



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

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Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes June 8, 2022

Present: Frank Allnutt
Amy Crone
Joseph Dymek
Kelly Dudeck
Sean Hough
Gordon Kretser
Matthew Levi Sellers
Michael Levengood
Paula Linthicum
John Murphy
Clifford Newsome Jr.
Michael Pons
Michelle Protani-Chesnik

Absent: Dr. Marianne Bailey
Dr. Craig Beyroudy
Cheryl DeBerry
Shelby Green
Elizabeth Hill
Thomas Mullineaux
Matthew Nielsen
Richard Pelz
Benjamin Sowers
Matthew Corey Spies

MDA Staff: Joe Bartenfelder
Steve Connelly
Rich Colburn
Cassie Shirk

Approval of Minutes:

April minutes were approved 1st by Sean Hough and 2nd by Clifford Newsome.

Election of New Chair:

It was decided that our new chair will be Kelly Dudeck 1st approved by Joseph Dymek and 2nd by Paula Linthicum followed by a vote by the whole commission.

Commodity Reports:

Ag Education- Joseph Dymek:

MAEF

- Working with Maryland Ag Teachers to submit four Letters of Intent to the Rural Maryland Council MAERDAF grant program, which if successful will generate \$285,000 in resources for ag ed programs across the state.
- Received 7 applications for the position of Middle School Director, an open position at MAEF.
- Ended our Mobile Lab year at about 75% capacity, which was very good considering a two-year lapse; currently booking into 2022-2023.
- Beginning plans to renovate the older of MAEF's showcases, to be prepared to reach out to more events in new ways.
- Created a toolkit for Farm Bureaus to understand how to connect with their local school systems. Still in draft form and working its way through MAEF staff; planning a member webinar to share it with Maryland Farm Bureau. It will promote MD 4-H and MD FFA.
- Dorchester County has discontinued their ag ed/FFA program. This is unfortunate for the future of the agricultural industry in Dorchester County and the students who desire to have careers in agriculture.

FFA

- Maryland State FFA Convention is June 28-29 at the Great Frederick Fairgrounds. Over 300 FFA members and 100 volunteers are registered to attend the Convention.
- In May, the FFA State Officer Team attended 20 Chapter award/banquet programs, 5 local Ag Day/Open house programs, assisted with interviewing candidates for the 2022-2023 State Office team, conducted a seed planting activity at Billie Holliday Elementary School in Baltimore for their Career Day along with Maryland Farm Bureau staff.
- June finds the FFA Officers planning and conducting three State Career Events in Horse Evaluation, Forestry & Environmental/Natural Recourses.

4-H

- The International Agri-Food Network invited Maryland 4-H to share their success stories about engaging youth in agricultural literacy and career readiness. In addition, the PSM (Private Sector Mechanism) Global Youth Forum had a particular interest in highlighting the critical need to engage diverse youth and increase access to careers in agriculture.

Maryland Farm Bureau

- Agriculture education is a top policy and program priority for Maryland Farm Bureau (MDFB). MDFB is focus on working to strengthen local farm bureaus as they hold programs and events with students, as well as advocate with local school systems and leaders to support Ag Education. MDFB is proposing a Next Generation Summit during the MDFB Annual Convention in September. The goal will be to amplify Maryland

Agriculture through the youth voice by giving measurable value to youth through a targeted workshopping event. Student state leaders will be invited from Maryland FFA, Maryland 4-H and MANRRS, either from UMES and UMCP, and (or) junior chapters at various high schools. MDFB is also working to assure that Ag Education is sustainable and growing within MSDE Blueprint for Maryland's Future, including assuring a strong program within the 5 pillars of the Blueprint. It hopes to see Ag Education remain part of Career Technology Education, but also become part of the overall approved science curriculum.

Ag Tourism- Kelly Dudeck:

