

# Maryland's Best

Connecting Maryland farmers with consumers

---



**Presentation for the Maryland  
Agricultural Commission**

**Stone Slade,  
Marketing Specialist**

**Maryland Department of  
Agriculture**



# MDA's Buy Local Program

---



- Connecting Farmers with Markets
  - Branding Maryland Grown Products
  - Increasing Consumer Demand and Preference for Maryland Grown Products
-

# Consumer/Retail Trends



- ❑ Demand for local is very high
- ❑ 2012 Schaefer Center study shows 78 % of Marylanders want Md.-grown produce
- ❑ Food safety concerns





# Maryland's Best

---

- More than 52 percent of the 5.7 million Marylanders are now aware of **Maryland's Best** (University of Delaware study, 2010)
  - Preference for Maryland-grown produce has increased by 37 percent since 2006 (Schaefer Center report)
-

# Maryland's Best Web Site



- ❑ [www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net) ... is growing, improving
- ❑ December 2008 – 2,845 visitors
- ❑ In 2012 – 41,400 visitors, visited 52,600 times
- ❑ Since 2007 – 159,370 visitors, visited 211,617 times
- ❑ Advertising has reached more than 800,000 Marylanders
- ❑ Web site updates including smart phone friendly access in 2013 through USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

**Connecting consumers with farmers & sharing the farmers stories**

# Web Site Functions



## Featured Promotions

**Maryland Wine Week**

Live local, eat local, drink local! We're celebrating Maryland's wineries June 14-24th. There are more than 400 different wines to choose from in the state. Award winning wines. Wines connected to Maryland soils. Wines with attitude and those with a gentle nature.

[Participating Wine Sellers and Restaurants](#)

[Find Maryland's Wineries](#)

Meet Maryland winemakers Carol and Fred Wilson of [Elk Run Winery](#) in the video at right.

**Ice Cream Trail 2013**

Maryland's Best - Elk Run Vineyards

## Searchable Database

**FIND ME LOCAL...**

**Find What's Nearby**

Zip   Distance

**Search by Keyword**

match all words  match any words

**Search by City or County**

City  County

**Search by Category**

<input type="checkbox"/> Ag-Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> Fibers	<input type="checkbox"/> Meat/Fowl
<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Fruits	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurseries & Garden Centers
<input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> Grains/Forage	<input type="checkbox"/> Nuts/Seeds
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Supported Ag (CSA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grass Fed/Pastured	<input type="checkbox"/> Organic
<input type="checkbox"/> Cut Flowers	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Pick Your Own
<input type="checkbox"/> Dairy/Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/> Herbs	<input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Equine	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream Trail	<input type="checkbox"/> S/IAF**
<input type="checkbox"/> FARM*	<input type="checkbox"/> Kocher	<input type="checkbox"/> Seafood
<input type="checkbox"/> Farm Stand	<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock	<input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Products
<input type="checkbox"/> Farm to School	<input type="checkbox"/> Looking for New Farmers/Vendors	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables
<input type="checkbox"/> Farmers Market	<input type="checkbox"/> Looking to add Farmers Markets	<input type="checkbox"/> Wine
<input type="checkbox"/> Farmers Market Booth		

\* Farmers' Market Nutrition Program  
\*\* Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

2013

# Advertising & Promotions

---



- WYPR Public Radio
  - Washington Post Digital
  - Online target demographic advertising, retargeting advertising
  - Facebook, Twitter, Google, [YouTube channel](#)
  - Trade press – The Packer, Produce News
-

# 2013

# Advertising & Promotions



**Enjoy Maryland Wine and Support Our Family Farmers**



To find a local vineyard near you visit [www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)

Proud partner of **THE 2012 URBANITE PROJECT**



**Spring is here and so are Sweet Maryland Strawberries**



Find out who has local strawberries near you at [www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)

