



**Maryland  
Department of Agriculture**

*Office of the Secretary*

**Wes Moore**, Governor  
**Aruna Miller**, Lt. Governor  
**Kevin M. Atticks**, Secretary  
**Steven A. Connelly**, Deputy Secretary

*Maryland Agricultural Commission*

*Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry*  
mda.maryland.gov

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building  
50 Harry S Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-841-5882 Baltimore/Washington  
410-841-5914 Fax

**Maryland Agricultural Commission  
Minutes  
June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Present:**

Chris Rhodes  
Dr. Marianne Bailey O'Malley  
Paula Linthicum  
Gordon Kretser  
Kelly Lewis  
Rachel Lipman  
Joe Dymek  
Hunter Pusey  
Johnny Shockley  
Raj Kathuria

Mike Levensgood  
Amy Crone  
Dr. Darren Jarboe  
Cliff Newsome  
Ann Merryman  
Kelly Dudeck  
Far Nasir  
Sean Hough  
John Murphy

**Absent:**

Tom Mullineaux  
Frank Allnut  
Stefanie Reiser  
Kellie Hinkle  
Levi Sellers  
Russell Shlagel

**MDA Staff:**

Sec. Kevin Atticks  
Steve Connelly  
Rachel Jones  
Jessica Hackett  
Hans Schmidt

Cassie Shirk  
Harrison Palmer  
Susan Kivioja  
Martin Proulx

**Guests:**

Katie Stevens  
Allison Roe  
Dominic Gilani  
Sam Friel  
Stacy Kubofcik  
Steve McHenry  
Brian Cadden

Jonathan Cribbs  
Dave Nemazie  
Dwight Weingarten  
Patti Anderson  
Kelsey Keadle  
Matt Tefteau



## Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

**Wes Moore**, Governor  
**Aruna Miller**, Lt. Governor  
**Kevin M. Atticks**, Secretary  
**Steven A. Connelly**, Deputy Secretary

*Maryland Agricultural Commission*

Agriculture | *Maryland's Leading Industry*  
mda.maryland.gov

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building  
50 Harry S Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-841-5882 Baltimore/Washington  
410-841-5914 Fax

### Call to Order:

The June 2024 Maryland Agricultural Commission meeting was called to order by Kelly Dudeck, Chair, at 10:04 am.

### Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the April 2024 meeting minutes was made by Joe Dymek, second by Paula Linthicum at 10:10 AM

### Presentation from Martin Proulx, Value Added Agriculture Specialist, Maryland Department of Agriculture

### Commodity Reports:

#### Ag Education- Joseph Dymek:

- **MAEF** – Reported by Susanne Richards, MAEF Executive Director
  - Gearing up for our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year beginning July 1!
  - Celebrating the end of the school year with 114 school visits by our Mobile Science Labs, where approximately 70,000 students learned more about agriculture and the role it plays in their lives.
  - Planning for our new mobile Showcase, to take the message of agriculture's importance into our communities, is ongoing. MAEF is very appreciative of the many who have contributed over \$146K, including a \$25K donation from the Maryland Ag Fair Board.
  - Registering teachers for "The World Under Your Feet," a professional development workshop in conjunction with the Turf program at the Institute of Applied Agriculture in College Park.
  - Enjoying Maryland's FIRST AG Story Trail at Charleston Elementary, thanks to the support of a [National Agriculture in the Classroom](#) grant, this innovative trail brings the magic of agriculture to life through captivating stories and interactive activities. Each month, a new ag-accurate book will be featured, kicking off with the awesome tale "Farm Boots," the 2024 MAEF Ag Literacy Week Book! Accessible during recess, afterschool, and beyond, this trail invites students and the community to explore the wonders of agriculture together.
  - Delivering "Amazing! Maryland Agriculture" books to elementary schools statewide.

