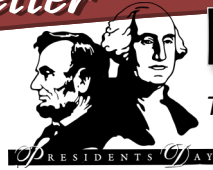


Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

February 2024



The Extension office will be closed on
February 19 for President's Day

Hello, Harford County!

February is here and soon it won't be long before spring arrives and we will be back in the fields planting the 2024 crop. Until then, now is a good time to handle office work on the farm, such as budgeting.

Every year the University of Maryland Extension compiles extensive field crop budgets; if you've not used them, I highly recommend giving them a try. These budgets are for corn, soybean, and wheat/double crop soybeans. They are available online at <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/field-crop-budgets/> and can be downloaded as Excel files or a printable pdf. Fields are pre-populated with approximate numbers and should be edited to reflect your actual production costs.

In general, input costs have come down from their record high in 2023; although they are still very high. You can see the annual trends in the graph below.

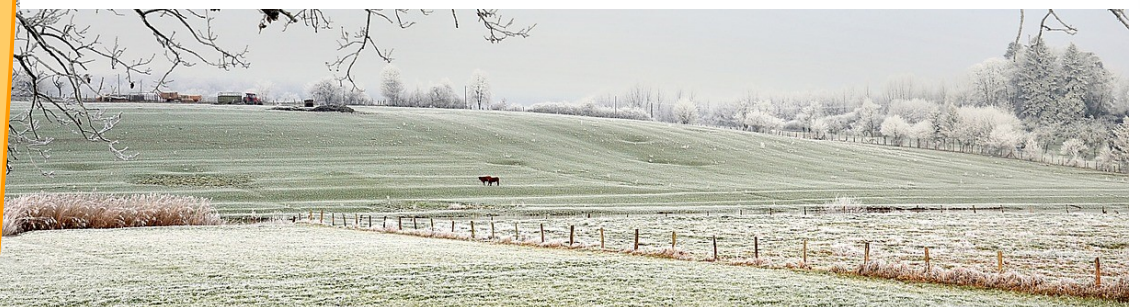
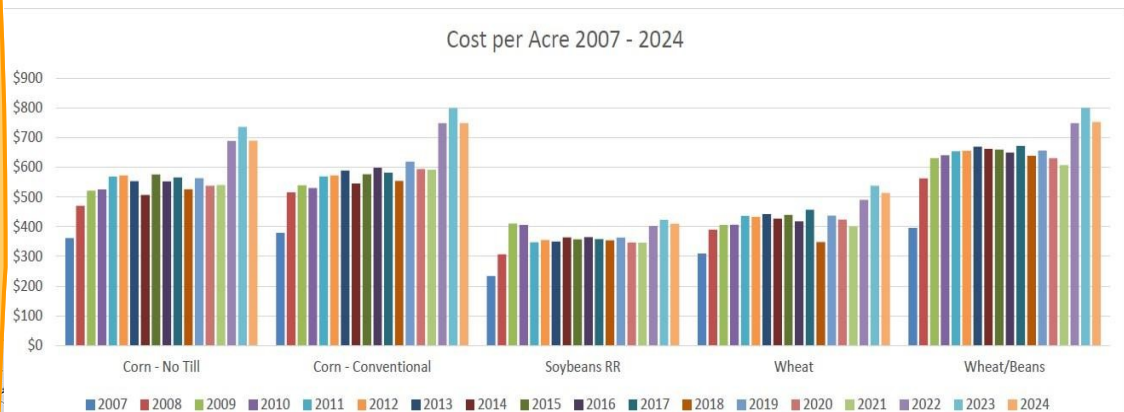
For those of you looking for vegetable crop budgets, our neighbors at the

University of Delaware have new vegetable budgets. They can be accessed at <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/sustainable-production/commercial-crops/vegetable-crops/>. I am told by Nate Bruce, their Farm Business Management Specialist, that forage budgets should be available sometime in the future as well.

As a reminder, if you haven't already done so and are planning to attend the Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting, there is still time. Registration information is on page 5.

Another reminder for those that have nutrient management plans, don't forget to complete your AIR by March 1. You should be getting your form from MDA in the mail within the next two weeks, or you can complete your AIR online at <https://onestop.md.gov/> and search for "annual implementation report."

