



**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  
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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**

**Committee Meeting Schedule**

**February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**In-Person Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

**Committee on Agricultural Literacy and Education (CALE)** 10:15 am – 11:15 am

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86811226480?pwd=O0z3lVqq0LUcU0JRtdmlogUrTJGko0.1>

Meeting ID: 868 1122 6480 Passcode: 431610

**Legislative Affairs Committee** 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88398876128?pwd=PHlOrayOZuLA8qdG0jywG15bW24p5c.1>

Meeting ID: 883 9887 6128 Passcode: 866759

**Farm Profitability & Sustainability Committee** 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83183366835?pwd=tv6ptTXmw58645UkixZN7II49BG9RI.1>

Meeting ID: 831 8336 6835 Passcode: 491919

**Value Added Agriculture Committee** 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83329975647?pwd=VVh7plUlj7Rt9vb0YKvN8c82iYVjbe.1>

Meeting ID: 833 2997 5647 Passcode: 249441

**Committee on Watershed Strategies** 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82956329374?pwd=O897VwEyN65h0qhb4iFWadShSU35pN.1>

Meeting ID: 829 5632 9374 Passcode: 616591



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## Maryland Agricultural Commission Committee Membership

Commodity	Representative	Committee
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh	CALE
Agribusiness	Vacant	
Agritourism	Janna Howley	VAA
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley	VAA
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt	
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser	Profitability, VAA
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria	VAA, CoWS
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle	VAA
Dairy I	Vacant	
Dairy II	Vacant	
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair	Profitability, VAA*
Equine	Ann Merryman	Profitability, Leg. Affairs
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum	Leg. Affairs*
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes	Profitability, Leg Affairs
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov	
Forestry	Hunter Pusey	CoWS, CALE
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers	Leg. Affairs
Horticulture	Vacant	
Livestock	Sean Hough	Profitability, CoWS
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair	Profitability
Nursery II	John Murphy	Leg. Affairs
Organic Farming	Emma Jagoz	Profitability*, Leg., VAA
Poultry I	Zach Evans	Leg. Affairs, CoWS
Poultry II	Vacant	
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker	CALE
Tobacco	Vacant	
Turf	Gordon Kretser	Profitability, CoWS*
UMD	Dr. Darren Jarboe	CALE, VAA
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel	Profitability
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey	Leg. Affairs
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman	VAA
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman	



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### **Maryland Agricultural Commission** **Committee Missions & Operations**

**Committee on Agricultural Literacy & Education (CALE)** - Focused on promoting agriculture as a viable and necessary industry through public literacy, identifying shortcomings and opportunities to increase agricultural education in the state (K-12 and post-secondary), and engaging with MDA's Karen Fedor to support farm to school programs

**Committee on Watershed Strategies (COWS)** - Focused on environmental, natural resource, and conservation initiatives throughout the watershed of the Chesapeake Bay, navigating pathways to promote conservation and hold organizations/processes accountable when they fall short. Works closely with the department's Resource Conservation team.

**Farm Profitability & Sustainability Committee** - Priorities include marketing of agricultural products to increase attention to purchasing Maryland goods, preserving agricultural land throughout the state, and identifying opportunities for economic viability. Interacts with various programs at MDA including MALPF, Marketing, and others as appropriate.

**Legislative Affairs Committee** - A combination of the originally adopted Agricultural Policy and Advocacy Committee & Regulatory Reform and Oversight Committee. Responsible for monitoring local and state regulation that impacts agriculture, identifying shortcomings in existing legal code or zoning statutes where MDA could act, and discussing potential action of the Commission in support or opposition of bills. Works closely with MDA's Director of Legislative Affairs, Rachel Jones.

**Value Added Agriculture Committee** - Promotes value added agriculture initiatives through identifying economic incentives, training opportunities, market development and infrastructure initiatives, and supporting MDA's Value-Added Agricultural Specialist, Martin Proulx.



