

Penn State to focus on education, ag literacy at state Farm Show

Friday, December 14, 2012

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- Helping the public understand the importance and diversity of agriculture is a major goal for the faculty, staff and students from Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences [1] who will participate in the Pennsylvania Farm Show [2], Jan. 5 to 12, in Harrisburg, Pa.

The college's presence will be felt throughout the Farm Show Complex, but the public focus will be an exhibit in the Main Hall offering presentations on a variety of topics, as well as information for prospective students on academic programs and careers.

Penn State Extension [3] educators and Master Gardeners will offer presentations throughout the week on topics such as small-scale vegetable production, common water issues for farms and rural homes, diet and nutrition, and flower arranging. (See schedule below)

4-H youth also will give presentations on collecting insects, raising rabbits and poultry, robotics, and raising seeing eye dogs, and representatives from the Pasto Agricultural Museum will demonstrate the use of antique farm kitchen implements and share really old recipes.

College officials hope to connect with prospective students [4] at the Farm Show.

"We look forward to meeting with families and students of all ages," said Tracy Hoover, associate dean for undergraduate education. "There are many educational and career opportunities in the agricultural sciences, and it all starts at Penn State, one of the premier agricultural colleges in the nation."

Faculty, staff and students from the College of Agricultural Sciences [5] will be on hand with information about the college's programs in the food, agricultural and natural resource sciences. With 19 majors and nearly \$2 million in scholarships available, the college has considerable diversity in its academic programs and many educational and life-changing opportunities to offer

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prospective students, according to Hoover.

"Graduates in these fields will have an opportunity to help solve challenges related to the food versus fuel debate, the health of the Chesapeake Bay and other ecosystems, Marcellus Shale gas exploration, biofuels and other renewable energy production, use of technology in farming and food manufacturing, invasive species, sustainability, emerging diseases that affect people, animals and plants, and many other issues," she said.

In the complex's Expo Hall, Penn State will join about 40 other exhibitors in the alternative energy exhibits area, which will focus on the latest energy technologies and products.

Researchers from the College of Agricultural Sciences will showcase energy conservation and on-farm energy production. The college also will highlight its diverse research and outreach programs aimed at making the most of agricultural renewable energy opportunities in Pennsylvania while reducing the carbon footprint of agriculture.

Specialists from the college will conduct the Pennsylvania Farm Safety and Health Quiz Bowl at 1 p.m. Jan. 9. FFA and 4-H teams will compete in a quiz show format to demonstrate their knowledge of farm safety and health hazards, and recommended practices.

The quiz bowl also enables participants to increase their leadership and public-speaking skills, according to Dennis Murphy, distinguished professor of agricultural safety and health.

"The quiz bowl helps young people learn about hazards and safety on farms in a fun way," Murphy said.

"The kids can enjoy friendly competition while learning information that they can use for the rest of their lives. Teens answer questions covering many farm-safety issues, such as safety with tractors, mowers and other farm machinery, child safety, first aid, animal care and disease control."

The 4-H exhibit, located in Exhibit Room B off the Maclay Street lobby, near

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the Main Hall, will focus on science, engineering and technology. Visitors can participate in 4-H science activities, including robotics and hydrogels.

"We invite Farm Show attendees to take the eco-bot challenge and be a 4-H scientist for the day," said Mya Rushton, Penn State Extension 4-H project development specialist. "By turning ideas into action, 4-H'ers leave lasting, positive impacts on Pennsylvania communities."

The 4-H booth will be staffed by 4-H members, staff, volunteers and state officers. For the second year, a 4-H food booth, serving Hess beef brisket, complete with award-winning sauces and sides, will raise money for programs benefitting the more than 200,000 youth served by 4-H in Pennsylvania.

In addition, each year more than 150 faculty, county-based extension educators and staff from the College of Agricultural Sciences participate in the Farm Show as committee chairs and members, exhibit personnel, publicity staff and show/judging coordinators for competitions ranging from beef cattle and poultry to maple products and mushrooms.

The college's role is part of Penn State's land-grant partnership with the state.

The Pennsylvania Farm Show is the largest indoor agricultural event in America, with 24 acres under roof, spread throughout 11 buildings including three arenas. Farm Show officials expect more than 400,000 spectators, some 8,000 animals, 13,000 competitive exhibits and nearly 300 commercial exhibitors at the eight-day event.

More than \$465,000 in premiums will be offered to competitive exhibitors.

The show is held at the Farm Show Complex and Expo Center, at the corner of Cameron and Maclay streets in Harrisburg, just off Exit 67 of Interstate 81. Hours are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Jan. 7-13 and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 14. Admission is free, and parking is \$10. For more information, visit the Farm Show website at <http://www.farmshow.state.pa.us> [6].

Schedule of presentations at the College of Agricultural Sciences exhibit in

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the Main Hall:

SATURDAY, JAN. 5

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 4 p.m. -- 4-H Small Scale Vegetable Production, Rabbit Wool Harvesting and Spinning, Lame and Wool Queen, Needle Felting

SUNDAY, JAN. 6

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 4 p.m. -- 4-H Poultry Club Backyard Poultry

MONDAY, JAN. 7

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 2 p.m. -- Pasto Agricultural Museum Demonstration, Antique Recipes/Historic Food Preparation Artifacts

TUESDAY, JAN. 8

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 2 p.m. -- Pasto Agricultural Museum Demonstration, Antique Recipes/Historic Food Preparation Artifacts

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 9

11 a.m. to noon -- Common Water Issues for Farms and Rural Homes

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 2 p.m. -- Pasto Agricultural Museum Demonstration, Antique Recipes/Historic Food Preparation Artifacts

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2 to 3 p.m. -- Common Water Issues for Farms and Rural Homes

THURSDAY, JAN. 10

11 a.m. to noon -- Dining with Diabetes: Recipes Everyone Can Enjoy

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

1 to 2 p.m. -- Dining with Diabetes: Recipes Everyone Can Enjoy

FRIDAY, JAN. 11

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. -- 4-H Entomology Club

Noon to 1 p.m. -- Penn State Master Gardeners

SATURDAY 12TH

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. -- 4-H Entomology Club

11 a.m. to noon -- Penn State Master Gardeners

2 to 3 p.m. -- 4-H Technology Team, Robotics

3 to 4 p.m. -- 4-H Seeing Eye Puppies

Links:

[1] <http://agsci.psu.edu/>

[2] <http://agsci.psu.edu/events/farmshow>

[3]

http://extension.psu.edu/?utm_source=agsci.psu.edu&utm_medium=left+navigation&utm_campaign=top+vs+left+navigation

[4] <http://prospective students>

[5] <http://agsci.psu.edu/>

[6] <http://www.farmshow.state.pa.us>



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