Agricultural Trustee History

1851 The Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society was formed in Harrisburg on January 21, 1851 (the society was an outgrowth of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture). The Pennsylvania State Archives state: "In 1851 the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, one among a group of private organizations touching on farming, was incorporated. The incorporating statute gave the society power to obtain annual statements from county agricultural societies which it recognized and which were, by that recognition, eligible for financial aid from county funds. The county societies at this time were very influential. Their annual fairs exhibited farm products, one of the few ways to achieve public awareness in those days. But they had not cooperated with the private State Agricultural Society."

"In most of its activities--sponsoring prizes and organizing fairs or exhibitions, for instance--the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society was much the same as its counterparts in other states. In one respect, it was unique . . . the society mounted a campaign to establish a state-assisted agricultural college."\(^1\)

1854 Governor William Bigler signed an act incorporating The Farmer's High School. The initial board consisted of the presidents of the county agricultural societies and the president and vice president of the state agricultural society. This initial governing board of over sixty members made obtaining a quorum difficult and the board was not successful in obtaining a quorum to organize.

1855 An Act to Incorporate the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania\(^2\) was passed by the General Assembly that provided for the establishment of the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania. Section 10 of the Act repealed the 1854 legislation. The initial 13-member board of trustees included ex officio the Governor, Secretary of the Commonwealth, the president of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, and the principal of the institution. The remaining nine trustees were elected periodically by a body consisting of the executive committee of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, and the votes of three representatives duly chosen by each county agricultural society in the Commonwealth.

1862 Passage of the Morrill Land-Grant Act by the Congress of the United States. An act "donating lands to the several States and Territories which may provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts." This also necessitated the school's curriculum be changed to bring it in line with the stipulations of the Morrill Act. (Three courses of study mandated by the Morrill Act were agriculture, military tactics, and the mechanic arts.)

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The Charter was amended to change the number of trustees from 13 to 23 (providing for the selection of industrial trustees). As a result of the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, several revisions were made to the Charter at this time so "that the articles and conditions of the charter of the said institution of learning may be so changed, amended, improved, and altered as to confirm to the altered conditions imposed upon the institution by the acceptance of the provisions of the act of Congress."

There were eight ex officio members: the Governor, the Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Secretary of Internal Affairs, the Adjutant General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the president of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, the President of the Franklin Institute of Pennsylvania, and the president of the institution.

Of the remaining fifteen members, three were elected by the alumni, and twelve were elected by a body of electors composed of the executive committee of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, the managers of the Franklin Institute in Pennsylvania, three representatives duly chosen by each county agricultural society in the Commonwealth . . . and three representatives chosen by each association, not exceeding one in each county of the Commonwealth, which shall have for its principal object the promotion and encouragement of the mining and manufacturing interests of the Commonwealth and the mechanic and useful arts."

**NOTE:** The Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts was founded in 1824. The Franklin Institute's purpose was to honor Ben Franklin and advance the usefulness of his inventions.

An act to reorganize the Board of Trustees increasing the number of trustees from 23 to 32: nine were elected by the alumni; six appointed by the Governor; twelve elected as noted above (see 1875); and five were ex officio trustees--the Governor, President of the College, Superintendent of Public Institution, President of the State Agricultural Society, and Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture.

A petition to amend the Charter of The Pennsylvania State College citing, "that by reason of the growth of the College, and the changed conditions wrought naturally by time, the proceedings had in your Honorable Court changing certain provisions of the Charter of Pennsylvania State College . . . in 1875, relating to the election of trustees, their number and terms of office, and the qualifications of their electors . . . having become impracticable and inadequate to meet the exigencies which the present existing conditions demand."

The petition resulted in a change in number of trustees from 32 to 31. Ex officio the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the President of the institution; six appointed by the governor; nine elected by the alumni; and twelve elected by delegates from the societies and associations...
hereinafter named, i.e., three delegates from each county in the Commonwealth representing organized agricultural interests of the said county, and three delegates from each county in the Commonwealth representing the organized engineering, mining, manufacturing and mechanical interests of such county. [The President of the State Agricultural Society and the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture were replaced by the Secretary of Agriculture.]

Pennsylvania State Archives note: "The 1895 legislation that created the Department of Agriculture transferred to it the three basic functions the board had held: law enforcement, education, and prevention of plant and animal disease. But the new agency also had the tasks of forestry and of coordination of farmland valuation for tax purposes. Contrary to the General Assembly's original intention, local interests prevented the old board [the Board of Agriculture that consisted of representatives from each of the county societies recognized by virtue of the provisions of the Agricultural Society Act of 1851] from being terminated, and it continued to meet once a year until 1918. It still had advisory powers as well as control of the farmers' institutes held in its members' counties, but it was not involved in funding." The Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society was disbanded in 1918.

1932 Change in number of trustees from 31 to 32 -- the State Secretary of Mines was added.

1951 Additional refinement of Charter that formally separated the trustees elected by delegates into two groups -- six elected by ag delegates and six elected by industrial delegates.

2002 Discontinued the provision for election of trustees from county industrial interests; specified election of trustees by the board representing business and industry endeavors.

Present Day:

Over 350 agricultural organizations or associations receive information to participate in the election of trustees by agricultural societies organized at the county level. Each organization is invited to send three delegates to attend and participate in the election of trustees by organized agricultural societies. The trustees are elected by three delegates from each county; if more than three delegates for the county are present, a caucus must be held to determine how the county's three votes shall be cast.

Organizations or association types are as follows:

- Agricultural & Horticultural Association
- Agricultural Association
- Agricultural Forum
- Agricultural Improvement Association
- Agricultural Society
- Agriculture & Mechanical Association
- American Mushroom Institute
- Beef Cattlemens Association, Inc.
- Beef Producers
- Beef Producers Association
- Beekeepers Association
- Cattlemen's Association
- Electric Cooperative
- PA Livestock Cooperative
PA Milk Marketing Cooperative
Christmas Tree Growers Association
Conservation District
Cooperative Farmers Night Market
Cooperative Wool Growers Inc.
County Fair
County Milk Handlers Cooperative
Crop Management Association
Dairy Farmers' Association
Dairy Farmers Cooperative
Dairy Goat Association
DHIA – Dairy Herd Information Association
PA Pork Producers Association
Electric Cooperative
Exposition Corp.
Fair and Agricultural Association
Fair and Park Board
Fair Association
Fair Association, Ag Expo
Fair Authority
Fair Dairy Committee
Fall Fair Inc.
Farm and Home Foundation
Farm Bureau
Farm Show
Farmers
Farmers Forum
Farmers' Market
Farmers Market Association
Farmers Picnic Association
Farmland Preservation Board
Foods Cooperative
Forest Landowners Association
Fruit Growers Association
Grange
Grange Encampment and Fair
Grazers Association
Guernsey Breeders
Holstein Association
Holstein Breeders Association
Holstein Club
Honey Producers Association
Horticultural Society
Jersey Club
Land Conservancy
Maple Producers Association
Maple Syrup Producers Association
Milk Producers Cooperative
Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative
PA Pork Producers
Pennsylvania Farmers Union
Pomona Grange
Pork Producers Association
Pork Producers Council
Potato Growers Association
Poultry Fancier Association
Rabbit Breeders Association
REA Energy Cooperative
Regional Grape Program Advisory Committee
Rural Electric Cooperative
Sheep & Wool Growers Association
Sheep and Wool Industry Association
Shorthorn Breeder's Association
Society of Farm Women
Swine Producers Association
Woodland Owners
Woodlands Improvement Association
Wool Growers' Association