

Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION



September 2024

The Extension office will be closed on
September 2 for Labor Day

University of
Maryland Extension

Harford County
Agricultural Center

Suite 600
3525 Conowingo Rd.
Street, MD 21154
(410) 638-3255

M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Extension.umd.edu/harford-county
facebook.com/HarfordAg

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Hello, Harford County!

As the [Maryland State Fair](#) heads into the third and final long weekend of fun, the **Maryland Department of Agriculture** is thrilled to present an extensive lineup showcasing the many programs that support Maryland's agriculture, farmers, and residents.

Throughout the fair, the department is hosting an array of children's activities and agricultural displays in the **Cow Palace**, highlighting over 20 of the department's programs and engaging with fairgoers to showcase the broad spectrum of industries within agriculture that MDA supports.

At **Horseland** near the Grandstand, the [Maryland Horse Industry Board](#) is on hand to educate the public about Maryland's vibrant equine industry, offering valuable insights and information for horse enthusiasts.

The fair runs for one more long weekend of fun- **Sept. 5-8**- at the **State Fairgrounds**

in **Timonium**. The fair also showcases thousands of home arts and agricultural exhibits, along with daily livestock and horse exhibitions, a variety of midway rides and games, thoroughbred horse racing, and national entertainment.

We would also like to extend our gratitude towards the countless hours that our 4-H and FFA students put into their projects they showcase at the fair, as well as to the volunteers that help put the fair on, including judges and superintendents! If you haven't been already, I hope you can find time this weekend!

On an unrelated note, I have had several inquiries about pesticide training. I have scheduled training dates and they are posted on page 6 of this newsletter.

Until next time,
-Andy



The
MARYLAND
STATE FAIR



EPA [press release](#) (abridged)

On Aug. 6, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the emergency suspension of all registrations of the pesticide dimethyl tetrachloroterephthalate (DCPA or Dacthal) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

EPA has taken this action because unborn babies whose pregnant mothers are exposed to DCPA, sometimes without even knowing the exposure has occurred, could experience changes to fetal thyroid hormone levels, and these changes are generally linked to low birth weight, impaired brain development, decreased IQ, and impaired motor skills later in life, some of which may be irreversible.

“Farmworkers face burdensome conditions in the fields and often face exposure to harmful pesticides while working to feed our nation. I applaud the emergency action by the EPA which prioritizes farmworker health and safety, especially for pregnant women, by suspending this harmful chemical from our agricultural systems. We must continue to build on this progress and ensure all farmworkers are given the protection, worker’s rights, and overtime pay they deserve,” said Congressman Raúl Grijalva (AZ-07).

DCPA is a pesticide registered to control weeds in both agricultural and non-agricultural settings, but is primarily used on crops such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and onions. DCPA is currently undergoing registration review, a process that requires reevaluating registered pesticides every 15 years to ensure they cause no unreasonable adverse effects on human health or the environment.

In deciding whether to issue today’s Emergency Order, EPA consulted with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to understand how growers use DCPA and alternatives to this pesticide. In 2013, the agency issued a Data Call -In (DCI) to AMVAC Chemical Corporation, the sole manufacturer of DCPA, requiring it to submit more than 20 studies to support the existing registrations of DCPA. The required data included a comprehensive study of the effects of DCPA on thyroid development and function in adults and in developing young before and after birth, that was due by January 2016. Several of the studies that AMVAC submitted from 2013-2021 were considered insufficient to address the DCI, while the thyroid study and other studies were not submitted at all.

In April 2022, EPA issued a very rarely used Notice of Intent to Suspend the DCPA technical-grade product

(used to manufacture end-use products) based on AMVAC’s failure to submit the complete set of required data for almost 10 years, including the thyroid study. While AMVAC submitted the required thyroid study in August 2022, EPA suspended the registration based solely on AMVAC’s continued failure to submit other outstanding data on Aug. 22, 2023, following an administrative hearing. In November 2023, the data submission suspension was lifted after AMVAC submitted sufficient data. Most DCPA use on turf was voluntarily canceled by AMVAC in December 2023, but unacceptable risks from other uses remained.

