

Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

April 2024



Happy Easter from the
Extension office!

University of
Maryland Extension

Harford County
Agricultural Center

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Street, MD 21154
(410) 638-3255

M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Extension.umd.edu/harford-county
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Hello, Harford County!

The month of March started off warm but quickly turned cold and damp. We received about 4.5 inches of rain in March, approximately 1.5 inches more than normal and we are about 3 inches over normal precipitation for the year. Hopefully April will bring some much needed sunshine for not only our sanity but also for our crops and farming field operations.

One thing we can always count on in farming is to expect the unexpected—this is no more evident than what happened with the unbelievable collapse of the Key Bridge in Baltimore. This disaster could have some impact on agriculture in our state and the country as a whole depending on how long the Port of Baltimore remains closed as the debris is cleared.

The Port of Baltimore is the 11th largest port by tonnage and 9th largest by dollar value of cargo handled in the United States and plays a key role in agricultural commerce and trade. For 13 consecutive years, the port has been number one for handling cars and light trucks, as well as farm machinery. I had a chance to tour the Port of Baltimore in 2021 during one of our LEAD Maryland seminars, and you can see in the picture below the seemingly endless rows of Case IH and New Holland combines staged at the Port of Baltimore.

Other than farm equipment and sugar, the Port of Baltimore (fortunately) does not play a major role in imports or exports of major agricultural commodities. Because of our robust livestock industry in the mid-Atlantic (particularly poultry), grains such as corn and soybeans grown

here are generally utilized locally by the livestock industry, so we only have a very minor proportion of these commodities that are exported through the Port of Baltimore. However in recent years, there has been some increased exports of some grains, such as soybeans, out of Baltimore to new markets, which could be affected by the Port's closure. There is also some concern over the import of organic grain for the organic broiler industry; companies such as Perdue and Mountaire receive imports of organic grain through the Port of Baltimore.

The port also handles shipments of fertilizer; the most significant being UAN and urea. The Port imports about 10% of all UAN for the United States, as well as effectively all of the urea and UAN used locally, and about 50% of the potash used locally. Right now I am hearing that fertilizer supplies are OK for the time being, but logistics could become complicated if the Port remains closed for an extended period of time and fertilizer shipments are diverted to other ports. In this case, the major bottleneck becomes hauling product back into the area from these distal locations, driving up freight costs and potentially causing a delay in receiving product.

Officials say it could take up to a month to get the debris cleared enough to re-open the Port of Baltimore. In the meantime, we can all be thankful for the Bay Pilots, crew, and emergency personnel whose swift actions leading up to the accident most definitely prevented an even larger catastrophe.

Until next time,
-Andy



*Paul Goeringer, Agriculture Law Extension Specialist
University of Maryland, Agriculture Law Extension Initiative*

The University of Maryland and the University of Delaware will host the Hiring and Retaining Farm Employees – What you Need to Know and Do four webinars every Friday in April at noon starting on April 5th and ending on April 26. The free webinars will cover developing an employee handbook for your operation, basic legal requirements, and how to incorporate benefits that agricultural employers deal with. The funding for this program is thanks to the Northeast Risk Management Education Center.

The webinar schedule includes:

- April 5: Introduction to the Employer Guide and Workbook - Nate Bruce, Farm Business Management Specialist, UD Cooperative Extension;
- April 12: Finding the right person, Employee Handbook, Paul Goeringer, Sr. Faculty Specialist and Extension Specialist, UMD
- April 19: Overview of health insurance options with case study, Jesse Ketterman, PhD, AFC, Senior Agent, University of Maryland Extension
- April 26: Overview retirement savings options with case study, Maria Pippidis, Extension Educator, Financial Wellness, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension;

“This program will be a great opportunity for agricultural employers to get valuable information on their legal responsibilities and options,” said Paul Goeringer. “This information will be useful for any employer, regardless of the size of the operation,” said Goeringer.

For more information or to register for the webinars, go to <https://bit.ly/3uwXmdx> - and do not hesitate to reach out to Paul Goeringer at lgoering@umd.edu if you have any questions.

This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2021-70027-34693.

Small Business Loans Available Up to \$200K

Harford County’s Economic Development Opportunity Fund has:

- ▶ Flexible terms
- ▶ Low interest rates
- ▶ Gap financing

scan here for details or to apply



Funds can be used for:

- ▶ Building + land purchases
 - ▶ Renovations
 - ▶ Equipment
 - ▶ Technology upgrades
- and more!**

Loan approvals are subject to conditions and are not guaranteed.



