

Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

December 2023

University of
Maryland Extension

Harford County
Agricultural Center

Suite 600
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Street, MD 21154
(410) 638-3255

M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

MDA Nutrient
Management Update 2

Future Harvest
Conference 2

Avian Influenza
Confirmed in Maryland 3

UME Winter Crop
Meetings 4

Tar Spot Research
Summary 5

UME Nutrient
Management Update 6

Expansion of Deer Creek
Rural Legacy Area 7

FSA Job Opening 7

Hello, Harford County!

I hope this newsletter finds you well and you are enjoying the holiday season. I know I say it every year, but it's hard to believe we are getting ready to bring in a new year. All but a few acres of crops remain in the field, and I think we can be thankful for a decent harvest, especially for corn. 2023 started off warm and dry, with many folks planting 1-2 weeks earlier than normal. We had a bit of a scare in May and June with a run of about 6-8 weeks of no significant rainfall to start the crops. However, most of our soils held just enough moisture to get the crops germinated and off to a decent start; many laying down deep roots to find the moisture, which likely helped contribute to some surprisingly strong yields.

Crops held on just long enough for the rains to return in the end of June and into July. If you grow corn you know this is when the majority of our crop is in its critical flowering period and when moisture is most critical. These timely



Happy Holidays

rains helped pollinate the corn crop and led to some impressive yields.

Soybeans, however, were a bit hit and miss depending on their planting date and maturity group. Most of our full-season soybeans set the majority of their pods in August; and unfortunately, the rains diminished in August and it continued to be dry through September, and we continued to be dry through fall. I think 2023 is a great example of how important timely moisture is for making a crop, and also demonstrates the resiliency of these plants as most of us were worried about a serious crop failure after the dry spring. It's also a testament to how far we've come in crop genetics and overall management; 10 years ago I am not so sure we would have fared this well after such a dry spring.

I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

Until next time,
-Andy

Upcoming Programs for Pesticide & Nutrient Management Credits

Date & Time	Program	Location
December 7, 2023 8:00-12:00 pm	Northern Maryland Field Crops Day*	Friendly Farms Restaurant
January 25, 2024 8:00-12:00 pm	Central Maryland Vegetable Growers Day*	Hereford Fire Hall
February 20, 2024 9:00-3:00 pm	Harford County Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting*	Deer Creek Overlook
February 22, 2024 1:00-3:00 pm	Nutrient Management Voucher Training	Harford County Extension Office
March 26, 2024 9:00-11:00 am	Private Applicator Exam (for new applicators)	Harford County Extension Office
March 26, 2024 1:00-3:00 pm	Private Applicator Recertification Training	Harford County Extension Office

*Satisfies credits for BOTH pesticide and nutrient management

This course will provide an update on nutrient management regulations and provide information on current topics affecting the agricultural community.

- Update on UMD Extension NM Plan writing
- Final Report from the Farmer Task Force
- Update from the Oversight Committee
- Legal considerations for NM Plan writers
- Nitrogen from cover crops
- Update on Manure Transport Program
- Biostimulants and nutrient recommendations
- AFO and new CAFO permit Update from MDE
- Nutrient recommendations for Triticale and winter forages; and more...

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Certified consultants, certified farmers, and agency personnel. This program awards 6.0 CEU in all agricultural nutrient management categories.

COST

A check or money order registration fee made payable to MDA for \$30.00 includes a continental breakfast and buffet lunch is due by **Tuesday, December 5th** (Annapolis) or **Tuesday, December 26th** (New Midway). Please mail to MDA, Attention: NMU, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Suite 201-203, Annapolis, MD 21401. No registration will be accepted by phone or at the door.

You will receive a confirmation by email before the event. Seating is limited! Admission is by prepaid registration only. This event is non-refundable except in case of cancellation by MDA due to unforeseen circumstances.

REGISTRATION

Mail a check to the address above and complete the online form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoTrvur6-cXIQSDDbXI55gniyOYY2a2AvPEeyudWhlST13ig/viewform> or call MDA, (410) 841-5959.

December 19

9:30 AM—3:30 PM
MDA Annapolis, MD

January 9

9:30 AM—3:30 PM
New Midway Fire Dept.
New Midway, MD

FUTURE HARVEST'S 25TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
**NOURISH & FLOURISH
FROM THE GROUND UP**

JANUARY 18-20, 2024
THE HOTEL AT UMD COLLEGE PARK, MD



Register at: <https://futureharvest.org/2024-conference/conference-registration/>

Avian Influenza Confirmed in Caroline County

Maryland Department of Agriculture [press release](#), abridged

State laboratory testing has detected a case of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (HPAI) in Caroline County. Following increased mortality of a broiler operation and investigation by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, it has been preliminarily confirmed that poultry from the affected farm has tested positive for HPAI.