In May 2023, EPA released its assessment on the risks of occupational and residential exposure to products containing DCPA, following its analysis of the thyroid study submitted by AMVAC. The assessment found health risks associated with DCPA use and application, even when personal protective equipment and engineering controls are used. The most serious risks are to the unborn babies of pregnant individuals. EPA estimates that some pregnant individuals handling DCPA products could be subjected to exposures four to 20 times greater than what EPA has estimated is safe for unborn babies.

Also of concern are risks to unborn babies of pregnant individuals entering or working in areas where DCPA has already been applied (especially post-application workers involved in tasks such as transplanting, weeding and harvesting). Current product labels specify that entry into treated fields must be restricted for 12 hours after application. However, the evidence indicates that for many crops and tasks, levels of DCPA in a treated field remain at unsafe levels for 25 days or more. Spray drift from pesticide application could also put at risk the unborn babies of pregnant individuals living near areas where DCPA is used.

Since the release of EPA’s 2023 assessment, AMVAC has proposed several changes to the DCPA registrations, including the cancellation of DCPA products registered for use on turf. Those cancellations practically eliminate exposures to DCPA from recreational activities on and around turf. But according to EPA’s analysis, AMVAC’s proposed changes to agricultural uses of DCPA do not adequately address the serious health risks for people who work with and around DCPA.

In April 2024, EPA issued a public warning regarding the significant health risks to unborn babies of pregnant individuals exposed to DCPA and its intent to pursue action to address the serious, and in some instances,

3 permanent, and irreversible health risks associated with the pesticide as quickly as possible. In a letter to AMVAC dated March 27, 2024, EPA restated the risks the agency found and noted that the agency would be pursuing regulatory options as soon as possible which could include cancelling the pesticide or seeking an emergency suspension.

When serious risks are identified, EPA can take action under FIFRA to suspend or cancel a pesticide. Taking such action is resource and time intensive, partly due to the procedural requirements of FIFRA. A cancellation proceeding may take at least several months (if uncontested by the registrant) or potentially several years (if contested by the registrant, thus triggering an administrative hearing and any subsequent appeal of a cancellation order). FIFRA also allows EPA to seek a suspension of a pesticide product while cancellation proceedings are ongoing if the Administrator determines

it is necessary to prevent an imminent hazard. EPA Administrator Regan has determined that, due to the serious and imminent harm posed by DCPA, an emergency exists such that this order of suspension effective immediately is necessary. EPA intends to issue a notice of intent to cancel the DCPA products within the next 90 days.

The Emergency Order is effective immediately. EPA determined that the continued sale and use of DCPA products during the time it would take to follow the normal cancellation process poses an imminent hazard to unborn babies. While AMVAC has attempted to address these concerns, EPA has determined there are no practical mitigation measures that can be put in place to allow DCPA's continued use.

Additional information is available in the DCPA registration review docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0374](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/registration-review-docket-epa-hq-opp-2011-0374).

Pesticide Disposal Program

The Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Pesticide Disposal Program is a free service for all current or retired farmers and producers, including orchardists, nurserymen, greenhouse operators, and Christmas tree growers.

The program will collect any product with a registration number from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and any other material that can be identified as a pesticide. Any unknown material will be sampled and tested by MDA prior to collection to ensure safe and proper disposal.

To participate in the 2024 program, farmers are asked to fill out the [registration form](#) and submit to MDA's Pesticide Regulation Section (see below for more detail).

After reviewing applications, an MDA inspector will schedule a site visit to verify information. Once the program has a complete inventory of materials that need to be disposed, MDA will contract a licensed hazardous waste hauler to collect the pesticide materials directly from the storage site and transport to an EPA-approved disposal facility.