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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION AGENDA

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 10:15 AM

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86811226480?pwd=O0z3lVqg0LUcU0JRtdmlogUrTJGko0.1>

Meeting ID: 868 1122 6480 Passcode: 431610

I. Welcome: Harrison Palmer, Executive Secretary (10:15)

II. Review of November meeting minutes

III. Review presentation from the Maryland Agricultural Education Coalition (10:20)

I. FSRC Recommendations (10:45)

The FSRC requests that the Maryland Agricultural Commission (MAC) examine the regulatory challenges and barriers impacting small and beginning farmers, such as zoning, permitting, business licensing, and land use agreements. Recommendations provided by the MAC will help producers navigate contradictory regulations, economies of scale, risks associated with non-commodity or non-traditional crops, and accessing essential resources.

IV. Election of Chair (11:10)

V. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
<b>Ag Education</b>	<b>Dr. Melissa Welsh</b>
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
<b>At Large Ag Service</b>	<b>Frank Allnutt</b>
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
<b>Forestry</b>	<b>Hunter Pusey</b>
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
Livestock	Sean Hough
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair
Nursery II	John Murphy
Organic Farming	Emma Jagoz
Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
<b>State Grange</b>	<b>Richard Stonebreaker</b>
Tobacco	Vacant
Turf	Gordon Kretser
<b>UMD</b>	<b>Dr. Darren Jarboe</b>
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman



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### MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION

Working Minutes

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 12:45 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86811226480?pwd=O0z3lVqg0LUcU0JRtdmlogUrTjGko0.1>

Meeting ID: 868 1122 6480 Passcode: 431610

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Richard Stonebraker  
Frank Allnutt  
Hunter Pusey  
Dr. Melissa Welsh

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Dr. Darren Jarboe

#### **Guests:**

Steve Connelly, MDA  
Karen Fedor, MDA

#### **Call to Order:**

The February 2025 Committee on Agricultural Literacy and Education meeting was called to order by Harrison Palmer, Executive Secretary, at 12:50 pm.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

The November 2024 Committee on Agricultural Literacy and Education meeting minutes were approved by Frank Allnutt, second by Richard Stonebraker.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

The Executive Secretary welcomed several new members to CALE and shared historical context from the 2024 strategic plan, establishment of committees, and the goals/ responsibilities of the committee. He then shared the Coalition for Agricultural Education (MDFB, MAEF and MATA) presentation that they gave to CALE in November. The Committee discussed the proposal briefly, expressing some reservations about the efficacy of any party, new and existing, and their ability to collaborate with MSDE. Members will continue to review the proposal and await the consolidated goals from the Coalition to review.



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The Committee then began the discussion on the FSRC request to identify challenges and barriers for new and beginning farmers in the context of agricultural literacy and education. They highlighted

- Access to land and capital
- Agricultural education programs for new & beginning farmers exist in groups like future harvest, UME, and EcoCity Farms, but may or may not be located where the demand is.
- Literacy
  - o Budgeting, planning, following regulation, engaging with groups, literacy in the context of functional agricultural knowledge
  - o Dr. Everts at the Harry Hughes Center is currently seeking project proposals, could the FSRC project be an option?
- Access to centralized information for New & Beginning farmers
- How do you scale a full-sized business proposal from a hobby?
- New & beginning farmers' outlook on agriculture is often shaped by the first office they walk into – whether it is the Soil Conservation District, Farm Bureau meetings, Extension, beginning farmer training programs, USDA FSA or NRCS service centers, MARBIDCO, etc.
- Sequential courses to expose potential farmers to agriculture, challenges and risks, and teach those auxiliary skills before stepping into land access/ownership.
- How can folks foster relationships for older farmers and landowners to connect with new and beginning farmers to provide access.
- How can we structurally change the narrative of legacy farmers and their trust of young farmers and new business ventures (internally within the family or otherwise)
- 

### Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Welsh, second by Richard Stonebraker.