- Congratulations to Gregory Garin of Columbia, Peyton Hereth of Woodbine, Jayci Mitchell of Elkton, Meg Smolinski of Takoma Park, and Emily Stamper of Boonsboro, all from Maryland, as recipients of the 2024 MAEF Academic Scholarship. The MAEF Academic Scholarship was open to rising junior or senior undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in majors leading to careers in agricultural education or Extension education.
- Congratulations to Wyatt Sheubrooks of Sudlersville, Md., as the recipient of the 2024 Dr. Ronald J. Seibel Scholarship. The Seibel Scholarship was open to students pursuing a two-year or four-year degree in majors leading to careers in agriculture or agriculture education.
- **FFA** – Reported by Terrie Shank, Maryland FFA Executive Director, MAEF Asst. Director of High School
  - 96<sup>th</sup> MD FFA State Convention will be held June 24-26 at the WISP Resort in Garrett County.
  - The Maryland FFA State Officer Team and staff has been busy during May conducting workshops and attending many events: 24 local FFA Chapter banquets, facilitated 5 chapter leadership programs, assisted with the Cecil County, Boonsboro Community and the Caroline County Ag Days, and held 2024-2025 State officer candidate interviews,
  - Attended year end program advisory committee meetings for local ag programs, MSDE staff and CTE Director meetings and workshops.
  - Assisting with the Maryland Environthon Event which will be held June 12-13 at Mt. Saint Mary's University in Emmitsburg.
  - The Summer **Livestock, Dairy, Dairy Handling and Poultry events** will be held on **Friday, July 19, 2024** at the Washington County Ag Expo, Boonsboro, Maryland.
  - The **Tractor Operators** event will be held at the Maryland State Fair on **Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>** in conjunction with the MD 4-H event. The event will start at 1pm.
  - The MD FFA **Horticulture Evaluation** event will be held on **Saturday, August 31, 2024**, at the Maryland State Fair in conjunction with the MD 4-H event.
- **UMCP Ag Education** - Melissa Leiden Welsh, Assistant Clinical Professor of Agricultural Education, Director Agricultural Science and Technology
  - We graduated our first group of graduate students from the new Master of Extension Education program. The 3 students were from different working professions (Extension, MDA, & teacher)
  - There were also 2 students graduating with bachelor degrees in the non-formal Agricultural and Extension Education specialization under the Agricultural Science and Technology Major this spring semester
  - We spoke to over 400 individuals at Maryland Day at the "Hatch a Career in Agricultural and Extension Education" display tables.
  - Presentations at state/national conferences- Dr. Silvert- AIAEE (Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education) & AAAE (American

Association for Agricultural Education), Dr. Welsh at NACTA (North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture) and MAFCS (Maryland Association of Family and Consumer Sciences)

- We revamped the MD state agronomy CDE event to align with the changes to the national CDE event. The new modifications were received positively by the students and advisors.
- Dr. Welsh traveled to Taiwan with a graduate student and met with faculty from the 2 agricultural universities in the county and discussed potential travel abroad exchange programs.
- Drs Silvert and Welsh will be facilitating workshops for the MD FFA convention and the Maryland Agricultural Educators summer conference.
- Dr. Silvert has developed and is piloting new evaluation training for University of Maryland Extension; non-formal adult education focused teaching:
- ***Building Your Program Evaluation Plan Training Course:*** To build education and outreach professionals' capacities to design, evaluate, and report for their programs, *Building Your Program Evaluation Plan* is a new self-paced approximately 10-week professional development course, offered fully online, to guide participants' creation of individualized evaluation plans. Expert feedback is be provided throughout the course, and participants complete the course with an actual evaluation plan to use for their programming. This course is provided by the University of Maryland Extension in collaboration with the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture and available to outside stakeholders for an enrollment fee.
- **LEAD Maryland Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** The LEAD Maryland Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is being launched in 2024 to guide how the LEAD Maryland Fellowship Program is implemented in collaboration with partners and stakeholders. The first step in developing this improved M&E system is conducting a needs assessment in mid-2024 to assess the major leadership content areas and capacity priorities stakeholders propose the LEAD program should address.
- **4-H-** Reported by Sandy Corridon, Interim MD 4-H Program Leader, Assistant Director, UMD
  - Maryland 4-H Robotics Workshop held on May 4<sup>th</sup>, -Eastern Shore Higher Education, Wye Mills at Chesapeake College- Queen Anne's County
  - Over 2,300 youth participated in Eclipse-related activities led by Maryland 4-H in 2024, using curriculum Maryland 4-H developed in conjunction with NASA HEAT (Heliophysics Education Activation Team) at Goddard Space Flight Center. NASA HEAT has been a partner of MD 4-H since 2020. Previously, 46 adults and educators from 12 states, including educators from 5 states in the Eclipse's Path of Totality, were trained to use the curriculum with their programs, which were anticipated to reach over 200 youth in underprivileged and underserved communities.
  - Maryland DAY was held on April 27th on Campus