Until next time,
-Andy



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

Andrew Kness

Ag Extension Educator
akness@umd.edu

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Produce Safety Rule Training	2
Equine Seminars	2
UME Internship	3
Harford County Ag Week	4
Beginning Farmer Course	4
4R Nitrogen Grants	5
Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting	5
Job Opening	6
Conservation Buffer Initiative	6
4-H Sock Collection	7
Ag Plastic Recycling	7

FSMA Produce Safety Rule Training

This training will cover the Produce Safety Rule (PSR) and how to reduce sources of microbial contamination in produce production.

Who should attend FSMA PSR training?

Fruit and vegetable growers and others interested in learning about produce safety, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule, Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), and co-management of natural resources and food safety. The PSA Grower Training Course is one way to satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in § 112.22(c) that requires

'At least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.'

What should you expect from the course?

The trainers will cover content contained in these eight modules:

- Introduction to Produce Safety
- Role of Maryland Dept. of Agriculture and On-Farm Readiness Reviews
- Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training
- Soil Amendments

- Wildlife, Domesticated Animals, and Land Use
- Agricultural Water (Part I: Production Water; Part II: Postharvest Water)
- Postharvest Handling and Sanitation
- How to Develop a Farm Food Safety Plan

In addition to learning about produce safety best practices, key parts of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements are outlined within each module. There will be time for questions and discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and produce safety questions. Appropriate time will be made for breaks at the discretion of the instructors.

There are in-person and virtual options

In-Person: February 14, 2024 | Baltimore County Ag Center | 8:30 a.m.– 5:00 p.m.

Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/food-safety-trainings-171819>

Virtual: February 7, 2024 | 11:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/food-safety-trainings-171819>

Contact Megan Todd at totodd@law.umaryland.edu if you have any questions about the program

2024 Winter Equine Seminars

January 18 - Rehabilitation: Healing and Prevention with Dr. Chris Smith at *Foxhall Equine Center*

February 22 - Optimizing Equine Fertility with Dr. Bill Hess at the *Baltimore County Ag Center*

March 21 - Avoiding Lameness with Proper Conditioning and Nutrition with Dr. Andrew McClain at the *Baltimore County Ag Center*

All seminars will be in-person from 6:00-8:00 pm.

Register Here:
<https://bit.ly/WinterEquineSeminars>

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

Extension Internship Program

Shannon Dill, Principal Agriculture Agent
University of Maryland Extension, Talbot County

The University of Maryland Extension (UME) is seeking undergraduate student applicants interested in careers in agriculture. Multiple students will be selected for this ten-week, full-time internship, which includes a competitive salary and opportunities to interact with agricultural leaders and Extension specialists. Interns will participate in an experiential learning and professional development opportunity while exploring Extension careers, applied research, and non-formal education outreach. Interns will be placed at one of the State's Extension Offices or Research and Education Centers (REC). Interns will come together as a cohort for weekly virtual professional development sessions, an overnight University of Maryland College Park tour, in-person leadership training, and the annual end of internship celebration. The remainder of the time, the interns will work with their personal UME faculty mentor and supervisor. Work location varies depending on your projects. Expect to work at your assigned UME office or Research & Education Center, in research or meeting locations, and virtually (telework days). Interns are expected to attend virtual pre-internship training sessions before the internship start date on 5/28/2024.

Interns will:

- Work one-on-one with a UME faculty mentor
- Gain hands-on experience through professional development and Extension activities
- Work on research projects and non-formal educational programming
- Have the opportunity to engage with leaders in the agricultural community
- Explore professional development topics and core competencies of career readiness
- Participate in an overnight University of Maryland, College Park campus residency and research tour scheduled for June 19th and 20th.
- Gain leadership skills with LEAD Maryland Foundation Inc.
- Earn credit hours (eligibility specific to your university)

Applicant must:

- Be enrolled full-time at an accredited professional certification program, two-year or four-year college or university
- Have an undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale

- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- Be a licensed driver with their flexible and reliable transportation (this position requires some local travel)
- Major in agricultural, environmental, natural resources, food science, nutritional science, biology, geology, geography, or related STEM or social science fields.