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bonnie Barresi Business Development Associate

✉ bebarresi@harfordcountymd.gov ☎ 410-638-3338 🌐 harfordcountymd.gov/OED

BOB CASSILLY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Tree Fruit Spray Schedules

Updated 2024 tree fruit spray schedules are available for download on our website for both commercial growers and for small farm/backyard multi-species orchards. These guides can be a great reference so that you stay on top of pest issues in the orchard and can help you plan for 2024. Access the documents at the links below or contact our office for a hard copy.

Commercial Tree Fruit: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-419/456-419.html>

Multi-Species Mixed Orchards: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/spray-program-multi-tree-fruit-orchards/>

Spring Forage Events in Maryland

*Amanda Grev, Pasture and Forage Specialist
University of Maryland Extension*

University of Maryland Extension, NRCS, the Mountains to Bay Grazing Alliance, and several Maryland producers invite grazers, livestock owners, and associated industry personnel to attend upcoming spring educational forage events! These in-person events will cover a range of topics and will be held at various locations across the state, both on producer farms and at UMD research and education centers.

April 16, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Location: Hidden Waters Farm in Pikesville, MD

Description: Join UMD Extension, NRCS, and producer Joe Shaffer to discuss increasing plant and animal diversity and potential challenges and successes with integrated multi-species grazing.

Registration: <https://go.umd.edu/pw-april>

April 25, 2024 at 9:00 AM

Location: Central Maryland Research & Education Center in Ellicott City, MD

Description: Join the Mountains-to-Bay Grazing Alliance, UMD Extension, and partners to host Allen Williams for a pasture-based field day. Attendees will learn about soil health, biodiversity, grazing management, fencing and watering systems, and the behavior of grazing livestock at this interactive field day with classroom and field-based activities.

Registration: <https://go.umd.edu/allenwilliams> (space is limited)

May 16, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Location: New Roots Farm in West River, MD

Description: Join UMD Extension, NRCS, and producer Sarah Campbell to discuss finishing cattle on grass, genetic selection for grass-finished livestock, and pastured pigs.

Registration: <https://go.umd.edu/pw-may>

Participants are welcome to join for one or more events. Registration is required; please visit the specific link for each event or call (301) 432-2767 to register. Events are supported by the Mountains-to-Bay Grazing Alliance, UMD Extension, NE SARE, and partners. All events will be outdoors; please dress accordingly.

Additional dates and locations are forthcoming; for information on all upcoming forage events, visit <https://go.umd.edu/forageevents>. If you have questions or need accommodations, please contact Amanda Grev (agrev@umd.edu; 301-226-7575).



Cost-Share for Manure Transport and Injection

Maryland Department of Agriculture [press release](#)



The Maryland Department of Agriculture is reminding farmers they may apply for cost-share funding to help cover the cost of transporting all

types of manure to crop fields with acceptable soil phosphorus levels. Grants are also available to offset the cost of injecting liquid manure into soil to prevent nutrient runoff and reduce odors.

Program highlights include:

- Transporting poultry manure to qualifying fields with acceptable soil phosphorus levels or alternative use projects that can safely utilize the product; farmers may receive up to \$28/ton.
- Cost-share grants are available to transport dairy and livestock manure to qualifying fields, covering up to 87.5% of eligible costs.
- FastTrack and standard transport options are available for both poultry and dairy or livestock manure.
- Farmers may receive up to \$45/acre for costs

associated with injecting liquid manure into the soil. Please note, poultry manure is not eligible for this option due to its low moisture content.

FastTrack (haul now, apply later) applications for poultry and dairy or livestock manure are available for download from the mda.maryland.gov. Farmers who do not qualify for FastTrack are encouraged to contact their local soil conservation district to apply for standard grants, which require pre-approval before manure is transported or injected.

Farmers who are planning to transport dairy or livestock manure this spring and summer are advised that all projects must be completed by September 9. Claims for payment should be submitted to the department's Conservation Grants Office by October 9.

The department's Conservation Grants Program administers manure transport and injection grants. To apply for these grants, farmers must be in good standing with the program and in compliance with Maryland's nutrient management regulations.

To find manure, please download the [LTTR app](#) or contact a [poultry manure broker](#). For more information, please contact the department's Manure Management Program at (410) 841-5864.

Small Acreage Cover Crop Program

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

Small Farms and Urban Growers Who Plant Less Than 10 Acres Encouraged to Apply

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has announced the sign-up period for its 2024 Small Acreage Cover Crop Program will run from March 25 through April 30, 2024. The program provides grants to help small farms and urban growers plant cover crops in their production areas to build healthy soils, increase crop yields, protect local water quality, and improve climate resilience.

Growers who plant less than ten (10) acres of qualifying cover crops—including cereal grains or cover crop seed mixes— may apply for these grants. Financial assistance for this program is capped at \$1,500 per grower per year.