- Maryland Tourism Coalition is holding their Spring Seminar on June 15 at Serenity Farm in Benedict MD, from 10:30-4pm. The theme for this year's seminar is Agritourism. <https://web.mdtourism.org/atlas/events/spring-seminar-195/register>.
- Camping was legally added to Maryland's definition of agritourism earlier this month, providing farmers with another low-impact, productive use of their land.
- On May 17, Gov. Larry Hogan (R) authorized HB 558 and SB 296, cross-filed bills amending the state's Land Use article to include "camping" and "incidental outdoor stays" in the definition of agritourism. The bills were championed by the Maryland Farm Bureau and Hipcamp, an international online marketplace that moderates outdoor stays and camping experiences on private land.
- VAA producers are starting to see an issue with the cost and availability of grains. With 30% of cereal grains coming from Ukraine and another 15-20% coming from Russia, barley is becoming more and more of an issue.
- Supply chain continues to be an issue, with warnings that it is only going to get worse. Currently paper products are causing some challenges - especially when it comes to labels.
- Newly formed contracts with FedEx and UPS aren't helping. Upstream partners of the beverage alcohol industry face rising shipping rates and contract terms that lack the product handling protections that existed prior to COVID-10.
- These price hikes and contracts provide no coverage for damaged shipments - placing 100% of the insurance on the shipper - and continue to grow costs for vendors and shrink margins.
- ILAC (International Leadership Alumni Conference) is being hosted by DE and MD LEAD alumni. The conference will be July 31 - August 4th. Registration is open and sponsors are needed. <http://ilacconference.com/ilac-2022/>

Ag Services- Levi Sellers:

- One main point to highlight is several Maryland State Hemp industry stake holders have been in mitigation with MDA to make changes with the current hemp program regulations.
- Discussions have been successful and some changes that are being made to align the MD

hemp program more with the USDA final rule are removing the need for THC testing, increasing the window harvest from 15 to 30 days, increasing the negligence threshold.

Direct Farm market- Amy Crone:

- The farm-direct sector is in full season with summer produce available at farmers markets and at farm stands.
- The incentive program Maryland Market Money is now operating across the state for the 2022 season.
- Not much to update from last meeting since operators are in full swing.

Equine-Michael Pons:

- The 147th running of the Preakness Stakes was held on May 21, 2022, the first being held with full attendance since 2019. Early Voting, owned by Seth Klaravich, graduate of Baltimore's Polytechnic High School, upset the favorite Epicenter, who had run second in the Kentucky Derby. The owners of Derby winner, Rich Strike, an 80-1 longshot, decided to skip the Preakness. Klaravich was celebrating his 65th birthday. The Maryland Jockey Club estimated the Preakness crowd at 60,000 fans, with the parimutuel-handle surpassing \$100M. Preakness is Maryland's largest sporting day, generating millions of dollars in economic activity.
- New records for the high-priced horse, gross revenue and average were set at the Fasig-Tipton Mid-Atlantic 2-Year-Olds in Training Sale held on Monday and Tuesday, May 23 and 24, 2022. Chester Broman's Bernardini colt, who worked a ¼ mile in 9 4/5 seconds, brought a record \$3.55M. The sale featured 391 horses bringing more than \$37M, with the average being \$95,000. This is strongest horse sale of the year held in Maryland, at the Timonium State Grounds, and one of the top 2-day sales in the nation.
- Foaling and breeding season are wrapping-up, with projections for number of Maryland foals staying steady, while there is another projected decline in the numbers of mares bred to Maryland stallions. This reflects a nationwide trend, as more broodmares are being bred in Kentucky.
- Plans for the rebuilding of Pimlico and Laurel have been pushed back to fall 2023. Construction costs have increased astronomically in recent years, and have necessitated a revamping of the original plans as well as a need to increase funding. This project was originally estimated at \$400M in 2020. However, both the size and scope of the Maryland Stadium Authority's plan will need to be revised, prior to construction beginning. In this past Maryland Legislative session, House Bill 897 passed, calling for \$2.4M in funding for an update of the entire Maryland Stadium Authority project for the rebuild of Pimlico and Laurel. The first report is due: September, 2022, with a final one being submitted by January 2023.
- Work is steadily progresses on the Maryland Horse Library and Research Center, located in downtown Reisterstown, MD. The facility will feature state-of-the-art projections,

video and a vast library for anyone who would like to use it. The projected opening is Fall 2022.

- October is Maryland Horse month with a plethora of activities, including: Maryland Million Day on Saturday, October 22, 2022, and the Five Star Classic at Fair Hill on October 13-15, 2022. Maryland Million was founded by Emmy-winning broadcaster, Jim McKay, nearly 40 years ago and is a wonderful day for anyone interested in horse racing. The Five Star Classic attracts horses and people from around the world to Fair Hill racecourse. Both events welcome families and groups of friends offering hospitality and a fun-filled atmosphere. If anyone would like to attend either event, then please let me know.