State officials have quarantined all affected premises, and birds on the properties are being or have been depopulated to prevent the spread of the disease. Birds from affected flocks will not enter the food system.

Confirmation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratory is pending with final results anticipated in the coming days.

"High Pathogenic Avian influenza or HPAI does not affect poultry meat or egg products, which remain healthy and safe to eat and handle. Poultry growers, operators, and backyard flock owners should be on high alert of the threat of HPAI," said Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks.

Avian influenza is a highly contagious airborne respiratory virus that spreads easily among birds through nasal and eye secretions, as well as manure. The virus can be spread in various ways from flock to flock, including by wild birds, through contact with infected poultry, by equipment, and on the clothing and shoes of caretakers. This virus affects poultry, like chickens, ducks, and turkeys, along with some wild bird species such as ducks, geese, shorebirds, and raptors.

According to the Maryland Department of Health, the risk of transmission between birds and the general public is low.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture recommends the following common-sense biosecurity steps if HPAI is suspected on personal property, wild birds, or in a commercial operation.

- Look for signs of illness. Know the warning signs of infectious bird diseases.
- Report suspected sick birds: To report a possible case of HPAI call the Maryland Department of Agriculture at (410) 841-5810. Commercial chicken growers and backyard flock owners can email questions about the outbreak to MD.Birdflu@maryland.gov.

Key biosecurity practices:

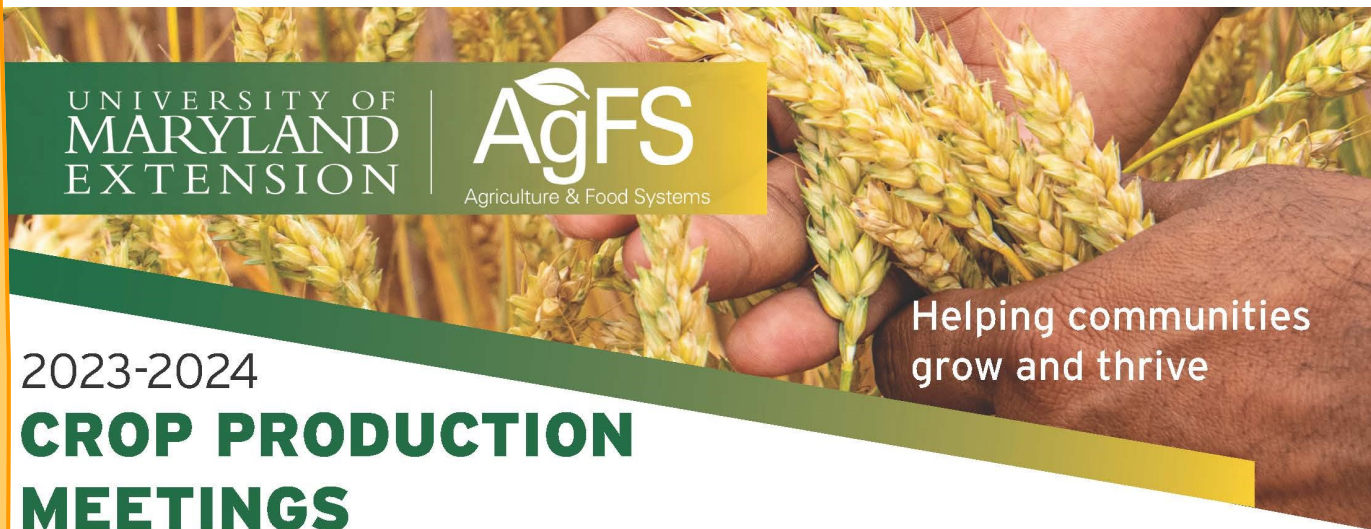
- Clean and disinfect transportation. Don't walk through or drive trucks, tractors, or equipment in areas where waterfowl or other wildlife feces may be. If you can't avoid this, clean your shoes, vehicle, and equipment

thoroughly to prevent bringing disease agents back to your flock. This is especially important when visiting with farmers or those who hunt wild fowl such as when gathering at a local coffee shop, restaurant, or gas station.