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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AGENDA

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 11:30 AM

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88398876128?pwd=PHlOrayOZuLA8qdG0jywG15bW24p5c.1>

Meeting ID: 883 9887 6128 Passcode: 866759

- I. Welcome: Paula Linthicum, Chair (11:30)
- II. Review and Combination of August minutes (11:35)

III. FSRC Recommendations (11:45)

The FSRC requests that the Maryland Agricultural Commission (MAC) examine the regulatory challenges and barriers impacting small and beginning farmers, such as zoning, permitting, business licensing, and land use agreements. Recommendations provided by the MAC will help producers navigate contradictory regulations, economies of scale, risks associated with non-commodity or non-traditional crops, and accessing essential resources.

IV. Priority Legislation, MDA Departmental Bills

V. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
<b>At Large Ag Service</b>	<b>Stefanie Reiser</b>
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair
Equine	Ann Merryman
<b>Farm Bureau</b>	<b>Paula Linthicum</b>
<b>Field Crops</b>	<b>Chris Rhodes</b>
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
<b>Hemp</b>	<b>Matthew Levi Sellers</b>
Horticulture	Vacant
Livestock	Sean Hough
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair
<b>Nursery II</b>	<b>John Murphy</b>
<b>Organic Farming</b>	<b>Emma Jagoz</b>
<b>Poultry I</b>	<b>Zach Evans</b>
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker
Tobacco	Vacant
Turf	Gordon Kretser
UMD	Dr. Darren Jarboe
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel
<b>Veterinary</b>	<b>Dr. Marianne Bailey</b>
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman





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### MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 11:30 AM

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88398876128?pwd=PHlOrayOZuLA8qdG0jywG15bW24p5c.1>

Meeting ID: 883 9887 6128 Passcode: 866759

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Stefanie Reiser  
Paula Linthicum  
Matthew Levi Sellers  
Emma Jagoz  
Zach Evans

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Chris Rhodes  
John Murphy  
Dr. Marianne Bailey

#### **Guests:**

Kevin Atticks, MDA  
Rachel Jones, MDA

#### **Call to Order:**

The February 2025 Legislative Affairs Committee meeting was called to order by Paula Linthicum, Chair, at 11:36 am.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

The August 2024 Agricultural Policy and Advocacy Committee and Regulatory Reform & Oversight Committee meeting minutes were approved by Stefanie Reiser, second by Emma Jagoz.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Rachel Jones, Director of Government Affairs for the Maryland Department of Agriculture, gave an update on the departmental bills submitted by MDA.





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Paula Linthicum, Chair, shared concerns about the PFAS bill (HB386/SB345) that would eliminate chemicals that farmers use safely based. Emma Jagoz raised concerns about soil tests to evaluate the existence (or levels) of PFAS currently; her sentiment was followed by Paula's concern with a lack of standardized testing capabilities for PFAS.

Emma raised concerns to Secretary Atticks regarding the definition of "Regenerative Agriculture" that was listed in the Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act (HB506/SB428) as "a form of land management and stewardship approaches and practices that: 1, Draws on traditions and innovations from African, Indigenous, and original land stewards; 2, promotes culturally important food and climate justice programs and initiatives; and 3, enhances the land and ecosystem through adaptive land management practices that improve soil health and water quality, restore biodiversity, mitigate climate change impacts, and provide the greatest community benefits...includes practices such as producing food in the state for distribution within the state." She inquired about the development of the definition and highlighted the broad impacts that creating a definition would create. The Rodale Institute certifies Stefanie Reiser's farm as [Certified Regenerative Organic](#), who brought forward additional concerns about enforcement and management of the newly proposed definition. Secretary Atticks clarified that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is interested in encouraging tenants on state-owned land to be engaging in soil health practices and devised this definition through discussions with MDA's Healthy Soils program and DNR's Climate Justice Coordinator, intentionally incorporating broad language to allow for an array of practices to be considered. MDA will have ownership of interpretation of this law through their Healthy Soils Program, but the intention is to support these theories on properties that DNR owns and leases for agricultural production.