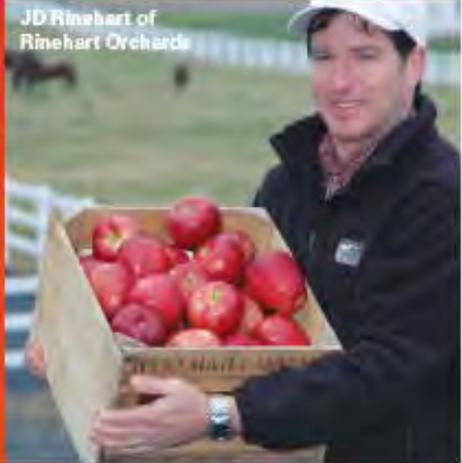


Proud partner of **THE 2012 URBANITE PROJECT**

**Choose Maryland Apples**



JD Rinehart of Rinehart Orchards



To find local apples near you **CLICK HERE**



facebook

Maryland's Best

403 Likes

10 Friends

Official Kick Off @Maryland Home Grown School Lunch Week



Maryland's Best @MDsBest

6,431 TWEETS | 674 FOLLOWING | 1,864 FOLLOWERS

Maryland's Best is your source to find the best local food and products from Maryland farmers. Managed by the Marketing team at the MD Dept. of Ag. 410-841-5770 Annapolis, MD · [marylandsbest.net](http://marylandsbest.net)

In Harford County, Wilson's Farm Market. [ow.ly/ISyOP](http://ow.ly/ISyOP)

# 2013 Maryland Promotions by Month

---



- January/February – CSAs
  - February – winter farmers markets
  - March – meat, nutrition month
  - April –nurseries & garden centers, poultry
  - May/June – **eggs, strawberries, farmers' markets, milk**
  - June - wine, dairy
  - July/August – Buy local challenge, watermelons, farmers markets
  - September - Apples, farm to school
  - October/November – Ag-tourism, turkeys, pumpkins
  - December – Christmas trees
-

# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers



# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers



## Maryland Farm Tours



Harris Teeter Local Produce Buyer at Homestead Farms

# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers



- ❑ Trade shows: Including PMA's Fresh Summit- largest produce expo



- 20,000 Participants
- Decision Makers from Nearly all of the Grocery Retailers

# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers



□ Advertising in trade publications targeting retail buyers

□ In-Store Promotions

□ Partnerships in promotional campaigns & advertising to increase consumer demand



# Connecting Farmers to Consumer Markets



Buyer-Grower Expo– connecting farmers with buyers from grocery retailers, schools, restaurants, and institutions.



- 350 Participants
- 60 Farms Exhibited
- 146 Buyers Attended
- 98% of Exhibitors reported potential sales

# Connecting farmers with Restaurants



## Dine Downtown Baltimore's Farm to Table Event

A DINING EXPERIENCE IS...

BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Take a vibrant city, an active farmers' market scene, and an abundance of seafood from the Chesapeake Bay. Add a heaping helping of adventurous, talented chefs who know exactly what to do with the region's bounty, and you've got Downtown Baltimore: a foodie nirvana with excellent farm-to-table dining options. Celebrate the summer harvest by experiencing farm-to-table dishes at many Downtown Restaurants.

SUMMERTIME TASTE—FARM-TO-TABLE CELEBRATION  
July 12-21

70 RESTAURANTS. 70 MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES.  
FIND YOUR PERFECT DINING EXPERIENCE.  
[www.DineDowntownBaltimore.com](http://www.DineDowntownBaltimore.com)

DINE DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE  
An Institute of Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

FARM to TABLE

## The Georgetowner's Chefs Go Fresh Motorcycle Tour



# Special Promotions



## Mar-Delicious Watermelon Promo in New England



**The MAR-DELicious Promotional Campaign**

**Creating Consumer Demand in New England for MAR-DELicious Watermelons**

The Maryland and Delaware Departments of Agriculture in partnership with the MAR-DEL Watermelon Association will be executing a promotional campaign in New England to increase consumer demand for MAR-DELicious watermelons. We will be looking to create lasting partnerships with retailers who want to take advantage of MAR-DELicious watermelon advertising support for their stores.