- Remove loose feed. Don't give wild birds, rodents, and insects a free lunch. Remove spilled or uneaten feed right away, and make sure feed storage units are secure and free of holes. Wild birds can carry HPAI.
- Keep visitors to a minimum. Only allow those people who take care of your poultry to come in contact with your birds, including family and friends. Make sure everyone who has contact with your flock follows biosecurity principles.
- Wash your hands before and after coming in contact with live poultry. Wash with soap and water. If using a hand sanitizer, first remove manure, feathers, and other materials from your hands because disinfectants will not penetrate organic matter or caked-on dirt.
- Provide disposable boot covers (preferred) and/or disinfectant footbaths for anyone having contact with your flock. If using a footbath, be sure to remove all droppings, mud or debris from boots and shoes using a long-handled scrub brush BEFORE stepping into the disinfectant footbath.
- Change clothes before entering poultry areas and before exiting the property. Visitors should wear protective outer garments or disposable coveralls, boots, and headgear when handling birds, and shower and/or change clothes when leaving the facility.
- Clean and disinfect tools or equipment before moving them to a new poultry facility. Before allowing vehicles, trucks, tractors, or tools and equipment—including egg flats and cases that have come in contact with birds or their droppings—to exit the property, make sure they are cleaned and disinfected to prevent contaminated equipment from transporting disease. Do not move or reuse items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected—such as cardboard egg flats.

For more information on avian influenza, visit: <https://mda.maryland.gov/Pages/AvianFlu.aspx>.

2023/24 Winter Crop Meetings



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

AgFS
Agriculture & Food Systems

Helping communities
grow and thrive

2023-2024 CROP PRODUCTION MEETINGS

University of Maryland Extension is excited to host local, in-person meetings along with statewide virtual meetings for the 2023-2024 production season!

AGRONOMY

- 11-29-23 Washington Co. Agronomy Day
- 12-07-23 Kent Co. Agronomy Breakfast
- 12-07-23 Northern MD Field Crops Day
- 12-07-23 Southern MD Crops Conf. & Dinner
- 01-10-24 Talbot County Agronomy Program
- 01-11-24 Carroll Co. Mid-Winter Mtg.
- 01-26-24 Lower Shore Agronomy Day
- 02-08-24 Cecil Co. Winter Agronomy Mtg.
- 02-20-24 Harford Co. Mid-Winter Agronomy Mtg.
- 02-21-24 Central MD Agronomy Mtg.
- 02-22-24 Mid-Shore Agronomy Mtg.
- 03-01-24 Queen Anne's Agronomy Day

FORAGE

- 01-16-24 Southern MD Forage Conf.
- 01-17-24 Western MD Forage Conf.
- 01-18-24 Central MD Forage Conf.

FRUIT & VEGETABLE

- 01-25-24 Central MD Veg. Growers Mtg.
- 01-27-24 Urban Farmer Winter Mtg.
- 02-20-24 Mid Shore Veg. Growers Mtg.
- 02-15-24 Western MD Regional Fruit Mtg.

GRAIN MARKETING

- 01-05-24 Virtual Meeting

Pesticide Certification, Nutrient Management Voucher, and Certified Crop Advisor credits will be offered!

ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE

- 12-08-23 Advanced IPM Conf.
- 01-8/11-24 2024 Advanced Landscape IPM PHC Short Course
- 01-18-24 Operator Cert. (FTC) for Writing Nursery Nutrient Mgt. Plans for Nurseries, Greenhouses and Controlled Environments
- 02-14-24 Eastern Shore Pest Management Conf.
- 02-29/03-1-24 Biol. Control Conf. (Greenhouses, Nurseries, & Landscapes)

Manure

- 01-24-24 Manure Meeting

For more information
go.umd.edu/CPM



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Tar Spot Research Update

Andrew Kness, Senior Agriculture Agent
University of Maryland Extension, Harford County



Tar spot (Figure 1) is a new foliar fungal disease of corn first discovered in the United States in 2015 and we confirmed it in Maryland in 2022. Tar spot was estimated to be the most significant yield-limiting disease of corn in the US in 2021 and 2022. As a new disease for our state, we conducted this project to collect preliminary data on the distribution of tar spot in our state and compare the efficacy of different fungicide application timings. Through field surveys we identified and confirmed tar spot in eight Maryland Counties at a frequency of approximately 47% and at a relatively low severity rate (not exceeding 30%).

