

## *Sources of Technical Assistance, Education, and Support for Farmers in Frederick County, Maryland*

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### **Introduction**

Starting a farm and keeping it established may seem overwhelming. However, farmers have many resources at their disposal. There are federal, state, and local agencies and organizations that have been established to assist farm operators with a wide variety of financial, technical, and educational services.

The list below identifies and describes the resource agencies and organizations for farmers in Frederick County. However, these same or similar agencies are available to farmers across Maryland and the United States.

### **Sources of Assistance for Farmers in Frederick County**

- Frederick County Office of Economic Development  
118 N. Market Street, Suite 300; Frederick, MD 21701  
Telephone: 301-600-1058  
Websites: [www.discoverfrederickmd.com](http://www.discoverfrederickmd.com) and [www.homegrownfrederick.com](http://www.homegrownfrederick.com)

The Office of Economic Development works to increase the overall economic health of Frederick County by attracting new businesses and help existing businesses be more successful. Since agriculture is one of the key industries in the county, the Office of Economic Development assists farmers with promoting agriculture and walking through regulations for items such as zoning and value-added products. Homegrown Frederick, a website and annual magazine that promotes local farms, is published by the Office of Economic Development.

- Frederick County Agricultural Land Preservation Program  
30 N. Market Street; Frederick, MD 21701  
Telephone: 301-600-1474  
Website: [www.frederickcountymd.gov/7980/Agricultural-Preservation](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/7980/Agricultural-Preservation)

The Agricultural Land Preservation office administers a variety of local, state, and federal land preservation programs focused on protecting agricultural lands. These preservation programs provide many opportunities to the farmers of Frederick County to protect the future of their farmlands and promote natural resource industries.

- Frederick County Weed Control  
330 Montevue Lane; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-600-1586

Frederick County Weed Control operates through a joint partnership between the county government and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Weed Control enforces the State Weed Control Law which regulates johnsongrass, shattercane, and thistles. They also provide technical assistance to landowners for initiating noxious weed control programs.

- Future Harvest Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture (Future Harvest CASA)  
1114 Shawan Road, Suite 1; Cockeyville, MD 21030  
Telephone: 410-549-7878  
Website: [www.futureharvestcasa.org](http://www.futureharvestcasa.org)

Future Harvest CASA provides education, networking, and advocacy to help build a sustainable Chesapeake foodshed; protect our land, water, and air; and provide healthy, nutritious food that sustains the region's communities and cities. Future Harvest CASA offers field days, meetings, conferences, as well as a Beginning Farmer Training Program.

- Local Banks

Several local banks offer ag lending services. Check with your local bank for the services they offer.

- Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)  
1410 Forest Drive, Suite 21; Annapolis, MD 21403  
Telephone: 410-267-6807  
Website: [www.marbidco.org](http://www.marbidco.org)

MARBICO is a quasi-public economic development organization that helps Maryland's farm, forestry, and seafood businesses achieve sustainability and profitability. They offer loan and grant programs for farmers and rural business owners, land preservation programs, partnerships with commercial lenders, and business resources and planning tools for rural entrepreneurs.

- Maryland Department of Health (MDH)  
Frederick County Office  
350 Montevue Lane; Frederick, MD 21702  
Environmental Health Services Division Telephone: 301-600-1719  
Website: <http://health.frederickcountymd.gov/132/Environmental-Health>

The Environmental Health Services Division of the MDH oversees regulations dealing with wells, septic systems, food service facilities, farmers markets, cottage food businesses, and value-added products.

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Website: [www.dnr.maryland.gov](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov)
  - Forestry Division  
8602 Gambrill Park Road; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-473-8417
  - Wildlife Division  
14038 Blairs Valley Road; Clear Spring, MD 21722  
Telephone: 301-842-2702

The Forestry Division of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources can assist landowners with the establishment, management, and harvesting of trees on their property. The Wildlife Division of DNR manages the wildlife in the state. They handle complaints dealing with wildlife damage to crops and issue control permits and work with landowners to develop wildlife management plans.

- Maryland FarmLink  
Website: [www.marylandfarmlink.com](http://www.marylandfarmlink.com)

Maryland FarmLink is a website that helps Maryland farmers buy, sell, and lease farmland as well as connect with other farmers. This website is run by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission.

- Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit  
925 N. East Street; Frederick, MD 21701  
Telephone: 301-663-4192  
Website: [www.mafc.com](http://www.mafc.com)

Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit is an agricultural lending cooperative. They offer farm, home, and land loans, as well as crop insurance. Farm Credit also has a Beginning Farmer Program and an AgBiz Masters Program for young and beginning farmers.

- Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)  
Maryland Coordinator: Nevin Dawson, University of Maryland Extension  
9194 Legion Road, Suite 4; Denton, MD 21629  
Telephone: 410-479-4030 ext. 5  
Website: [www.northeastsare.org](http://www.northeastsare.org)

Northeast SARE offers grants and educational resources to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, and others to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region.

- Soil Conservation District (SCD)  
92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 230; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-695-2803  
Website: [www.catocinfredericksd.com](http://www.catocinfredericksd.com)

The soil conservation and water quality efforts in the county are channeled through the Soil Conservation District (SCD). The SCD works closely with the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service to install conservation practices and write conservation plans. The SCD also promotes environmental conservation to the public. Frederick County has two District Boards (Frederick & Catocin), which are made up of farmers from the county.

- United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 240; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-695-2803, ext. 2  
Website: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). FSA handles the government cost-share and price support programs, as well as low-interest loans. Disaster programs for drought, freeze, and hail are also handled by FSA.

- United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 240; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-695-2803 ext. 3  
Website: [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a branch of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). NRCS provides technical and financial assistance for installing farm practices that reduce soil erosion and benefit water quality. These practices include grass waterways, diversions, crop strips, ponds, watering troughs, manure pits, cover crops, stream buffers, and many more. NRCS also writes conservation plans, which are plans for the implementation of conservation practices on the farm.

- United States Department of Agriculture New Farmer Website  
Website: <https://newfarmers.usda.gov/>

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a section of their website dedicated to new farmers, women in ag, young farmers, and veterans. Information on how to start a farm, business resources, and grants and loans are available on this website.

- University of Maryland Extension (UME)  
Frederick County  
330 Montevue Lane; Frederick, MD 21702  
Telephone: 301-600-1594  
Website: [www.extension.umd.edu/frederick-county](http://www.extension.umd.edu/frederick-county)

University of Maryland Extension (UME) is the outreach branch of the University of Maryland. UME provides educational programs in the areas of agriculture, family and consumer sciences (nutrition, family finance), home horticulture, and youth (4-H). UME is an excellent source of reference materials such as fact sheets, individual consultations, and educational classes and workshops.

*Original Sheet written by Terry E. Poole, Agricultural Science Extension Agent.  
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