

For Immediate Release – County of Berks

Berks County Unveils “Growing Berks” Agriculture’s Economic Impact and A Roadmap for Its Future as Part of IMAGINE Berks

Reading, PA – 01/28/2025 – Today at the Berks County Board of Commissioners’ Operations meeting, Pamela Menet, Director of Community and Economic Development presented the Berks County Department of Agriculture’s Ag study. Titled Growing Berks, the study is the culmination of a year-long process which involved a diverse group of farmers, agri-businesses, local government and community members and Ag Advisory Committee. This input was joined with comprehensive information gathering in partnership with ACDS, LLC (Agriculture and Community Development Services). Growing Berks is helping to fully recognize the full economic impact of the over 1,800 farms and agribusinesses located throughout Berks County.

The plan’s vision is:

“Berks County is a place where agricultural production and agribusiness is thriving, the community engages with and supports local agricultural producers, and the industry is well understood and valued by municipal, county, and regional decision-makers.”

The 6 main areas of focus in Growing Berks are: Land Use and Land Security, Workforce and Career Pathways, Entrepreneurship and Agri-Business Development, Technology and the Farm, Market Development, and Agriculture Finance. The study shows a contribution of over \$1 billion of direct and indirect economic activity to the County.

The study and a corresponding Roadmap provide data and information that will result in deeper collaboration and cooperation among the County’s Ag Department and other Ag agencies and partners. It will guide and prioritize action steps unique to Agriculture and to the overall IMAGINE Berks strategic economic development action plan.

“We recognize the importance and impact of Agriculture in our community and have a strong commitment to its continued success” said Commissioner Leinbach, Chair, Berks County Board of Commissioners.

Growing Berks is scheduled to be adopted by the County Board of Commissioners on Thursday, February 8th, 2025 at the regularly scheduled meeting.

For more information about the Growing Berks plan, contact the Berks County Department of Agriculture at DeptofAg@BerksPA.gov or 610-378-1844 or see the department’s website at www.berkspa.gov/departments/agriculture.

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Media only inquiries:

Jonathan Heintzman, Public Relations Officer

Office: 610-478-6136 x 6112

Cell: 610-507-0063

Email: JHeintzman@BerksPA.gov