These observations suggest that the tar spot pathogen can overwinter in Maryland, as it has expanded its range from two counties in 2022 to at least eight in 2023 (Figure 2) and it is likely to be present in more counties than we confirmed in this survey.

Additionally, we conducted field evaluations of two fungicide programs: a one pass program

Figure 1. Corn leaf with approximately 10% tar spot severity. Tar spot symptoms include raised, black specks on the leaves.

with Triavpro at VT (1X) and a two-pass program with Triavpro at VT followed by Triavpro again at R2 (2X) and compared them to a non-treated control. Fungicides were applied at 13.7 oz per acre with a DJI T30 drone calibrated to deliver 2.8 gallons per acre.

Fungicides significantly decreased tar spot disease severity at the September rating, as well as decreased plant lodging compared to the control; however, there was no significant difference in yield (Table 1). Disease severity was likely not high enough to cause yield loss, nor did it appear in the plots early enough. Water was likely the most significant yield-limiting factor in this trial.

Additional research on fungicide timing and the spread of this disease will be conducted in the future to help develop improve management recommendations.

This work was supported by funding through the Maryland Grain Producer's Utilization Board and in-kind support from The Mill. Special thanks to Clear Meadow Farm for their use of land and equipment making this research possible.

A detailed report of this project can be found on our [Maryland Agronomy News Blog](#), or contact me for a copy.

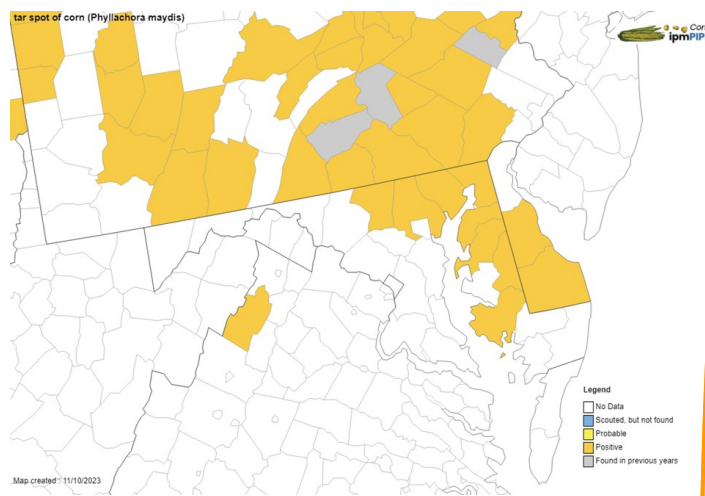


Figure 2. Map showing confirmed distribution of tar spot for the 2023 growing season (yellow). Map from corn.ipmPIPE.org.

Table 1. 2023 Tar Spot Disease Rating and Harvest Data.

Treatment	Tar Spot Severity (%)		Lodged Plants (%)	Grain Yield (bu/acre)	Grain Moisture (%)
	9/11/23	10/12/23			
Control	3.05 a*	3.75	10.0 a	192.56	19.06
1X Pass	1.18 b	2.88	5.0 a	199.05	19.41
2X Pass	0.85 b	4.00	0.0 b	201.56	20.31
<i>p-value</i>	<i>0.0176</i>	<i>0.4133</i>	<i>0.0680</i>	<i>0.2123</i>	<i>0.4343</i>

*Treatments connected by the same letter are not significantly different from each other ($\alpha=0.10$).

Nutrient Management Update

University of Maryland press release

University of Maryland Extension (UME) has launched an enhanced nutrient management planning process designed to adapt to modern farming practices and operations that better align with Maryland's agricultural regulations and environmental goals. Moving forward, UME will now administer and coordinate statewide nutrient management planning following the finalization of the agreement between the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

This reinvigorated effort marks a significant opportunity for enhanced collaboration between UME led advisors and the farming community. The program will build on its prior successes and service model that includes no cost nutrient management plans; soil, manure and tissue sampling assistance and guidance; farmer training and certification; continuing education training opportunities, and much more.

Maryland law requires farmers grossing at least \$2,500 a year or livestock producers with at least 8,000 pounds of live animal weight to follow nutrient management plans when fertilizing crops and managing animal manure. Nutrient management plans specify how much fertilizer, manure or other nutrient sources may be safely applied to crops to achieve yields and prevent excess nutrients from impacting waterways.

Key highlights of the reinvigorated program:

Statewide Coverage: UME will increase staffing to provide nutrient management planning coverage

across the entire state. Farmers across Maryland can benefit from this service, ensuring sustainable and responsible agricultural practices.

