

Governor's Weekly Message Transcript: Planting the Seeds for Economic Growth

To grow Delaware's economy, we must build on our strengths. And no economic engine has been more reliable throughout our history than farming. It's now a multibillion dollar industry in our state.

We're looking forward to a strong future for farming in Delaware. Just as we're committed to preserving our physical farming resources by properly maintaining our land, we must also support our human resources – the 2,500 farmers we have now as well as thousands more to come.

Young Delawareans just starting out in agribusiness are now participating in our innovative Young Farmers Program. This initiative helps to ensure the next generation of farmers has the tools and opportunities to continue Delaware's great farming tradition. The high cost of land is one of the obstacles for young people getting into farming, and our program helps solve that problem by providing no-interest loans to help purchase land.

We're supporting Delawareans like Phillip and Cara Sylvester, a young husband and wife team who used a state loan program last year to help expand their Felton-area farming operation, where they grow corn, soybeans, wheat and lima beans. Ten new farmers who just joined our initiative will be raising poultry, and growing corn, soybeans, wheat and watermelon.

Our farming heritage is strong and proud, as we saw recently when we honored members of our Century Farm Program – a group of Delawareans who have been farming the same land for more than 100 years. The strength of Delaware's agriculture will

continue because of our farmers' hard work and the investments we make in their needs. By supporting them, we'll keep Delaware moving forward.