MDA's Pesticide Disposal Program was first introduced in 1995. The program has collected nearly 190,000 pounds of unusable or unwanted pesticide from 385 sites since its inception. Funding for the program comes from licensing, certification and registration fees collected from pesticide businesses, certified applicators, and pesticide manufacturers and registrants.

For more information on the program, please consult our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document or contact the [Pesticide Regulation Section](#) at (410) 841-5710.



Mark Hoffman, Small Fruits Specialist
North Carolina State University

Several plant suppliers that usually ship strawberry tips to plug plant producers have had a large outbreak of *Neopestalotiopsis* (Neo-P) and therefore cannot deliver tips. Other tip suppliers might still deliver, but there is the possibility of an infection as well.

What to do if my plug plant order was cancelled?

Please consult with your local agent or with the specialists. **IMPORTANT:** If you decide to plant, it is crucial to start out with plants that show no disease symptoms. It is also important to have sufficient spray equipment and deploy an aggressive spray schedule to be able to control this disease. You need to be able to spray from the first day of planting! To learn more about the spray program, please read this [note](#) from Dr. Phil Brannen.

If you decide to use plug plants and tips: It is important to only use plant material that is symptomless. Most nurseries already be sold out, but some might still take orders. You find a [plant supplier list here](#). However, please also consult with your original plant supplier. They will be also doing their best to find other tip sources as well.

Bare-root with leaves & cut-offs: If you switch to bare-root planting material, green bare roots need to be watered daily (for 14 days). That requires a large water reservoir as well as soil that drains reasonably well. Cut-offs require considerably less overhead watering, and might be less prone to disease spread due less overheard water usage.

Late planting: Some of you might experience this year a late planting due to delayed plant delivery. If that is the case, after the initial rooting phase, please use row-covers (ideally before Thanksgiving) to increase crown development.

What to do if my plants show disease symptoms?

Disease Symptoms are described by Bill Cline in this [note](#). Disease symptoms can however vary quite a bit. It is definitely advisable to let professionals identify the cause for your symptoms.

We are also still learning about disease management. But there are a few things that we do know:

- Disease symptoms show typically more on plants that are more stressed (e.g. nutrition, other pathogens, irrigation etc.).
- There is a high correlation between rain events and disease spread. It seems that Neo-P is primarily

spread through rain splash.

- We know that a few fungicides (Thiram, Switch, Rhyme/Tilt/Inspire) can control Neo-P to a certain percentage.
- It is crucial to deploy an aggressive spray program and stay on top of it. That means early sprays, sprays before and after rain (but in dry conditions!).



Figure 1. Symptoms of Neo-P on strawberry. Picture by Bill Cline, NC State.

It is not advisable to plant plug plants or bare-roots that show disease symptoms. Here are steps that you can take before and after planting:

- Do not plant unhealthy plants and destroy the ones not planted;
- Limit field operations, such as harvesting and spraying, when plants are wet;
- Sanitize hands, shoes, and clothing when moving out of infected fields;
- Clean and disinfect equipment when moving out of infected fields;
- Remove and destroy symptomatic plants (including crowns and roots) during production to reduce inoculum and disease spread;

Are there tolerant or resistant cultivars? There are no true resistant cultivars. However, it seems that there are cultivars that are more susceptible than others. Most of the data we have on this are either anecdotal or insufficient to really make a scientific claim. So the following information is only based on observations made by me and others in the industry, and should be seen as such.

It seems that 'Monterey', 'Rocco' and 'Fronteras' typically show less disease symptoms. 'Ruby June', 'Albion', 'Chandler', 'Camarosa', 'Sweet Charlie', 'Camino Real' all seem to be more affected by the disease. Same with 'Brilliance' and 'Sensation'. I want to stress out that this is based on observations of growers, extension and nursery men I spoke to in the past days. There is no research trial that sufficiently evaluated the impact of Neo-P on disease development in different cultivars.