- 4-H State Public Speaking Contest with 117 participants from 20 counties and Baltimore City was also conducted at Maryland Day.
- Maryland 4-H Foundation - \$4 for 4-H our Maryland 4-H Foundation Fundraiser challenged supporters on April 4th - to give \$4 for 4-H. It was a huge success! 734 donors helped raise \$53,235.84 to support Maryland 4-H. We had 100% participation with donations benefitting all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Donors were able to select a county/city 4-H program to receive half of their donation. Funds are unrestricted and will support our 4-H educators in continuing to provide high quality positive youth development programming throughout our state!
- Maryland 4-H Foundation's 40th Annual Golf Tournament in Memory of Marlin K. Hoff was held on June 7. Proceeds support youth representing Maryland at out of state leadership conferences and national project based contests!
- Teen Leadership: June 17 - 18 Maryland 4-H Youth Power being held at Horn Point will empower youth to address pressing global issues within local communities. Climate Change and the Effect on Environment and People
- Environmental Science & Camping - our 4-H residential and day camps are provided for youth and teen leadership opportunities across the state.
- Shooting Sports; Our Clays Contest was completed and we have a Maryland 4-H Team traveling to Nebraska for the National Contest.
- Animal Science: Our Maryland signature 4-H Animal Sciences programs continue to provide youth and adult trainings and hands-on educational exhibits at fairs and shows.
- Sheep and goat skillathon and judging was held at the Sheep and Wool Festival in Howard County May 4-5.
- **MDA**
  - The Maryland Department of Agriculture will be hosting an Ag Education Summit, on July 16, at MDA.

**Agribusiness- Thomas Mullineaux:**

- No Report.

**Agritourism - Kelly Dudeck:**

- **Cottage Food Labeling Issue:** The Amish and Mennonite communities and citizens without email/phone access requested intercession regarding the mandatory requirement for email and phone to be printed on Cottage Foods labels for products sold to licensed grocery stores. Patricia Vauls, Chief, MDH Office of Food Protection, notified SMADC on April 19 that the labeling concerns have been addressed. Proposed changes include allowing those without phone/email to designate a representative contact. Amish and Mennonite community bakers may use SMADC's email/phone for contact. Changes will be confirmed/published in the Maryland Register. Additionally, a regulatory change has been approved allowing ingredient information to be placed on a separate label from the product identity. Kim Burns confirmed the request for a 2-piece label for product

ingredients has been approved and posted on the MDH website as a labeling option for Cottage Foods businesses.

- **Rising Supply Chain Costs:** Craft alcohol producers, especially farm-based, are facing escalating supply chain costs. Increased prices for raw materials and packaging are squeezing profit margins, challenging producers to maintain quality without significantly raising prices.
- **Decreased Agritourism Traffic:** There is a noticeable decline in visitor numbers and spending in farm-based alcohol production. This reduction in supplementary revenue from agritourism is crucial for sustaining operations.
- **Public Health Perceptions:** Growing health-consciousness and negative public perception against alcohol consumption are significant challenges. This changing landscape requires careful navigation in marketing efforts to promote responsible enjoyment while countering widespread negative messaging.
- **Brand Loyalty:** Maryland producers face challenges in cultivating brand loyalty among consumers. Effective branding and consumer engagement strategies are needed to build a loyal customer base amidst a saturated market.
- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Complex regulatory environments can stifle growth and innovation. Compliance with food safety and zoning regulations demands significant resources from small-scale operators.
- **Marketing and Visibility:** Small-scale producers struggle with marketing and gaining visibility in a crowded marketplace. Reaching a wider audience and extending reach beyond regional boundaries remains a significant hurdle.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Inadequate infrastructure in rural areas can deter agritourism and hinder operational efficiency, affecting customer access and online sales capabilities.
- **Seasonality and Weather Dependence:** The seasonal nature of agritourism and agricultural production leads to fluctuating revenues, making financial planning and sustainability challenging. Adverse weather can potentially cause significant economic losses.
- **Workforce Challenges:** Recruiting and retaining a reliable workforce in rural areas is a persistent challenge. Seasonal demand spikes require a flexible workforce, complicating the maintenance of consistent quality and service.
- **Access to Capital:** Access to capital remains a critical barrier for start-ups and small businesses looking to expand. Traditional lenders may hesitate to provide financing, and alternative funding sources can be highly competitive and challenging to secure.
- **Maryland Wineries Association:** Recently held the Maryland Winemaker's Choice. Port of Leonardtown Winery won Best in Show with a Brut Sparkling White. Port of Leonardtown is one of the only winery cooperatives in the County.
- **Craft Beverage App:** Updates in progress.
- **Upcoming Festivals:** Beer From Here Festival (Aug 3rd), Drink Maryland Festival (June 15th, Spirits of Maryland