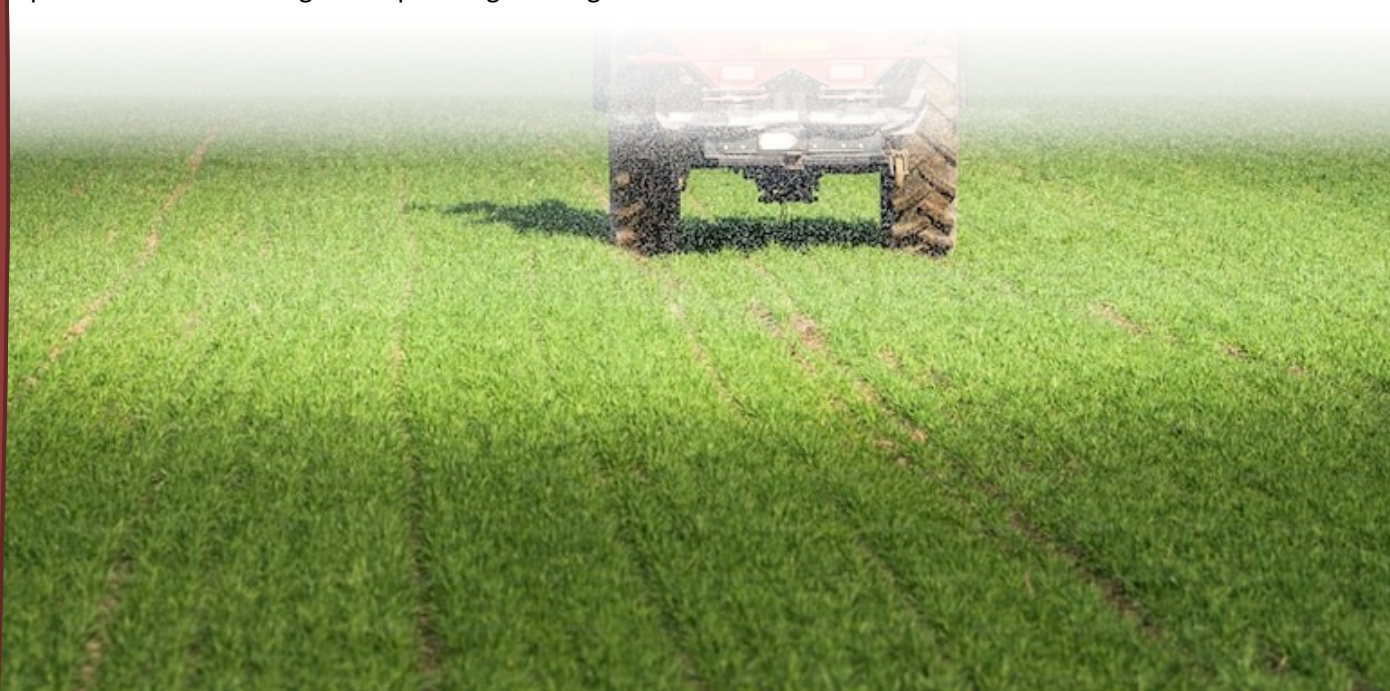
Staffing and Training: As part of this initiative, the university is in the process of hiring and training additional nutrient management advisors. These advisors will play a crucial role in assisting farmers and facilitating compliance with Maryland's regulations. There are multiple positions statewide at various locations, with more information available at <https://ejobs.umd.edu/postings/113947>.

Scientifically Grounded Plans: Nutrient management plans developed through this program are rooted in scientific principles and adhere to Maryland's regulatory framework, promoting both profitable and sustainable farming practices.

"The University of Maryland Extension is committed to the improvement of this program and increasing farmer accessibility to help them meet their regulatory goals and preserve Maryland's waterways," said Craig Beyrouy, dean and director of AGNR. "We are thrilled to launch this new model in our ongoing efforts to support Maryland's agricultural community."