2024 Statewide Cash Rental Averages

Paul Goeringer, Agriculture Law Specialist
 University of Maryland, Agriculture Law Education Initiative

USDA’s National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS) updated data on cash rent paid by producers in 2024. NASS collects this data from 240,000 operations across the United States annually through the Cash Rent Survey - data used by other agencies throughout USDA. The survey results give us an idea of what other tenants in the area may be paying per acre for farmland.

One important note: many of you ask me what constitutes a reasonable cash rent price. I still have no idea what an affordable cash rent price is for you or the other party based on a specific piece of farmland. The averages will give you a good starting point, but you should consider a reasonable price carefully. Resources exist at <http://www.aglease101.org> to help calculate cash rent, crop-share rent, or flex-cash rent. Utilizing these resources can help determine rent prices that will work for you.

Nationally, cash rent averages in 2024 were up (Table 1). Non-irrigated cropland cash rent increased from \$142/acre in 2023 to \$146/acre in 2024 or a 2.74 percent increase. Irrigated cropland saw a 3.27 percent increase, going from \$237/acre on average in 2023 to \$245/acre in 2024 (Table 1). Since 2015, irrigated cash rental rates have risen over 14.69 percent per acre. Pasture rent rose 3.23 percent from \$15/acre in 2023 to \$15.50/acre in 2024 (Table 1).

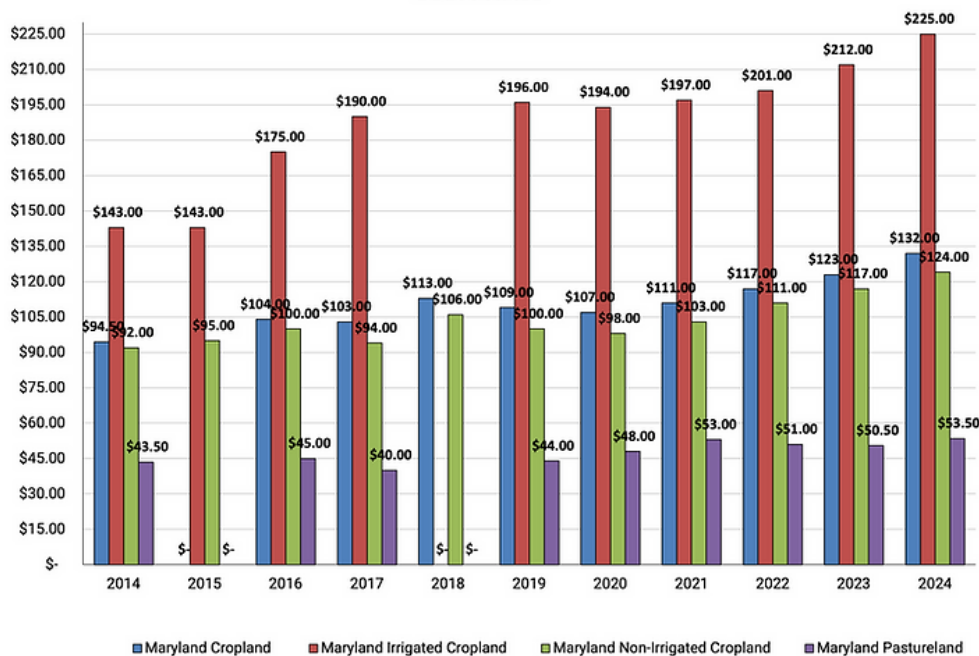
Table 1: U.S. Average Cash Rents per Acre for 2014-2024

