

NEWS RELEASE

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**HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION SALUTES
PENNSYLVANIA'S FIRST FARMERS AT FARM SHOW**

Harrisburg, PA – Noting that Pennsylvania's first farmers were Native Americans, the Historical and Museum Commission is saluting those pioneering agriculturalists with an interactive booth at this year's Farm Show.

The commission's "Petroglyphs of Pennsylvania" exhibit, sponsored in conjunction with the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Pennsylvania Archaeological Council, and the state Department of Transportation, features Bob Winter's Native American flint-knapping demonstrations, a casting of the Parker's Landing Petroglyph, the canoe, and a 20-foot-by-10-foot-high banner of the petroglyphs on Little Indian Rock near Safe Harbor Dam.

"The first farmers in what is now Pennsylvania were Native Americans," said Barbara Franco, executive director of the commission. "The Lenape Indians of the Delaware Valley region planted corn, while the Monongahela Indians of the Upper Ohio Valley region grew corn, beans and squash."

Franco said archaeologists from the State Museum have found storage pits used for preserving dried corn and other food by Native Americans in Pennsylvania, the earliest dating back about a thousand years ago.

"Agriculture in Pennsylvania has a long, rich history and it's an industry that promises to keep growing and changing over time," Franco said. "It is the job of the commission to document and preserve changes in agriculture in the state, and this exhibit helps provide Farm Show visitors with the opportunity to experience some of that history for themselves."

Petroglyphs are frequently associated with early farming societies. Although their specific meaning is unknown, they frequently are related to territorial boundaries or predicting the seasons. The Little Indian Rock petroglyphs have six images of serpents that align with the annual solstice or equinox. These would have been extremely important dates in early farming societies.

The “Petroglyphs of Pennsylvania” exhibit is located in the Family Living Section of the Farm Show’s Main Hall. The Farm Show ends Saturday, Jan. 17.

For more information about the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, visit www.phmc.state.pa.us.