- **Agritourism Workgroup:** Working to find common ground, processes, and checklists that work for both regulators and agritourism operators.

**Aquaculture - Johnny Shockley:**

- Blue Oyster is pursuing High-Pressure-Processing (HPP) and developing the first processing facility in Maryland.
  - Connecting value added agriculture with aquaculture & agritourism, developing a retail component focused on education and engagement.
- Focused on developing nutrient credit trading markets for the oyster industry. Great interest in living shorelines and using oysters as a vector.
  - This builds more incentives for infrastructure for oyster protein.

**Bio-Fuel - Rajneesh Kathuria:**

No Report.

**Consumer – Kellie Hinkle:**

- No Report.

**Dairy I – Vacant:**

**Dairy II- Vacant:**

**Direct Farm Market - Amy Crone:**

- Farm stands and farmers markets are opening for the season. Full list of farmers market openings can be found [here](#) and farm stands can be found [here](#).
- National Farmers Market Week is set for 8/4-10, 2024
- Applications open for direct-marketing farmers:
  - MDA's [Farmers Market Nutrition program](#)
  - SMADC's [Maryland Market Money program](#) for the 2024 season.
  - [MarketLink](#) assistance and equipment for SNAP acceptance.
- Ongoing challenges for this sector: weather, processing dates, labor

**Equine (Horse Breeding) - Ann Merryman:**

No Report.

**Farm Bureau - Paula Linthicum:**

- **Maryland Right-To-Farm (RTF) Law**
  - MDFB and its partners in the MDFB-led amicus brief were successful in having the Appellate Court of Maryland affirm the Maryland Right-To-Farm (RTF) law, protecting a farm's ability to use modern nutrient management techniques without the threat of litigation.
  - MDFB's brief was financially supported by the Delmarva Chicken Association and signed onto by Maryland Grain Producers Association, Fred R. Moore & Sons, Inc., Maryland Forests Association, Inc., Maryland Horse Council, Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association, Inc., and Horizon Farm Credit.

- MDFB sent Secretary Atticks a letter requesting a training program be established for County Agricultural Reconciliation Committees. These are the local committees where a complainant asks for a hearing about a farm operation allegedly in violation of the RTF law. MDFB offered to facilitate training sessions for the 23 county Agricultural Reconciliation Committees across the state. The training goal is to enhance the Committee's understanding of their functions and ensure compliance with the Right to Farm law.
- ***Agriculture Education:***
  - Committee Chair Barb Glenn [glennbarb6@gmail.com](mailto:glennbarb6@gmail.com) & MDFB Staff member Kendall Abruzzese [kabruzzoese@marylandfb.org](mailto:kabruzzoese@marylandfb.org)
    - A meeting with Dr. Jinhee Kim, associate dean, UM Extension (UME) was held to discuss future partnerships to advance MDFB's goals regarding Extension. Items discuss included:
      - Advancement of the Memorandum of Understanding between MDFB & Maryland 4-H.
      - 2024 Young Farmer Next & Generation Summit at the Annual Convention December 7-8 in Cambridge. An impactful networking and leadership development opportunity for Young Farmers and Next Gen youth including MDFB Ag Ambassadors, and youth leaders from FFA, 4-H, and MANRRS. Maryland 4-H is a big part of bringing 4-Hers to this event. The Summit will be MDFB is seeking sponsors!
  - A meeting with MDA Secretary Kevin Atticks was held to discuss the upcoming Agriculture Education Summit on July 16 at MDA.
  - MDFB, Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) and Maryland Agriculture Teachers Association (MATA) have been unified on a joint proposal for ag education for over 2 years. MDFB hopes to present that proposal during the Summit as a model for future growth and sustainability of leadership and resources needed to align ag education with the Blueprint and with other areas of educational curricula.
  - MDFB is reaching out to county farm bureaus to encourage engagement with county Workforce Development Boards who are locally the driving force behind adoption of the Blueprint's required apprenticeships and industry-recognized credentialing which are required for all CTE programs including agriculture education.

