Andy Bater

Farmer | Agricultural & Technology Policy Advocate | Yoga Instructor



A fourth-generation farmer with nearly twenty years of advocacy experience, Andy Bater works at the intersection of agriculture, advanced technology—including artificial intelligence (AI)—and public service. He builds connections among farmers, agribusinesses, universities, government agencies, and legislators.

A state and national agricultural policy development leader, Andy represents farmers in Centre, Clinton, and Lycoming counties on the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau State Board of Directors.

Through his service on the Dean's Leadership Council for Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, he fosters collaboration between the university and farming communities, including engagement with the Penn State Student Farm.

That commitment to agriculture is rooted in Andy's own farm near State College, Pennsylvania, where he grew switchgrass on marginal land for 16 years. The crop supplied mulch to commercial strawberry growers and supported Penn State biofuel research. He is now converting that acreage to pollinator habitat. His broader conservation work includes early participation in forest carbon sequestration and practices that address excessive rainfall and other climate impacts.

Conservation commitment extends to Andy's forest habitat, where a mile of deer-exclusion fencing supports natural regeneration and vulnerable bird species, including Golden-winged and Cerulean Warblers. As chair of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Wildlife & Fisheries Committee, he brings farmers, sporting organizations, legislators, and state agencies together to address wildlife damage and habitat concerns.





Andy's commitment to community also shapes his work as a registered yoga teacher (RYT 500). He teaches weekly classes, mindfulness workshops, and introductory courses in yoga history and philosophy. His approach is informed by five years of mentored study in Eastern and Western religions with Marcy Braverman Goldstein, Ph.D., and by additional mental health training.

His interest in farmer well-being also includes past service on an AgriSafe advisory council and collaboration with Penn State to support farmers facing wellness issues.

Andy Bater | Biography

Technology, public service & community connections



Before returning to agriculture, Andy spent 25 years with Tribune Broadcasting in radio and television engineering, technology implementation, regulatory affairs, and industry coordination. His disaster-recovery work began with restoring broadcasts after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Following the September 11 attacks, he began coordinating New York City broadcasting-industry recovery efforts with FEMA that afternoon. In fall 2005, he spent an extended period in New Orleans embedded with local colleagues after Hurricane Katrina—an experience that left a lasting impression on his understanding of resilience, recovery, and community.

His disaster-recovery experience informs his service on the advisory board of Prepare PA, a new statewide climate resilience network led by Penn State. Drawing on that work, agricultural conservation, and climate-policy studies at Harvard Kennedy School in 2026, Andy connects preparedness with the practical challenges of a changing climate.



Appointed by FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, Andy served on the Precision Agriculture Task Force from 2019 to 2024, helping develop federal recommendations on agricultural broadband and technology needs. On the Task Force, he coauthored an early analysis of AI's impact on agriculture with Microsoft's Ranveer Chandra. A past chair of the American Farm Bureau Federation's Technology Issues Advisory Committee, Andy regularly speaks about the intersection of AI, technology, and agriculture.

Andy co-convenes Penn State's Futures of AI in Rural Education (FAIR) initiative. In September 2025, he helped organize its summit and develop related policy recommendations; the Penn State FAIR team continues its work on AI workforce education and community outreach. He has since examined how data centers and power infrastructure affect farmland, water resources, and rural communities. In 2026, he testified before the Center for Rural Pennsylvania in July and published the white paper "Data Centers in Pennsylvania: Necessary Infrastructure, Difficult Tradeoffs" in September.



From 2022 to 2025, Andy served on USDA's Pennsylvania Farm Service Agency State Committee following his appointment by Secretary Tom Vilsack, working with rural and urban growers. He also serves as an appointee of former Governor Tom Wolf to the Pennsylvania Food Policy Council's Advisory Committee, connecting agricultural perspectives with food-system policy, nutrition security, and the charitable food network. His current work with urban growers includes developing policy proposals that recognize urban farms' contributions to food access, education, and community life.

Andy's recent professional development includes AI programs through Oxford, MIT, Purdue, and Harvard, advanced telecommunications policy through Cornell, and public policy leadership at Harvard.

Married for 45 years, Andy and his wife, Chris, a wealth manager, live on their farm outside State College. Their daughter leads sustainability documentation for a major international food company.