Food System Resilience Council Recommendations – Paula Linthicum, Chair, asked committee members to come to the next meeting with a list of regulations that have an impact on new & beginning farmers.

### **Meeting Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Zach Evans, second by Stephanie Reiser.



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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION FARM PROFITABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AGENDA

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 12:45 pm

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83183366835?pwd=tv6ptTXmw58645UkixZN7II49BG9RI.1>

Meeting ID: 831 8336 6835 Passcode: 491919

VI. Welcome: Emma Jagoz, Chair (12:45)

VII. Review & approval of November minutes

VIII. FSRC Recommendations (12:50)

The FSRC requests that the Maryland Agricultural Commission (MAC) examine the regulatory challenges and barriers impacting small and beginning farmers, such as zoning, permitting, business licensing, and land use agreements. Recommendations provided by the MAC will help producers navigate contradictory regulations, economies of scale, risks associated with non-commodity or non-traditional crops, and accessing essential resources.

IX. Committee Member Discussion (1:20)

X. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
<b>Bio-Fuel</b>	<b>Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria</b>
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
<b>Direct Farm Market</b>	<b>Amy Crone, Vice Chair</b>
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
<b>Field Crops</b>	<b>Chris Rhodes</b>
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
<b>Livestock</b>	<b>Sean Hough</b>
<b>Nursery I</b>	<b>J. Kelly Lewis, Chair</b>
Nursery II	John Murphy
<b>Organic Farming</b>	<b>Emma Jagoz</b>
Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker
Tobacco	Vacant
<b>Turf</b>	<b>Gordon Kretser</b>
UMD	Dr. Darren Jarboe
<b>Vegetable</b>	<b>Russell Shlagel</b>
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman
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### MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION FARM PROFITABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 11:30 am

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83183366835?pwd=tv6ptTXmw58645UkixZN7II49BG9RI.1>

Meeting ID: 831 8336 6835 Passcode: 491919

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Raj Kathuria  
Amy Crone  
Kelly Lewis  
Emma Jagoz  
Gordon Kretser

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Chris Rhodes  
Sean Hough  
Russell Shlagel

#### **Guests:**

Kevin Atticks, MDA  
Martin Proulx, MDA  
Aidan Boline, MDA

#### **Call to Order:**

The February 2025 Farm Profitability and Sustainability Committee meeting was called to order by Emma Jagoz, Chair, at 9:00 am.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

The November 2024 Farm Profitability and Sustainability Committee meeting minutes were approved by Gordon Kretser, second by Kelly Lewis.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

The committee began discussing the Food System Resilience Council recommendations and request to the Ag Commission for consideration. Agricultural apprenticeships offer a clear intersection between profitability and the opportunity to overcome barriers for new and beginning farmers. Emma Jagoz mentioned that she is engaging in a [PASA apprenticeship](#)



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program where the apprentice is employed by the farm, and the farm is then compensated to engage in above-and-beyond experiences to help develop the apprentice for supplemental training opportunities. One of the major challenges in farm labor is that most available domestic labor is unskilled. The noticeable trend in domestic labor entering the agricultural workforce is that they are working to learn about agriculture with farm-ownership in mind. As unskilled labor enters the apprenticeship system, farmers and farm business managers must make investments into training and developing a workforce that may or may not ever return to their operation.

The committee is particularly invested in changing the narrative for new and beginning farmers that creates a career track for skilled agricultural labor that does not include owning the farm. However, as Kelly Lewis identified, even large-scale production operations (whether it is poultry, produce or nursery) rely heavily on semi-skilled labor and are operating on tight margins and don't have an opportunity for growth up a management chain. Often, even mid-large farms do not have mid-level management positions that do not include farm ownership. Third-party skilled labor is a unique opportunity to meet the needs of farm businesses without the burden of farm ownership.

