

# MID-ATLANTIC *fruit & vegetable convention*



**NEWS MEDIA ADVISORY** for immediate use - for further information, contact: Maureen Irvin (fruit) 717-677-4184 [shap@embarqmail.com](mailto:shap@embarqmail.com) or William Troxell, (vegetable) 717-694-3596 [pvga@pvga.org](mailto:pvga@pvga.org)

## **2018 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention Set for January 30 to February 1**

The 2018 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention will be held January 30 to February 1, 2018, at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Over 2,400 fruit, vegetable, and berry growers and other industry persons from throughout the mid-Atlantic region and beyond are expected to attend. This year's convention will again feature several pre-convention workshops, a farm market bus tour, and a trade show with over 170 exhibitors plus three full days of seven or more concurrent educational sessions. This year's keynote speaker is Charlie Arnot, a recognized thought leader in food and agriculture and CEO of The Center for Food Integrity, who will speak on "Values, Trust and Science: Building Trust in Our Post-Truth Tribal World".

Registration is required for all persons attending the Convention trade show or educational sessions. For further information, go to [www.mafvc.org](http://www.mafvc.org) or call 717-677-4184 or 717-694-3596.

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### **Following is a more complete version of the press release:**

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consumer. Growers will leave the session knowing three things they should start doing, and three things they should stop doing to make their conversations about their fruit and vegetable operations 100% more effective.

Charlie Arnot is highly regarded as both a writer and sought-after speaker who engages audiences across the globe. Charlie has more than 25 years of experience working in communications, public relations and issues management within the food system. He serves as CEO of The Center for Food Integrity, a non-profit organization dedicated to building consumer trust and confidence in today's food system.

One client said of Charlie's work, "Others help us talk about our business, you help us think differently about who we are and what we do." His commitment to excellence, innovation and integrity have positioned him as a trusted counselor to CEOs, government leaders and executives, and as a respected industry advisor on critical issues within the food system. Clients and food and farm industry leaders seek his unique expertise in applying the peer-reviewed trust model developed in 2007 to help them build trust in their processes and products.

Charlie spent ten years as a corporate officer for a leading food company. He also worked for a public relations agency, was an award-winning radio journalist and worked in video and film. Charlie grew up in southeast Nebraska and graduated from the University of Nebraska with a Bachelor of Journalism degree.

The day before the main Convention opens, growers can chose between a bus tour of Pennsylvania farm markets or several different workshops. The workshops include FSMA Grower Training, UK Hard Cider Production (off-site), Orchard Trellis Construction, Vegetable Biocontrols, Computer Recordkeeping, Urban Community Farming, Farm Market Business Management, and Pennsylvania Pesticide Applicator License Training.

The Mid-Atlantic Convention has been jointly sponsored by the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, the Maryland State Horticultural Society and the New Jersey State Horticultural Society for the past 40 years making this year's Convention the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting. In 2014, the Virginia State Horticultural Society also began meeting at the Convention. The Pennsylvania State University, University of Maryland, Rutgers University Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech University all assist in organizing the three days of educational sessions.

The Convention has become one of the premier grower meetings in the Northeast. The Great American Hall and the Aztec Room at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center will host most of the Trade Show with several additional booths being located in the Confection Level Lobby. Specialized horticultural equipment, farm market merchandise, and packaging will all be on display along with information on the latest seed varieties, fruit varieties, pesticides and other supplies and services for the commercial grower.

Many pesticide applicator update training credits will be available to Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia growers attending the sessions. The program covers nearly every aspect of fruit, vegetable, potato and berry production. Commercial growers should not pass up this terrific educational opportunity.

Seven or eight concurrent educational sessions will be offered on all three days of the Convention. Besides a combined session for the keynote address, the opening day will feature breakout sessions on Pome Fruit, Tomatoes, Organic Vegetables, Food Trends, Agritourism, Rhubarb, Kale/Brussels Sprouts, Microgreens, Ethnic/Specialty Vegetables, Root Vegetables, Cut Flowers, Use of Drones, and Farm Management.

On the second day, sessions on Farm Market Development, Educating Consumers and the Media, Wholesale Marketing, Small Fruit, Pome Fruit, Stone Fruit, Pumpkins/Vine Crops, Greenhouse Ornamentals, Wine Grapes, Soil Health/Reduced Tillage, Cover Crops, and General Vegetables will be offered. A special feature in the afternoon will be an Apple Variety Showcase where nurseries will have their best varieties on display and available for tasting. Also offered will be the session “Técnicas de Producción de Frutas y Hortalizas” especially for Spanish speaking workers in the fruit and vegetable industries. It will feature various relevant production presentations in Spanish.

The Convention will close on the third day with sessions on: Tree Fruit, Small Fruit, High Tunnels, Sweet Corn, Potatoes, Farm Labor, Alternative Activities for On-Farm Marketing, Marketing on Social Media, General Vegetables, Asparagus, and Third-Party GAP Audits.

The twelfth annual Mid-Atlantic Cider Contest will be conducted during the Convention to determine the best tasting cider produced in the region. On January 30, fruit and vegetable growers will gather for the annual Fruit and Vegetable Growers Banquet which will include awards and recognitions. On January 31, there will be an Ice Cream Social for all in the evening plus a reception for apple growers.

Registration is required for all persons attending the Convention trade show or educational sessions. Registration with any of the five sponsoring organizations allows one to attend any of the sessions although there are additional charges for some workshops and meals. For further information, go to [www.mafvc.org](http://www.mafvc.org) or call 717-677-4184 or 717-694-3596.

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This release is available in electronic form – please contact William Troxell at [pvga@pvga.org](mailto:pvga@pvga.org).

A picture of Mr. Arnot is available upon request.