

Chester County Conservation District (CCCD) New Director and Employee Tour

On the morning of June 5th 2019, CCCD board members, employees and representatives from the American Farmland Trust, Chester County Commissioners' Office, National Fish and Wildlife Federation, and William Penn Foundation had the opportunity to visit two sites where BMPs have been installed with the assistance of the Conservation District. The first stop was at the oldest operational mushroom farm in the nation, Marlboro Mushrooms, Which is owned by Tom and Harold Brosius. As District Chairman and co-owner, Tom Brosius led the tour by describing each step in the process of growing mushrooms, beginning with composting and ending with picking. During the tour Tom explained how CCCD BMPs have improved his operation. At the end of the tour Tom brought us out to his solar farm adjacent to the growing houses. The solar farm on average produces more than 90% of the power needed at the mushroom farm. Tom is a 5th generation mushroom grower and active member in our community - it was an educational experience to learn more about his operation.

Mushrooms at final stage of development



Courtesy of Charlotte Sprenkle CCCD

Largest Rotating Solar Farm in PA Producing Energy for Mushroom Farm Operations



Courtesy of Gordon Roscovich CCCD

Walmoore Holsteins Inc. owned and operated by Walt and Ellen Moore, was the second stop of on our tour. Walt led the tour and explained how improvements to his operation have been instrumental for him to stay competitive within the market. Flush systems and sand separation BMPs installed at his facility allow for the barns that house the cows to be washed out three times a day while the cows are being milked. Using sand as bedding and water from large storage tanks on the high end of the barn, vast amounts of water can flush the manure from the floor to a lagoon in the valley below. As there is a change in grade near the basin, the sand can fall out of the manure water and be reused, saving on material and time. The manure water is then used as fertilizer which Walt can apply to his fields to grow crops for his cows or export.

Three of the flush system tanks painted to look like cows



Courtesy of Caitlin Betts CCCD

Walt (center) explaining the flush and sand separation BMPs



Courtesy of Paige LaDuca CCCD