Farm Bureau- Paula Linthicum:

- Currently taking applications for 2022-2023 Ag Ambassador program.
- Applicants apply through their county to participate in program and are due September 16, 2022.
- Maryland farm bureau recently became a member of the Center for Food Integrity.
- This will help farmers understand what some of the market drivers are for consumers today.
- Look at article in Old Line Farmer on the Maryland Farm Bureau website.
- One of the concerns for farmers a crossed the state this time of year is rural road safety.
- It is really challenging to move equipment while planting and harvesting.
- There are problems with the highways putting guard rails narrow which causes moving equipment and handling on coming traffic challenging.
- Challenging to get state highways to address problem areas.
- Some situations where equipment is damaged.

Livestock- Sean Hough:

- Our processing concerns with local butchers and processing plants its difficult to get meat processed because everything is already booked for the rest of this year.
- More and more people are driving to Pennsylvania to get things processed.
- Just went through Spring Calving season and Farrowing season with the hogs and most things were good not many problems.
- The March and April weather caused a few challenges but nothing too serious.
- Still seeing nationally inflation trends.
- Hog production has dramatically dropped in Maryland.
- Starting to sell more to the 4H world then general meat production
- Show season has started a lot of Spring 4H and Jackpot shows are doing well.
- Angus association had a big event this year.
- Maryland Pork Producers Association has been doing some webinars this season to get more people interested and informed.

- From price stand point meat prices are continuing to go up in the stores.

Nursery II- John Murphy:

- Same for last couple months supply and demand to bring materials in and labor is difficult.
- Industry has been busy with harvest and growing.
- June 23rd Maryland Nursery Landscapers Green House Growers meeting.
- Will bring up at meeting to get a horticulture and nursery vacancies.
- Now have meetings at farm bureau which is nice location.
- Green House Conference.
- In September headed to Longwood Gardens.
- State Soil Committee meeting has been postponed.

Poultry I- Michael Levensgood:

- **Maryland, Delaware drop certain HPAI orders**

Effective June 1, Maryland and Delaware's departments of agriculture both [rescinded orders](#) that had restricted how farmers and litter brokers could move poultry litter around the region. The Delaware Department of Agriculture also [rescinded](#) guidance that had advised delaying non-essential visits to poultry farms. At the same time, it remains important for commercial and backyard flock owners to practice good biosecurity and prevent contact between their poultry and areas wild birds can access.

Number of cases has slowed, but still have issues in PA. Farmers need to stay vigilant on biosecurity. Especially as we go into the fall.

- **USDA taking comments on contracting, tournament system regulations**

The Agricultural Marketing Service is soliciting comments on [proposed revisions](#) to the regulations under the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921. The proposal would revise the list of disclosures and information live poultry dealers must furnish to poultry growers and sellers with whom dealers make poultry growing arrangements. The proposal would establish additional disclosure requirements in connection with the use of poultry grower ranking systems by live poultry dealers to determine settlement payments for poultry growers. The proposals are intended to promote transparency in poultry production contracting and to give poultry growers and prospective poultry growers relevant information with which to make business decisions. Comments must be submitted through the Federal e-rulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and should reference the document number and the date and page number of this issue of the Federal Register. All comments submitted in response to this proposed rule will be included in the record and will be made available to the public.

- **Pennsylvania, Delmarva-based Farm Credit offices to merge**

Effective July 1, 2022, AgChoice Farm Credit and MidAtlantic Farm Credit [will](#)

[join organizations](#) to create [Horizon Farm Credit](#).

The vote to merge passed after a special stockholders' meeting on May 20, 2022 with the number of stockholders voting exceeding the required three percent quorum from both Associations' members. Horizon Farm Credit will serve more than 100 counties in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and will be made up of more than 20,000 member-borrowers.

The [merged entity](#) will have 25 offices across its five-state footprint and be headquartered in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

Current MidAtlantic Farm Credit Chief Executive Officer, Tom Truitt, who has over 25 years of experience with the Farm Credit System, will serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Horizon Farm Credit. "AgChoice and MidAtlantic have been working together for many years as industry peers, and are closely aligned in how we go about fulfilling our mission and serving our members," [says Truitt](#). "This merger will allow us to become even stronger than we are today, both financially and with an increase in specialized staff."

Current AgChoice Chief Executive Officer, Darrell Curtis, will stay on until the merger is complete to support the organizations in the transition plan. "I'm looking forward to the many benefits this new Association will bring to our local communities and partners," says Curtis. "Both of our Associations have strong ag expertise, and we're excited to work together to enhance the experience we provide our customers."

No office closures or staffing changes are anticipated as a result of the merger. Members will receive the same local, personalized service from the same trusted experts. The offices of both Associations will be closed from July 1 – 4, 2022 to ensure a seamless transition as they integrate systems to form Horizon Farm Credit.