*Preference will be given to applicants with a sophomore or junior status at the time of application if enrolled in a four- year institution. We encourage applicants from relevant certification programs and two-year institutions.

To Apply:

1. Identify up to four [Extension or REC locations](#) within commuting distance of your home.
2. Identify one or more focus areas you are interested in exploring: Animal Science, Farm & Agribusiness, Fruit & Vegetable Production, General Agriculture, Ornamental Horticulture, Row Crop & Forage Production, Urban Agriculture. Learn more about Extension programs [here](#)
3. Complete the [Online Application](#)
4. Submit supporting documents to andrea1@umd.edu

Complete application and process can be found online at <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/workforce-development-extension-internships/>.

Compensation: Interns will be paid \$15.53 an hour.

Deadline to apply: 11:59 p.m. March 29th, 2024.
Interns will be notified of their application status early to mid April 2024.

Program Contact:

Shannon Dill, Extension Educator - AgFS

410-822-1244 | sdill@umd.edu

Andrea Franchini, Program Coordinator

301-226-7416 | andrea1@umd.edu

This work is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, AFRI Competitive Grant Workforce Development, project MD-UME-09312.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

Alyssa Jeffries, Agriculture Business Development Associate
Harford County Government

What's Growing In Harford County? – Agriculture Week – Facilitating a Connection Between Families and Their Local Farmers

Hi Everyone! The County is seeking to promote an event this spring (May 12-18th, 2024) titled "What's Growing In Harford County? – Agriculture Week" – "Facilitating a Connection Between Families and Their Local Farmers." This will be a week-long event that aims to draw the public out to participating farms to experience different agricultural related activities. What these activities are is entirely up to the farm to decide! This could be an educational tour, helping to plant or harvest, a wagon ride, a petting zoo, the possibilities are endless! We request that one activity be of no charge and after that, the farm is welcome to provide items for sale, and other activities that people can pay to participate in. The goal of this event is to promote agriculture and educate the public of it's vital role in our county.

The dates of the event are strategic in that it is sandwiched between two upcoming Ag related events (more information will be shared as these events are finalized): The Farmers and Community Partnership Annual Symposium on May 11 (to be held at the 4H camp) and the First Annual Taste of Harford on Sunday May 19 (To be held at Vignon Manor).

The requirements to participate in the event are listed below:

1. The farms must commit to being open for business

from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. on Sunday May 12 to Friday May 17. We will promote visitation to the Belair and Havre de Grace Farmer's Markets on Saturday May 18.

2. The Farms must provide one small free activity throughout the 3 hours each day.
3. The farms must have the ability to host the public on their farm (parking, landowner liability, etc).

We plan to promote this event through a massive outreach effort so the hope is that it will encourage more awareness of the opportunity to buy local and will gain local farms more repeat customers.

We seek to gauge the interest in local farms to participate in this event. **If you are interested in participating or have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Alyssa Jeffries**

(ajeffries@harfordcountymd.gov, 410-638-3511) with:

1. Your name
2. Your contact information (Phone number and Email Address)
3. The name of your farm
4. The activity you would like to offer and the address where the activities will take place
5. What other goods/ services/events does your farm offer throughout the year?

Online Beginning Farmer Course

This course is designed for people in Maryland who are considering or in the beginning stages of starting a farm as a business.

Topics covered will include: business planning, marketing, crop production, livestock husbandry, soil health, integrated pest management, food safety, regulations and certifications, acquiring land and zoning, specialty crops, organic production, and urban agriculture.

Students will learn from over 14 speakers, including agricultural Extension educators, farmers, and agricultural industry professionals.

This 10-week course will be offered in a blended in-person and online format. The class will meet on

Thursday evenings, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., from February 8 through April 11, 2024.

In weeks 2 through 9 of the course, students will complete at-your-own pace homework on the course website on campus.extension.org and will meet online each Thursday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. for a live class using the software Zoom.

Course registration is \$60 plus Eventbrite fees. If the registration fee is a financial barrier, please fill out this scholarship application: https://ume.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cUtU6gGYpqMQNKe

For more information and to register, visit <https://bit.ly/bfs2024> or contact Neith Little: nlittle@umd.edu, (301) 226-7415.