### **Field Crops – Chris Rhodes:**

- Most all the corn and full seasons beans have been planted across the state. Was started has a wet spring has dried up and a lot of irrigations are now running.
  - Probably one of the worst years on record for replanting beans due to slugs. They have shown up and not only know till but conventional fields as well. Barley has been cut or is being cut across the state now and most wheat will be ready next week.
  - Most slug damage is seen on no-till fields.



- We got some good rallies in the market this spring while planting and got a nice rally in wheat as well due to some frost concerns in Russia. But after they started harvesting it wasn't as bad as they thought, and July wheat went from a high of \$7.20 to a low today of \$6.05.
  - There is a lot of uncertainty in the Corn market right now because of the planting conditions in the Midwest - a lot of corn was planted into wetter conditions than they would like.
  - Corn planting moved from 91% a week ago up to 95% through Sunday versus an average trade guess of 95%. This leaves this season's pace a bit below 2023's pace of 98% and identical to the prior five-year average. 85% of the Crop is down, merged up from 74 percent last week and slightly ahead of the prior five-year average of 84%.

### **Food Processing – Vacant:**

### **Forestry – Hunter Pusey:**

- **Annual Meeting between the Counties' Agricultural and Forestry Boards:** § 2-501 of the Agricultural Article (Maryland Annotated Code) states, among other things, the following: "...IT IS THE INTENT OF THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND AND WOODLAND ...EACH COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD SHALL MEET AT LEAST ANNUALLY WITH ITS FOREST CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD IN ORDER TO WORK COOPERATIVELY TO ENCOURAGE THE PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND AND WOODLAND IN THEIR RESPECTIVE JURISDICTIONS." In short, the boards are to identify farmland and woodland priorities pertinent to annual conservation easement applications under the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).
- This statutory requirement was embodied in Maryland's nationally acclaimed *Sustainable Forestry Act of 2009* (Chapter 175). However, compliance has eluded both MDA and DNR; hence, AFI has requested and received such acknowledgement from both departments plus a commitment to comply during calendar year 2024.
- **Imposition of the Agricultural Land Transfer Tax:** As provided in § 13–306 of the Tax – Property Article, up to \$200,000 annually of the proceeds of the tax imposed by § 13–302 of the Tax – Property Article (aka, *agricultural land transfer tax*) that are attributable to the taxation of instruments of writing that transfer title to parcels of land deemed "entirely woodland" shall be credited to the *Mel Noland Woodland Incentives Fund*...a Fund that underwrites several forest-related initiatives reflected in § 5-301 of the Natural Resources Article (Maryland Annotated Code). The problem: only 3 times in the last 37 years has WIF received \$200,000 from the agricultural land transfer tax; thus, prompting AFI to intervene with DNR to find out what's going on...something is amiss.
- **Maryland Wood Products Industry Equity Investment Fund (WIPPIE):** MARBIDCO administers WIPPIE which is intended to financially help Maryland's forest products industry remain competitive in a challenging market. The way things

stand today, WIPPIE and other programs may not be funded beyond fiscal year 2025 -- \$500,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2025 -- because of the General Assembly's longstanding intent for MARBIDCO to become fiscally self-sufficient beyond 2025; meaning, no further State financial assistance is anticipated.

- AFI intends to help convince the 2025 General Assembly to maintain some level of continued State financial assistance and/or allocation for WIPPIE, including the use of a portion of WIF moneys if State \$ for WIPPIE expires.
- A healthy forest industry supports healthy forests.

#### **Hemp- Matthew 'Levi' Sellers:**

- No report.