**How can your company benefit from the MAR-DELicious Campaign?**

- Creating strategic advertising partnerships with grocery retailers to promote stores selling MAR-DELicious watermelons
- Radio and other advertising to promote MAR-DELicious watermelons during the first 2 weeks of August
- In-store promotional materials, watermelon bins featuring the MAR-DELicious logo, and visits from the MAR-DEL Watermelon Queen in select stores
- Direct contact with MAR-DELicious watermelon brokers and farmers to insure adequate supply

Stone Slade, Maryland Dept. of Ag  
410-841-5779  
Stone.slade@maryland.gov

Dave Smith, Delaware Dept. of Ag  
302-698-4522  
DavidM.Smith@state.de.us



# Special Promotions

---



## Mar-Delicious Watermelon Promo in New England

- Targeted radio advertising
- Watermelon Queen promotion with Boston Red Sox and interview during game
- In-store promotions with partnering grocery retailers
- Sales of Mar-Delicious watermelons went from \$298,008,693 in 2011 to \$362,116,185 in 2012 during promotional period



**Mar-Del Watermelon Queen Terra Tatman**

# Special Promotions

---



## Maryland Farmers: Faces of the Land Exhibit

- Strategic Promotions targeting decision makers
- Photograph exhibit at the Miller Building in Annapolis
- Features farmers from all types of agriculture and throughout the state
- Promotional event to highlight agriculture to policy makers and their staff



# Consumer Promotions



## Buy Local Challenge

- Pledge to eat at least one thing from a MD farm each day
- Kick off with Governor O'Malley's Buy Local Cookout
- 5,000 Marylanders pledged to participate so far

Hey Maryland, Take the Buy Local Challenge Outdoors ... and WIN!

Enter this year's photo contest: "Take the Challenge Outdoors!"

It's easy! Take the official Buy Local Challenge pledge at [www.buy-local-challenge.com](http://www.buy-local-challenge.com) before July 18, 2013. Then visit [www.facebook.com/marylandbuylocalchallenge](http://www.facebook.com/marylandbuylocalchallenge) and upload one or more photos of how you took the Challenge outdoors.

It's fun! Plan a picnic, a patio party, a grill-fest or just a brown-bag lunch in the park. See the web for full contest details.

**Take the Buy Local Challenge**  
**July 20 - 28, 2013**

I pledge to eat at least one thing from a local farm every day during Buy Local Week!

Individuals, businesses and organizations can take the "Buy Local Challenge." It's a voluntary pledge to include Maryland-grown products (produce, eggs, meat, fruit, wine, etc.) in your meals for one week. Visit the website to find out more about the Challenge, and download your personalized certificate when you pledge!

**Buy local all year...[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)**

**Good Luck!**

One winning entry will receive a prize basket valued at \$200. In addition, a donation of fresh local farm food, valued at \$200, will be made in your name to local families in need via a local food bank and partners statewide.

# Consumer Promotions



## 2013 Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail

### Trail Passport



### Ice Cream Trail Signs



- Ice Cream & Geocache Trail
- 8 Creameries on the Trail
- 200 Completed Passports in 2012
- Stamped Passport at each location
- Maryland Dairy Industry Trivia

# Plans for 2013 and beyond.....

---



- ❑ Continuing specialty crop advertising to Maryland consumers
  - ❑ **Maryland's Best Restaurant Award**
  - ❑ Update web site to increase user-friendliness & mobile responsiveness
  - ❑ Ag-Tourism Sign Program and Kick-off Event
  - ❑ In-store Maryland apple promotion
  - ❑ New Cut Flower Web site and promotional materials
  - ❑ Additional Special Promotions
-

# Thank you

---



Questions?

**Stone Slade**  
**Agricultural Marketing Specialist, MDA**  
**410-841-5779**  
**[Stone.slade@maryland.gov](mailto:Stone.slade@maryland.gov)**

---