4R Nitrogen Grants

Janell McHenry, Mid-Atlantic 4R

The Mid-Atlantic 4R Nutrient Stewardship Association has a few funding opportunities available to farmers this growing season!

First, we have \$20 an acre cost-share for trialing biofertilizer products. Farmers will be asked to complete three different practices in their corn field. A biofertilizer could be Source, Pivot Bio, or another nitrogen reduction product. The first strip will include their typical nutrient management program without a biofertilizer, the second strip will include their typical nutrient management program with a biofertilizer, and the remainder of the field will include a reduction in nitrogen with the biofertilizer. Farmers are able to purchase and test the product they so wish to trial. More information can be found online at 4rMidAtlantic.com/cost-share.

Second, we have \$20 an acre cost-share for adding an additional split of nitrogen to a portion of their 2024 corn crop, with the same total pounds of nitrogen across the field. This split can be performed at any point in the

growing season as long as it is a new practice on the field. More information can be found online at 4rMidAtlantic.com/cost-share.

Lastly, we have a few vouchers remaining. These \$1,000 vouchers are to provide Certified Crop Adviser technical support and data management coaching until July 2024. The voucher project proposes to provide technical assistance directly to farmers, to help farmers understand the language and data used to identify and implement precision ag and nutrient management practices and enable them to make more informed decisions on their nutrient management practices. More information can be found online at 4rMidAtlantic.com/voucher-program/.

If anyone has any questions or needs more information, they can contact me directly. The best email is jenell.mdag@gmail.com and the best number is (443) 262-6969.



Still time to register!

MID-WINTER AGRONOMY MEETING

February 20, 2024 | 9 AM—2:30 PM | Deer Creek Overlook

Return form with payment to: **3525 Conowingo Rd, Suite 600, Street, MD 21154**

Call the Extension office at (410) 638-3255 for questions or if you need any special accommodations



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Number attending: _____ × \$12 each = \$ _____

Checks can be made payable to "HC EAC"

Hiring: Nutrient Management Program Director

The University of Maryland Extension is seeking dedicated individuals to join the team. Our mission is to provide educational programs and resources to Maryland farmers, helping them implement environmentally responsible nutrient management practices.

Agricultural Nutrient Management Program Director

The Agricultural Nutrient Management Program (ANMP) Director works collaboratively with the Assistant Director of Agriculture and Food Systems Extension (AgFS) to provide leadership for the ANMP which is dedicated to delivering education, research, and plan writing services in the field of agricultural nutrient management throughout Maryland. **Best consideration date is 2/18/24.** To apply or learn more, please visit: <https://ejobs.umd.edu/postings/116238>.

Conservation Buffer Initiative

Maryland Department of Agriculture press release

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has announced that the 2024 enrollment period for its Conservation Buffer Initiative runs from **January 29 through March 8**. Qualifying farmers who plant forest buffers receive a one-time \$1,000/acre signing bonus in addition to the attractive incentive payment for this practice.

Now in its fourth year, Maryland's Conservation Buffer Initiative offers generous incentive payments, easy enrollment, and a range of management options for farmers who plant streamside buffers on their farms to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

"The department takes pride in crafting attractive programs that resonate with farmers and foster widespread participation and commitment," said Maryland Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks. "This program is helping Maryland to meet its clean water goals for the Chesapeake Bay. Additionally, it aligns with the objectives of the Tree Solutions Now Act of 2021, which calls on Marylanders to plant and maintain 5 million native trees by 2031. Once again, Maryland farmers are meeting these challenges head-on."

Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Restoration Plan aims to plant 63,980 acres of forest buffers by 2025 to protect water quality in the Bay and its tributaries. As of June 30, 2023, Maryland has achieved over 85% of this goal. According to the 5 Million Trees Tracking Dashboard, 471,890 trees have been planted across the state as of October 26, 2023.

