2014 Financial Statistics

Area Reported in Assessment Forms for the 2013 season

Fresh Market	18,487 acres	64%
Processing	6,893 acres	24%
Greenhouse	3,538 M sq. ft.	12%

Source of Assessment Income for the 2013 season

Fresh Market	\$45,968	69%
Processing	\$12,277	19%
Greenhouse	\$8,067	12%

Income for the 2014 Fiscal Year

Undesignated Assessments	\$43,044
Assessments Designated for Research	\$15,139
Assessments Designated for Promotion	\$6,255
Specialty Crop Block Grants	\$34,947
PA Department of Agriculture Grant	\$12,000
Point-of-Purchase Materials	\$3,011

Spending for 2014 Fiscal Year

Research	\$20,000
Promotion	\$22,025
Planning/Evaluation (funded mostly by grants)	\$46,755

- Northumberland, Northumberland Co., which grows and processes tomatoes and processes snap beans;
- Stephen Kistler, a processing snap bean grower from Orangeville in Columbia Co.;
- David Miller, a retail and wholesale fresh market vegetable grower from York, York Co.;
- David Peters, a retail fresh market grower from Gardners, Adams Co.;

Western Region

- Leah Cook, with Duda's Farm in Brownsville, Fayette Co., a retail and wholesale fresh market growing operation;
- James Hoopes, a processing snap bean and sweet corn grower from Ulysses, Potter Co.;
- Kenneth Metrick, a retail fresh market grower from Butler, Butler Co.; and
- Joseph Mason, a retail and wholesale fresh market grower from Lake City, Erie Co.

Also serving on the Board are:

- Lela Reichart, the representative for the Secretary of Agriculture; and
- James Zimmerman of Weaverland Produce Auction and a retail and wholesale fresh market grower, a representative the collecting sales agents.

Marketing Statistics

The following statistics were gathered from the marketing questions asked of fresh market growers on the assessment forms for the 2013 growing season.

Total Responses	1,193	% of all	
Sell Retail	851	71%	
Sell Retail Only	353	30%	
Sell Wholesale	840	70%	
Sell Wholesale Only	342	29%	
Retail Outlets		% of all	% of retail
Roadside Market	668	56%	78%
Comm. Farmers Mkt.	239	20%	28%
CSA	63	5%	7%
Other	103	9%	12%
Wholesale Outlets		% of all	% of whsle
Auction	679	57%	81%
Chain Store Warehse	110	9%	13%
Direct Store Delivery	174	15%	21%
Wholesaler/Broker	140	12%	17%
Restaurant	98	12%	12%
Cooperative	80	7%	10%
Other	78	7%	9%
Growing Method			
Certified Organic	55	5%	
Sustainable	300	26%	
Conventional/IPM	819	70%	