For Nutrient Management Planning in Harford County,
contact Patricia Hoopes

phoopos@umd.edu | (410) 638-3255



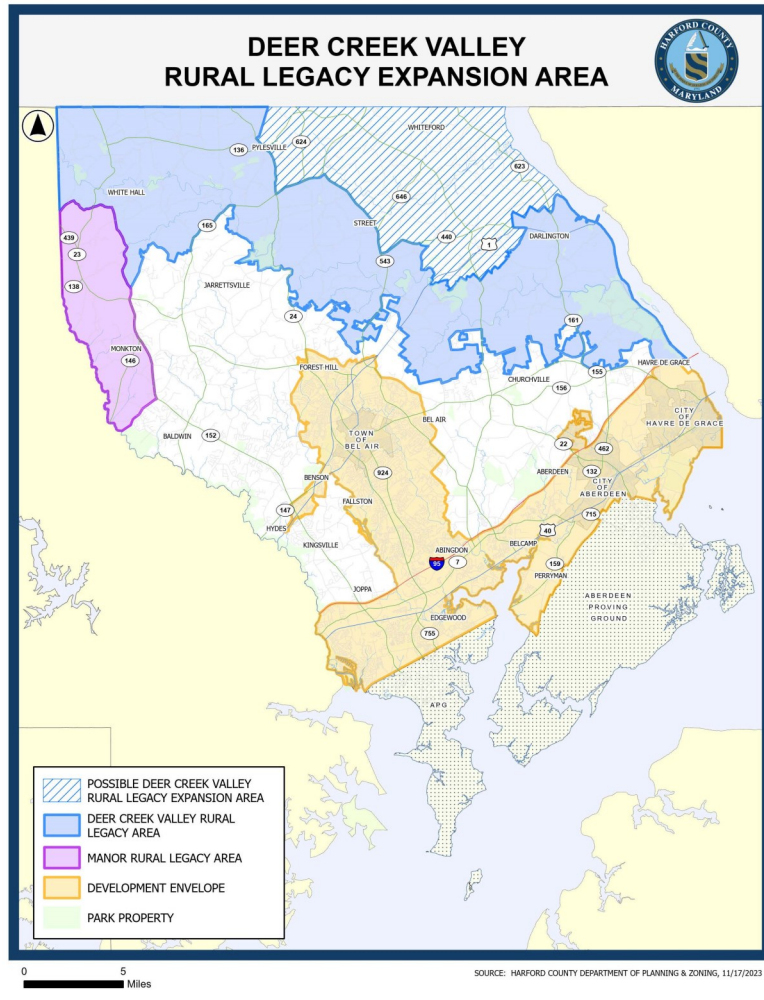
Deer Creek Rural Legacy Area Expansion

The Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program is seeking public input on the expansion of the Deer Creek Rural Legacy Area.

The Deer Creek Rural Legacy Area was designed to focus additional land preservation efforts within the Deer Creek Watershed by utilizing The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Rural Legacy Program. The County would like to further expand the area to include the Broad Creek Watershed in order to increase opportunities to utilize the Rural Legacy Program within Harford County. To be eligible for the Rural Legacy Program, a property must be located within the designated Rural Legacy Area. Expanding the area to the Broad Creek Watershed will increase the number of eligible properties and ensure the County can fully utilize funds provided by the DNR program.

Please see the proposed Rural Legacy Area map pictured to the right.

Feedback may be provided via email to Jennifer Wilson at jrwilson@harfordcountymd.gov and should be submitted no later than **January 5, 2024**.



FSA Job Opening, Forest Hill

County Program Technician (Temporary)

This is a temporary County Program Technician position, located in the Harford FSA County Office in Forest Hill, Maryland.

For more information and to apply, go to: <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/762709100>.

Great resources are just a click away!

Andrew Kness

Andrew Kness
Senior Extension Agent,
Agriculture and
Food Systems

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Back-issues can be found at: <https://extension.umd.edu/locations/harford-county/agriculture-and-nutrient-management>

akness@umd.edu



University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any event or activity, please contact the University of Maryland Extension office at least two weeks prior to the event.

General Interest

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Dates to remember

- 07 Dec.** Northern Maryland Field Crops Day. 8-12 PM.
Friendly Farm Restaurant. \$28 in advance, \$35 at door. Call
(410) 887-8090 to register.
- 05 Jan.** Grain Marketing Update. 8-10:30 AM. Online via
Zoom. Free. Register [online](#) or call (410) 822-1244.
- 25 Jan.** Central Maryland Vegetable Growers Day. Hereford
Fire Hall, Monkton. Details to come.
- 15 Feb.** Women in Ag Conference. 9-3 PM. Chesapeake Bay
Beach Club, Stevensville. \$50. Register [online](#) or call (410)
822-1244
- 20 Feb.** Save the date: Harford County Mid-Winter
Agronomy Meeting. 9-3 PM. Deer Creek Overlook. Details
to come.

December 2023