#### **Horticulture – Vacant:**

#### **Livestock- Sean Hough:**

- So far, there has been good feedback and involvement at the spring 4-H shows.
- National Junior Shorthorn Show is coming to Maryland for the first time ever at the end of June.

#### **Nursery I- J. Kelly Lewis:**

- Most nurseries have slowed shipping as we go from Spring into Summer. A stretch of 6 or 7 weekends with rain impacted those in the garden center business and their suppliers.
- Conditions this year seem to have been ideal for pest. The University of Maryland Extension IPM Report reported on issues with Ambrosia Beetle, Aphids, Scale, Bagworms, Fall Web Worm, Mites, Tortricids Moths, Spongy Moth Caterpillars, Leaf Cutter Bees, Galls, and others. It is relatively early in the "bug" season so hopefully issues will slow down and average out.
- Maryland Nursery, Landscape and Greenhouse Association (MNLGA) will host a Tech Field Day at Ruppert Nurseries on June 20. Drone applications, robot vehicles, field preparation equipment, non-chemical weed control, RFID inventory systems and other innovative nursery products and equipment will be on display and demonstrated. Sign-up is through MNLGA website.

#### **Nursery II- John Murphy:**

- No Report.

#### **Organic Farming – Vacant:**

- Resources -article
  - Mason's Heritage Farm – [article on organic no till corn and soy](#) shows double price for crops
- Challenges
  - Organic strawberries challenged by May rains
  - Organic fruit/veg challenged by rain with diseases in particular
- Opportunities

- USDA announced new programs, partnerships, [grant awards](#) and an additional \$10 million in funding to expand the markets for organic products and help producers transition to organic production <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/news-releases/2024/usda-easing-producers-transition-to-organic-production-with-new-programs-and-partnerships-announces-investments-to-create-and-expand-organic-markets>
- Help support the Organic Market Development Program - funding much-needed infrastructure for certified organic operations to expand
  - Pilot grant program in 2023 with \$75M available – they received over \$218M in requests from 190 applicants (including Moon Valley Farm)
  - Join in the request for Congress to allot \$25M for this program for FY 2025
- Organic soil health courses [available in Spanish](#) - free!

### **Poultry I- Zach Evans:**

- DCA Board Meeting on 6/11/2024
- Met on Monday, 6/10/2024, on the Food Processing Residuals regulations coming down the pipeline from MDA per the bill passed in the 2024 legislative session.
  - Poultry industry has concerns with the upcoming 7/1 deadline that is nearing.
  - Looking forward to working closely with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to ensure this program is effective for farmers, regulators, haulers, and storage facilities.
- Progress on DAF discussions:
  - Mountaire is no longer using dissolved air floatation methods and generating DAF, there is a new process to extract water from the residual processing product that they've invested in & will be using dry material instead of liquid DAF.
  - There are opportunities for companies to invest in technological innovations to reduce the DAF load on the Eastern Shore.
- Delmarva Chicken Association Booster BBQ had 660 entities and was extremely successful.
  - Mary Lou Brown was recognized as a distinguished citizen for a lifetime of service to the poultry industry.
- USDA grower contract regulations have come out, DCA is finalizing some one-page summaries to explain the impact of those updated regulations.
- Giant Miscanthus is an up & coming market as a buffer, bedding material, and conservation alternative.
  - USDS study will be publishing scientific data to determine miscanthus as a non-invasive non-native species with great benefits.
- Governor Moore is visiting Mountaire's oldest miscanthus plot to showcase the benefits of this crop.

### **Poultry II- Far Nasir:**

- USDA Rules – the agricultural community is generally against the USDA involvement in the tournament system.
  - Delmarva producers have been fortunate to work in the tournament system and ensures/incentivizes efficient production.

### **Related Services I – Vacant:**

### **Related Services II – Stefanie Reiser:**

- No Report.

### **State Grange- Clifford Newsome:**

- Maryland State Grange is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024
  - Kickoff celebration will be in October.
- Maryland State Fair Farm & Garden Building will have a large display representing the Maryland State Grange

### **Turf- Gordon Kretser:**

- No report.

### **University of Maryland – Dean Craig Beyrouthy | Dr. Darren Jarboe:**

- No Report.

### **Vegetable – Russell Shlagel:**

- No Report.