Urban and small-scale producers may download grant applications on MDA's website, which must be postmarked by **April 30, 2024**, for consideration in this year's program. Highlights of the grant include:

- Maximum payment per grower is \$1,500 per year.
- Growers will be reimbursed based on paid receipts.
- Eligible species include single cereal grains or cover crop seed mixes.
- Cover crops may be planted in open plots/fields, raised beds, or a high tunnel.
- Growers should follow cover crop planting recommendations made by the seed manufacturer or the University of Maryland Extension for eligible species.

The Department's Small Acreage Cover Crop Program is funded by the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund and managed by the Small Farm and Urban Agriculture Program. Interested growers should contact Bill Tharpe, the Program Administrator for the Small Farm and Urban Agriculture Program, bill.tharpe@maryland.gov or (410) 841-5869. For additional information, please visit the [website](#).



6TH ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL SYMPOSIUM

Farmers, Community, and the Environment: Nourishing Our Resources Together

SAT, MAY 11, 2024 | 8 AM-2 PM

Deer Creek Overlook 4-H Camp
6 Cherry Hill Road, Street, MD

Registration Fee: \$20
Includes breakfast & lunch

- Welcome from Bob Cassilly, County Executive
- Keynote speaker: Dr. Dennis Kirkwood
- 4 Workshops: Soil, Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife
- Panel discussion by local farmers



tickets.harford.edu | 443.412.2211

Space is limited. Register early.
Dress appropriately for this rain or shine, indoor/outdoor event.
Light to moderate walking on unpaved surfaces is required.

We are eager to ensure full participation for all. Please contact Theresa Lilienthal for disability accommodations at 443.412.2182 or tlilienthal@harford.edu at least 10 days prior to the event.

Join us for a
unique hands-on
experience!

Experience the county's
amazing **natural
resources** and how our
farmers care for them.

Use farmers'
**environmental
strategies** to nurture
your yard and garden for
sustainability.



State Fair Scholarships

6

Reposted from [Morning Ag Clips](#)

The Maryland State Fair is currently seeking 4-year college, post-secondary college, and trade school applicants for the F. Grove Miller Maryland State Fair Honorary and the Marlin K. Hoff Memorial Scholarship programs. Scholarship Rules and Applications may be obtained at <https://marylandstatefair.com/scholarships/>.

Completed applications and supplemental information must be electronically submitted, no later than midnight on June 1, 2024. Recipients of the scholarships will be recognized at special ceremonies during the 2024 Maryland State Fair.

“Since its inception in 1879, agriculture education has been one of the Maryland State Fair’s top priorities,” said Maryland State Fair General Manager Andy Cashman. “Our competitive scholarships highlight and reward the accomplishments of youth, help them with their educational pursuits, and promote the importance of agriculture to our state and our world.”

The F. Grove Miller Maryland State Fair Honorary \$2,000 Scholarships recognize the importance of education and participation in the Maryland State Fair. Applicants must be permanent residents of Maryland who have participated in the previous Maryland State Fair. They must be enrolled, and entering their freshman through senior year, in a 4-year college, post-secondary college or trade school. Recipients will be selected based on their involvement in the [Maryland State Fair](#), academic performance, leadership qualities, future goals, and financial need. Four winners will be selected and will each receive \$2,000 in scholarship monies. The scholarships will be presented during the 4-H/FFA Judging Award Program at the 2024 Maryland State Fair.

The Marlin K. Hoff Memorial \$2,000 Scholarship will be awarded to one Maryland youth who has carried a 4-H, FFA or breed organization dairy project, has participated in the previous Maryland State Fair, and is enrolled and entering their freshman through senior year, in a 4-year college, post-secondary college or trade school. The recipient will be selected on the basis of involvement in the dairy industry, academic performance, leadership qualities, future goals and financial need. The Scholarship will be awarded during the Maryland Holstein Futurity at the 2024 Maryland State Fair. For additional information, go to <https://marylandstatefair.com/scholarships/>.