	2014 Cash Rent \$/acre	2015 Cash Rent \$/acre	2016 Cash Rent \$/acre	2017 Cash Rent \$/acre	2018 Cash Rent \$/acre	2019 Cash Rent \$/acre	2020 Cash Rent \$/acre	2021 Cash Rent \$/acre	2022 Cash Rent \$/acre	2023 Cash Rent \$/acre	2024 Cash Rent \$/acre
National Cropland	\$ 141.00	\$ 144.00	\$ 136.00	\$ 136.00	\$ 138.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 139.00	\$ 141.00	\$ 148.00	\$ 155.00	\$ 160.00
National Irrigated Cropland	\$ 208.00	\$ 209.00	\$ 206.00	\$ 212.00	\$ 215.00	\$ 220.00	\$ 217.00	\$ 227.00	\$ 237.00	\$ 245.00	
National Non-Irrigated Cropland	\$ 130.00	\$ 133.00	\$ 125.00	\$ 123.00	\$ 125.00	\$ 127.00	\$ 126.00	\$ 128.00	\$ 135.00	\$ 142.00	\$ 146.00
National Pastureland	\$ 12.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 13.00	\$ 12.50	\$ 12.50	\$ 13.00	\$ 13.00	\$ 13.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.50

Source: USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service.

How did we do in Maryland compared with national averages? Maryland saw a 6.82 percent increase in average cropland cash rent from \$123/acre in 2023 to \$132/acre in 2024 (Table 3). The average irrigated cropland increased by 5.78 percent in 2024, from \$225/acre average in 2023 to \$225/acre average in 2023 (Table 3). Average pastureland cash rents were down 5.61 percent in Maryland in 2024, going from \$50.50/acre in 2023 to \$53.50/acre in 2024 (Table 3). NASS will release county cash rental rates later in August 2024. For last year’s average cash rents, check out this publication or the UME Grain Marketing page.

Table 3: Maryland Average Cash Rents per Acre for 2014-2024, Source USDA-NASS



Pesticide Training Dates

We will be hosting private pesticide applicator training at the Extension office (3525 Conowingo Rd, Street, MD 21154) the fall and winter. Dates and times are listed below. There is no fee to attend the classes, but please register ahead of time to ensure accurate headcount for educational materials. Please call the Extension office to register, (410) 638-3255, or email akness@umd.edu.

Private Applicator Recertification Training (4 CEUs in category PVT for private applicator renewal). As a reminder, if your license expires in December of 2024, you will need 4 CEUs by spring 2025 in order to renew your private applicator license.

- November 14, 2024 | 1-3:00 p.m.
- March 13, 2025 | 1-3:00 p.m.
- Credits will also be offered at Northern Maryland Field Crops Day (December 5), Central MD Vegetable Growers Day (January 22), and the Harford County Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting (February 11).

Optional Private Applicator Prep Course and Exam. \$20 for a hard copy of the *Maryland Private Applicator Core Manual* study guide.

- November 5, 2024 | Prep for Exam | 9-11:00 a.m.
- November 14, 2024 | Exam | 9-11:00 a.m.
- March 6, 2025 | Prep for Exam | 9-11:00 a.m.
- March 13, 2025 | Exam | 9-11:00 a.m.

Tar Spot Update: First Reports

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

Our first official reports of tar spot have been confirmed in Maryland for 2024; almost exactly on pace for when we first detected tar spot in 2023 and 2022. The first report came from a dent corn field in Baltimore County on August 22 and a subsequent report was made from a field in Harford County on August 27. Both of these fields are near black layer and yield loss due to tar spot infection is not likely unless infection occurred earlier in grain fill or during pollination. It is not likely that we had tar spot infections occurring in July of this year due to the extreme heat we had. Tar spot infections require lower temperatures than other common fungal diseases of corn such as gray leaf spot.

As average daily temperatures begin to dip into the mid 70s and mid sixties, tar spot symptoms will likely start to flare up in corn. Tar spot can spread as long as there is green tissue on the plant, which means symptoms can worsen even past black layer, making for a field that could look far more worse than it actually is. For reference, last fall I saw corn fields that had fairly moderate levels of tar spot infection but still yielded very well (250-300 bu/a). What likely happened is tar spot infected corn close to R5-R6 and it just continued to spread after black layer since the plants stayed green beyond physiological maturity due to the stay green effect of foliar fungicides that were applied to these fields. Even though tar spot spores can blow short distances in the wind, if you are harvesting a field infected with tar spot, it would be a good practice to try to clean as much corn fodder off of equipment prior to moving to a new farm. A simple blower or air compressor will do the trick.