Three types of buffers are eligible for funding and free technical assistance from local soil conservation districts

under the Conservation Buffer Initiative: forest buffers planted next to waterways, grass buffers planted next to waterways or field ditches, and watercourse access control areas adjacent to pastures. Here are the 2024 program highlights:

- Payment rates range from \$500/acre for an existing grass buffer to a maximum of \$4,500/acre to install a riparian forest buffer with pasture fencing.
- Annual maintenance payments are available for forest buffers during the first 5 years of the contract.
- An extra one-time bonus payment of \$1,000/acre is offered for enrolled forest buffers.
- Mowing and hay harvesting are allowed; nutrient applications are not.
- Contracts are for 5 or 10 years.
- Soil conservation districts provide farmers with free technical assistance to install buffers.
- All work must be completed by June 30, 2025.

Farmers who want to install new buffers on land adjacent to waterways or improve existing buffers are encouraged to apply for this program by March 8. Applications and required forms are available on the [website](#) and at local soil conservation districts. Questions? Conservation experts at your local soil conservation district office can help you with your application.

The Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund, Bay Restoration Fund, and the Environmental Protection Agency provide funding for Maryland's Conservation Buffer Initiative.

4-H Sock Collection



The Harford County 4-H Teen Council is collecting sock donations for the homeless within Harford County through the end of February. They are working hard to place boxes for collection throughout the community. Currently, they have boxes at the Mill of Bel Air, Tractor Supply, Camp, John Carroll School and at Deer Creek Meetinghouse. We also have a box located outside of the Extension office if anyone would like to donate.

Ag Plastic Recycling



This is a reminder that the Scarboro landfill is still accepting ag plastic year-round and super sacs are available if you need them. There has been some confusion with this program and the Maryland Department of Agriculture **pesticide container** recycling program, which was cut last year because the state could not find a suitable contractor to collect the pesticide containers. This is different from our ag plastic recycling program that is still alive and well in Harford County.

For ag plastic questions, contact Wendy Doring at wdoring@menv.com or call (410) 638-3417.

MAEF Scholarship



The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) is now accepting applications for its 2024 Academic and Seibel Scholarships. These scholarships are open to rising junior or senior undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in majors leading to careers in agricultural education or Extension education. Learn more by visiting <https://maefonline.com/home/student-center/scholarships/>. **Applications are Due by March 25, 2024.**

MARYLAND GRAIN PRODUCERS

CDL GRANT

\$1,500 GRANT

Members of our association, and employees of, are eligible to apply for one of the two Class A CDL Grants.

Learn more online at MarylandGrain.org

MARYLAND
GRAIN PRODUCERS
ASSOCIATION

1 MAR
DUE

Great resources are just a click away!

Andrew Kness

Andrew Kness
Senior Extension Agent,
Agriculture and
Food Systems



Like us on
Facebook

facebook.com/HarfordAg

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.

3525 Conowingo Rd.
Suite 600
Street, MD 21154

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

Ag Notes

Harford County Newsletter

Dates to remember

- 08 Feb-11 Apr.** Beginning Farmer Course. Online Thursday's 7-8:30 PM. Register [online](#).
- 15 Feb.** Women in Ag Conference. 9-3 PM. Chesapeake Bay Beach Club, Stevensville. \$50. Register [online](#) or call (410) 822-1244.
- 20 Feb.** Harford County Mid-Winter Agronomy Meeting. 9-3 PM. Deer Creek Overlook. \$12 in advance (by 2/12). Call (410) 638-3255 to register.
- 22 Feb.** Equine Seminar Series. 6-8 PM. Baltimore County Extension office, Cockeysville. Free. Register online or call (410) 887-8090.
- 22 Feb.** Nutrient Management Voucher Training. 1-3 PM. Harford County Extension office. Free. Call (410) 638-3255 to register.
- 19 Mar.** Private Pesticide New Applicator Optional Training (prep for exam). 9-11 AM. Harford County Extension office. \$10 for study materials. Call (410) 638-3255 or email akness@umd.edu to register.
- 26 Mar.** Private Pesticide Applicator Exam. 9-11 AM. Harford County Extension office. \$10 for study materials. Call (410) 638-3255 to register.
- 26 Mar.** Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training. 1-3 PM. Harford County Extension office. Free. Call (410) 638-3255 to register.

February 2024