### **Veterinary – Dr. Marianne B. O’Malley:**

- Updates- Veterinarians need to renew their license by June 30th. This year they must set up a OneStop account to be able to apply for a license. Despite efforts to notify veterinarians of this change, I expect this to be a problem for the majority of vets.
- New Rabies requirements for entering into the US from Canada go into effect August 1st. The USDA has launched DogBot AI to help veterinarians and pet owners navigate requirements. (In my experience it is a little confusing and hopefully will become more user friendly in the months to come)
- Avian influenza update
  - The bird flu virus strain that infected a Texas dairy farm worker in March was lethal to ferrets in experiments designed to mimic the disease in humans, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported on Friday.
  - Seasonal flu, by contrast, makes ferrets sick but does not kill them, the CDC said.
  - Ferrets are considered the best small mammal for studying influenza virus infection and transmission and are commonly used as a tool to inform public health risk assessments of emerging influenza viruses, according to the CDC.
  - Bird flu has been reported in more than 80 dairy herds across 11 U.S. states since late March. Scientists are on alert for changes in the virus that could signal it is adapting to [spread more easily](#) among humans.
  - The USDA is inviting dairy farms to enroll in a voluntary testing program to certify that their herds are free of H5N1 influenza and facilitate the movement of dairy cattle. Farmers enrolled in the program may test milk in bulk storage tanks for traces of the virus, and farms with negative tests three weeks in a row will be exempt from a requirement to test cattle before moving them. Dairy farms can maintain their H5N1-free status by testing milk weekly and submitting the result

- Chronic wasting disease update- Experts believe chronic wasting disease will be endemic in the 48 contiguous US states within a decade, aided by cervid feeding operations and the interstate transport of farmed deer. The fatal disease is difficult to detect, no vaccines or treatments are available, and although it has not been shown to infect humans, the prion that causes CWD has the potential to mutate in such a way that it could.

### **Viticulture – Rachel Lipman:**

- Currently vineyards are past bloom, overall vines are in good shape.
  - Not a significant frost in Winter '23
  - Lots of spotted lanternfly found in vineyards, have the potential to kill a vineyard in <5 years.
    - They are only coming out of the treeline after high wind events, the wind is the main dispersant method that spreads this pest.
    - They are poor fliers in the nymphal stage that helps in their management but good jumpers, but as they enter the adult phase they are significantly easier to kill.

### **Young Farmers Advisory Board – Jenell Eck McHenry, Chair:**

- This week the Young Farmers Advisory Board released the 2024 Young Farmers Survey
  - This will be shared for the next few months, targeting people involved in the agricultural industry age 18-45.
  - Received over \$3,000 in sponsorships for the survey to pay for the software and incentives.
- There is discussion amongst the board for Future Farmers, engaging with youth in agriculture & how to support students interested in the industry.
- The board is interested in the Right to Farm case in Talbot County and encouraged by the ruling that farmers won't be burdened with the potential lawsuits for normal agricultural practices.
- Young Farmers Advisory Board will be doing a small tour in October to expose the board to Eastern Shore agriculture.
- Establishing a priorities document for Young Farmers.

## **Maryland Department of Agriculture Staff Updates:**

### **Secretary Kevin Atticks:**

- Port of Baltimore
  - The port has officially opened.
  - Fleet Week kicks off this week, this diverted a major shipment of fertilizer away from the Port. MDA worked closely with the U.S. Navy and the Port to allow that fertilizer ship to enter and unload because of its major impact on agriculture.
- 2 International Trips since the last Ag Commission Meeting
  - India & Ireland
  - Trade missions are targeted to explore international markets for Maryland agricultural products, technology and innovation, healthy foods, and genetics.

- India – Enormous opportunity given the size of the market
- Ireland – Extremely interested in American whiskey and equine genetics
- Agriculture Education Summit scheduled for 7/16
  - 1<sup>st</sup> of many discussions, the goal of this meeting is to gain top level perspective to figure out “where are we now” in ag education.
  - We’ve got a ton of assets in the state, but no strategy from a state government standpoint.
  - We are losing exposure for future farmers and growing an agriculturally illiterate public.