As you are scouting your corn fields, be on the lookout for tar spot. With funding from the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, we are conducting a survey of tar spot's distribution in Maryland. If you have tar spot, or think you might, please report it to corn.ipmpipe.org or reach out to me at akness@umd.edu or (410) 638-3255. Reports are kept anonymous and individuals and/or farms are not identified in any public reports or publications.



A. Kness, Univ. of Maryland
Figure 1. Tar spot symptoms on a senesced corn leaf.



Mid-Atlantic 4R SYMPOSIUM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH
Maryland Department of Agriculture
9:30 AM to 2:45 PM

The Mid-Atlantic 4R Nutrient Stewardship Association will continue an annual 4R Symposium for crop advisers, agronomists, nutrient management professionals, and agribusiness representatives. This year's event will take place on Thursday, September 12th at the Maryland Department of Agriculture in Annapolis, MD. The event is free for attendees but, registration is required. You can [register online here](#).

Doors will open at 9:30 AM with our first speaker at 10:00 AM. There will be four research presentations and a farmer panel. Lunch will be available to all attendees. Participants will hear about research on biologicals, nutrient recommendations for high management wheat, and the new FRST tool. The farmer panel will include Steve Ernst from Washington County, Trey Hill from Kent County, RC Willin from Sussex County, and one more pending farmer from Pennsylvania.

SARE Farmer Grants



**Northeast
Sustainable Agriculture
Research and Education**

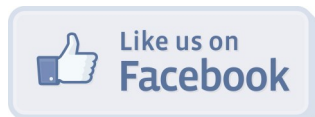
Northeast SARE offers grants to farmers to explore new concepts in sustainable agriculture conducted through experiments, surveys, prototypes, on-farm demonstrations or other research and education techniques. Farmer Grant

projects address issues that affect farming with long-term sustainability in mind. Learn more by visiting <https://northeast.sare.org/grants/get-a-grant/farmer-grant-program/>. **Applications are due by November 12, 2024.**



Great resources are just a click away!

Andrew Kness
Senior Extension Agent,
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Food Systems



facebook.com/HarfordAg

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



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Ag Notes

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Dates to remember

- 12 Sep.** 4R Symposium. 9-2:45 PM. Maryland Department of Agriculture, Annapolis, MD. Free. Register [online](#).
- 14 Sep.** Basic Composting. 10:30 AM. Harford County Public Library, Bel Air. Free. Register [online](#) or call (410) 638-3255.
- 01 Oct.** Sustainable IPM Workshop. 9-3 PM. Montgomery County Extension Office, Derwood, MD. Free. Register [online](#) or call Emily Zobel at (410) 228-8800.
- 08 Oct.** Women in Ag Webinar: How to Interpret a Soil Test Report. 12 noon. Free. Register [online](#).

AG PLASTIC RECYCLING @ HWDC

All plastics should be as clean as possible and stored under cover to minimize moisture. Farms should separate plastic by type. All types of Ag Plastics are received in Supersacks that are provided by Office of Recycling. Harford County farms only.



ACCEPTABLE ITEMS-FREE DROP OFF

- Bale Wrap- Debris-Free
- Black and White Silage Bags/Bunker Covers(without Plastic Baler Twine)
- Woven Plastic Feed Bags & Supersacks #4
- Softener Salt & Pellet Stove Bags #4
- Animal Feed Bags #4
- Plastic Baler Twine
- Greenhouse Cover
- Drip Tape
- Flats, Trays, & Flower Pots
- Clear Stretch Film
- Plastic Pallets



TO SCHEDULE A DROP OFF PLEASE CALL

410-638-3417

September 2024