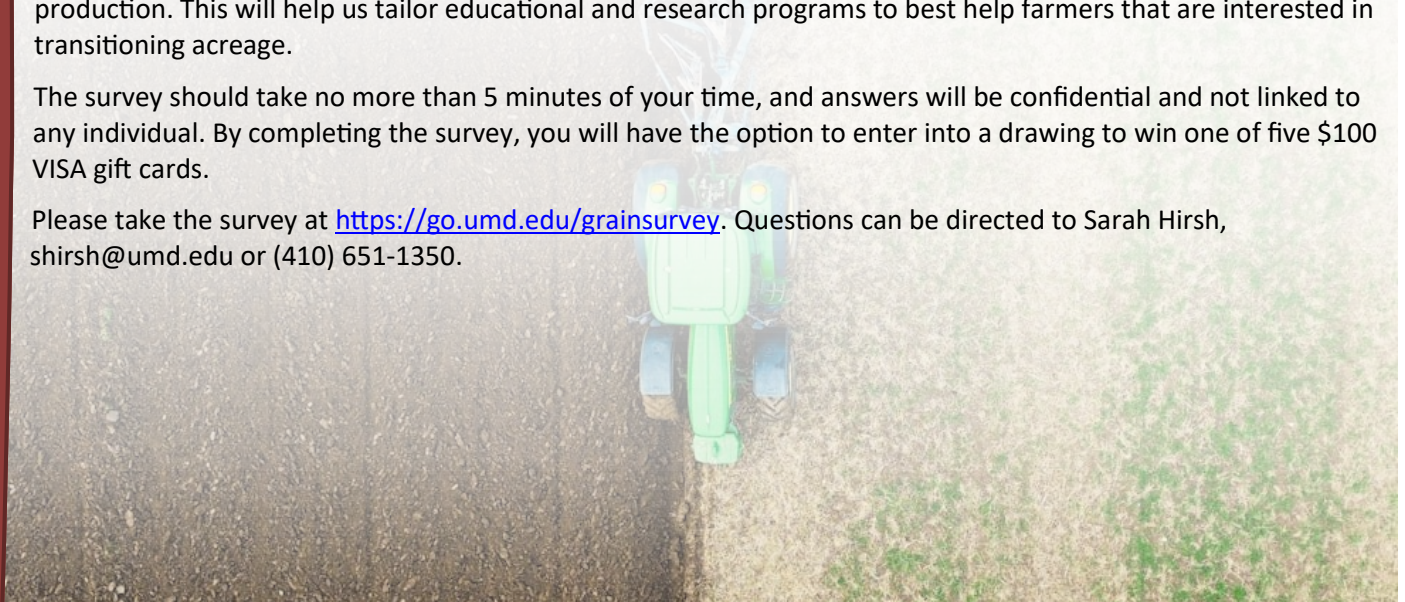
Organic Grain Survey

*Sarah Hirsh, Agriculture Agent
University of Maryland Extension, Somerset County*

For a variety of reasons, farmers may want to convert part or all of their grain production to certified organic. However, this transition can be challenging and risky. University of Maryland and Future Harvest would like to gain insight into the barriers preventing grain farmers from transitioning fields to certified organic production. This will help us tailor educational and research programs to best help farmers that are interested in transitioning acreage.

The survey should take no more than 5 minutes of your time, and answers will be confidential and not linked to any individual. By completing the survey, you will have the option to enter into a drawing to win one of five \$100 VISA gift cards.

Please take the survey at <https://go.umd.edu/grainsurvey>. Questions can be directed to Sarah Hirsh, shirsh@umd.edu or (410) 651-1350.



Ag Land Preservation Seminar

April 20

8:30—11:00 AM

Harford Community
College, Darlington Hall

Harford County Landowners Ag Preservation Seminar

Explore the options for preserving your land and protecting your legacy. Topics will include background on land preservation in Harford County; receiving value for your land through conservation easements and recent updates to the Harford Ag Land Preservation Program.

The seminar will be held in room 202 of Darlington Hall at Harford Community College, 401 Thomas Run Rd, Bel Air. If you have questions, please contact Bill Amoss, wdamoss@harfordcountymd.gov (410-638-3235) or Jen Wilson, jrwilson@harfordcountymd.gov (410-638-3103 x1365).

General Interest

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.



BOB CASSILLY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

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

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.

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Dates to remember

- 5, 12, 19, 26 Apr.** Farm Labor Webinars. 12 noon. Online via Zoom. Register online <https://bit.ly/3uwXmdx>.
- 11 Apr.** Hunting 101. 8:30-3 PM. Point Pleasant Farm, Bozman, MD. Register [online](#) or contact Luke Macaulay (703) 798-8459.
- 16 Apr.** Pasture Walk. 5:30 PM. Hidden Waters Farm, Pikesville. Free. Register [online](#) or call (301) 226-7575.
- 20 Apr.** Harford County Ag Land Preservation Seminar. 8:30-11 AM. Harford Community College. Free. Contact (410) 638-3235.
- 24 Apr.** Women in Ag Webinar: Extending the Grazing Season. 12 noon. Online via Zoom. Free. Register [online](#) or contact Shannon Dill (410) 822-1244.

- 11 May.** Harford County Ag Symposium. 8-2 PM. Deer Creek Overlook, Street, MD. Tickets available at tickets.harford.edu or call (443) 412-2211.

BERRY TWILIGHT TOUR

MAY 14, 2024

5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

WYE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
CENTER, QUEENSTOWN, MD

TO REGISTER:

[BIT.LY/3IBC4TU](https://bit.ly/3IBC4TU)

RSVP BY MAY 10TH



COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURE &
NATURAL RESOURCES

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

April 2024