**Rachel Jones:**

- The Governor’s Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture was established in 2006 but has been defunct since 2020.
  - This Commission represents state agencies and representatives from agricultural partners to streamline discussions between agencies with respect to agriculture.
  - The first meeting will be held on June 27<sup>th</sup> at MDA.
- 6 Clear Objectives for GICA
  - Promote a clear and consistent business friendly environment for agriculture
  - Develop annual intergovernmental goals for agriculture in the state
  - Develop procedures for identifying and assessing agricultural developments or the potential for impact on state and local governments
  - Develop and implement specific and consistent methods for the coordination of agricultural economic development activities
  - Develop and implement specific and measurable actions to improve the regulatory climate for agriculture in the state.
  - Recommend programs and policies to ensure the needs and goals of the states agricultural mission are met and accomplished

**Cassie Shirk:**

- June is National Dairy Month; MDA Marketing has kicked off the Ice Cream Trail
  - DNR Trails of the Creamery partnership will kick off in 2024
- 7/18 Is the Buy Local Cookout at MDA
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program
  - Transitioning to an electronic program in 2024, set to go live on 7/1
  - Sara Servin, FMNP Coordinator, is offering live trainings on how to use the program. If interested, reach out to [sara.servin@maryland.gov](mailto:sara.servin@maryland.gov).
- MDA is still searching for a new State Veterinarian & interviewing candidates.
- Hi-Path Avian Influenza in Dairy Herds
  - 12 states with active cases
  - Working closely with National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture, Center for Disease Control, and the other associations for State animal health officials to navigate this disease.
  - USDA has done a study to determine that pasteurized milk is still safe to drink.

- Resources on HPAI in Dairy can be found on MDA's website.
- Currently there are no cases in Maryland for HPAI in birds or dairy cattle
- MDA Animal Health field staff continue to perform surveillance, engaging with producers, putting out information on the website, working closely with the fairs & shows and the Vet Board
- There is a federal and state movement order monitoring and restricting dairy cattle movement.
  - Lactating dairy cattle traveling interstate must be tested for HPAI, there is free testing available at the State Animal Health Labs.

#### **Hans Schmidt:**

- Cover crop signup information has been published for farmers
- Know Your Watershed program has started for educating students in grades 3-8, provides tools for teachers to educate on conservation and agriculture
- Food Processing Residuals
  - Met with Nutrient Management Advisory Committee on Food Processing Residuals and the proposed regulations from MDA with respect to land application, storage and transportation
  - The proposed regulation establishes a permit process for product registration, applications, and transportation
  - There are still complaints about odors and trucking
  - This regulation will go into effect on July 1
  - Current regulation is appx. 38 pages long
  - MDA has been recording the feedback from the industry and is working to incorporate those recommendations into the regulation

#### **Jessica Hackett:**

- No report.

#### **Guest Reports:**

- **Dave Nemazie, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**
  - Kicking off the Global Nitrogen Innovation Center for Clean Energy and the Environment
    - Evaluating "Green Ammonia" on how to create this resource with less emissions.
    - International program that UMCES is leading.
    - NICEE – Nitrogen Innovation Center for Clean Energy & Environment
- **Stacy Kubofcik, Maryland Agricultural and Resource Based Industries Development Corporation**
  - 6/14 reopening the Maryland Producer Cold Storage Grant Program
    - Grants up to \$2,000, matching grant, for farmers and watermen
  - New program – Maryland Large Animal Veterinarian Assistance Program

- \$25,000 – \$100,000, 4.5% interest rate
- Funds for equipment, trucks, ultrasound equipment, x-ray equipment, etc.
- Finalizing details still

### **Old Business:**

- Review of Strategic Plan
  - The Commission discussed the proposed strategic plan in depth.
  - Moved for adoption by Joe Dymek, second by Kelly Lewis
  - Unanimously approved by the Commission
  - Approve and adopt as of June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- Committee Assignments
  - Upon approval of the Strategic Plan, 6 committees were established. Commission members were asked to sign up for a committee.
- Election of Chair
  - Proposed slate for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025:
    - Kelly Lewis, Chair
    - Amy Crone, Vice-Chair
  - Unanimously approved by the Commission.

### **New Business:**

- None.

Meeting Adjourned by Cliff Newsome, seconded by Amy Crone.

Respectfully Submitted by Harrison B. Palmer, Executive Secretary