- **Still time to join DCA for the '22 Booster BBQ**

The Booster BBQ is returning this year to the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington, Del. on June 22. If you didn't receive the postcard invitation, you may not yet be a '22 DCA member -- but there's still time! Join us by the end of May to ensure you'll be able to register for the fun, friendly event. [It's quick and easy to renew DCA membership online](#)

- **Other key Dates:** October 3-5, 2022: 57th National Meeting on Poultry Health, Processing, and Live Production | Ocean City, Md. October 6, 2022: DCA's College Scholarship Golf Tournament, Glen Riddle Golf Course, Berlin, Md.

Poultry II- Michelle Protani-Chesnik:

- Poultry layouts are longer 3 to 4 weeks.
- The availability of eggs is going down.
- Everyone did a wonderful job to protect their flocks during the AI outbreak.
- Gas prices continue to increase and are affecting the industry greatly.

- Diesel is a major investment.
- Prices for supplies continue to go up due to supply and demand.
- The labor continues to be a challenge with people not wanting to work.
- People are getting more money for unemployment than when they were working.
- Chop tank has raised their rates.
- The cost of insurance is also going up.

State Grange- Clifford Newsome:

- First, I want to thank Jessica for the great field trip through Carroll and Baltimore counties.
- Thanks to Bryan Butler, Carroll County Extension Agent, for choosing three outstanding farm operations to visit.
- It was nice to meet Michele's husband as they both came a long distance.
- The Maryland Grange held their Executive meeting on May 24 at Wacohu Grange Hall near Hagerstown.
- They celebrated National Pike Day commemorating the first route to open up the new "West" frontier.
- We plan to help at the Maryland FFA convention starting June 27th.
- July 8th is National Fried Chicken Day.
- We plan to help at many fairs, community shows and the state fair in the coming months.
- July 16 is the first ever FSK FFA and Medford Grange Community Fair. Hope to see you there.
- Thank you Michelle for serving as Chair of the Maryland Ag. Commission and continued member of it.
- Kelly will serve as new Chair in September. Everyone have a great summer.

Turf- Gordon Kretser:

- Cooler than average spring temps.
- Dormancy break has been slow.
- Slow re-establishment of fall/winter damage.
- Some Bermuda grass winter damage.
- Overall Healthy spring growing season with very little concern with disease.
- Army worm topic – peak adult activity in moth's hurricane/tropical storm caused major issues last year. Very little chance that happens again.
- Events – Mid Atlantic Golf Course Association – retirement party for Steve Potter (Woodholme CC) at the Pier in Edgewater, MD 16th of June.
- Events - Turf plot walk with new turf pathologist at UMD – Fereshteh Shahoveisi July 20th College Park, MD.

Staff Updates:

Cassie Shirk:

- This Saturday is grand open of Salisbury Animal Health Lab, Joe and the Governor will be there.
- Everyone is invited.
- Steve and Cassie will be joining the Governor on an equine trade mission to France and Ireland to promote equine industry.
- Governors buy local cookout this year at MDA July 21st.
- Invites out in next few weeks.
- Nothing on legislative front.
- Putting together task force to study the poultry inspection program.

Steve Connelly:

- We had a great team and it was a real team effort with a partnership with USDA, DDA, and MDA.
- The threat is still out there in wild population.
- 36 states confirmed with commercial or back yard flocks.
- More than 38 thousand birds have been affected so far.
- Still in wild birds and commercial flocks.
- Just not coming in 4 or 5 premises a day.
- Enhance biosecurity threat still there.

Joe Bartenfelder:

- Have board of public works meeting at the treasury building in Annapolis.
- Thank Michelle for serving as chairmen of Ag commission, did a great job and appreciate your leadership.
- Agenda for high path avian influence out breaks this spring and late last winter.
- Had outbreaks in Cecil and Queen Annes County.
- Our team at command center from Delaware and MDA and USDA.
- Bottom line is containment and elimination.
- Cross our fingers and hope for best but with folks on ground we were able to contain and eliminate without a huge effect on the broiler industry.
- Special thanks to Steve. Had office up at DDA and was there every day from 7am to 7pm as our person on the ground and that was very helpful.
- It is very different from when we did the event vs the earlier table top discussions.
- The number of chickens effected was pretty large.
- Effected layer houses not just broiler houses.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 Respectfully Submitted by Jessica O'Sullivan