Raj Kathuria acknowledged that there is continued pushback from local jurisdictions when it comes to agricultural innovation because it doesn't align with traditional views of farming. The committee identified several on-farm diversification opportunities for farm profitability to include seed sales, biofuels, on farm sales, agritourism, and aggregating for institutional purchasing. Flexible regulation for scalability and recognition of agriculturally adjacent businesses on the farm are necessary for the success of new and beginning farmers in the long term.

The committee discussed the opportunities and threats that tariffs pose to profitability. While a decrease in imported food (or increased price of imported foods) could bolster local business and reliance on local food production, the inputs for farmers will increase and put strain on production capacity.

### **Meeting Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Kelly Lewis, second by Raj Kathuria.



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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 2:00 pm

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83329975647?pwd=VVh7plUlj7Rt9vb0YKvN8c82iYVjbe.1>

Meeting ID: 833 2997 5647 Passcode: 249441

XI. Welcome: Amy Crone, Chair (2:00)

XII. Review & approval of November minutes

XIII. FSRC Recommendations (2:10)

The FSRC requests that the Maryland Agricultural Commission (MAC) examine the regulatory challenges and barriers impacting small and beginning farmers, such as zoning, permitting, business licensing, and land use agreements. Recommendations provided by the MAC will help producers navigate contradictory regulations, economies of scale, risks associated with non-commodity or non-traditional crops and accessing essential resources.

XIV. Committee Member Discussion (2:45)

XV. Next steps with Aidan Boline (2:55)

XVI. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
<b>Agritourism</b>	<b>Janna Howley</b>
<b>Aquaculture</b>	<b>Johnny Shockley</b>
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
<b>Consumer</b>	<b>Kellie Hinkle</b>
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
<b>Direct Farm Market</b>	<b>Amy Crone, Vice Chair</b>
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
Livestock	Sean Hough
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair
Nursery II	John Murphy
<b>Organic Farming</b>	<b>Emma Jagoz</b>
Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker
Tobacco	Vacant
Turf	Gordon Kretser
<b>UMD</b>	<b>Dr. Darren Jarboe</b>
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey
<b>Viticulture</b>	<b>Rachel Lipman</b>
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman



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### MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Minutes

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 2:00 pm

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83329975647?pwd=VVh7plUlj7Rt9vb0YKvN8c82iYVjbe.1>

Meeting ID: 833 2997 5647 Passcode: 249441

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Kellie Hinkle  
Emma Jagoz  
Janna Howley  
Johnny Shockley

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Amy Crone  
Dr. Darren Jarboe  
Rachel Lipman

#### **Guests:**

Kevin Atticks, MDA  
Martin Proulx, MDA  
Aidan Boline, MDA

#### **Call to Order:**

The February 2025 Value Added Agriculture Committee meeting was called to order by Emma Jagoz, Chair, at 2:06 pm.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

The November 2024 Value Added Agriculture Committee meeting minutes were approved by Kellie Hinkle, second by Janna Howley.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

The Committee began discussing the Food System Resilience Council's recommendation to analyze barriers and regulatory challenges for new and beginning farmers. County based permitting and interpretation of statewide regulations present a challenging process full of red tape for new and beginning farmers to navigate, on top of navigating their business processes. With the mindset shift of the Maryland Department of Commerce towards supporting business



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development and growth, agriculture serves a key role within that sector. Removing the barriers and red tape for agribusinesses inherently supports economic growth. The Maryland Department of Planning is embarking on a process to evaluate all permits and licenses in the state and navigate the process of streamlining those processes. As the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture continues to engage with partner agencies, they will serve as the channel to bring forward recommendations from the Value-Added Agriculture Committee and the Commission to ensure that solutions are posed. The Committee moved into discussion about the State Department of Assessment and Taxations reconsideration of agricultural businesses and reassessment as commercial entities. This continues to be a risk to new and beginning farmers, as well as to the preservation of existing agribusinesses.

Martin Proulx, MDA Value Added Agriculture Specialist, introduced his intern, Aidan Boline from UMD College Park. Aidan was brought on to assist Martin in the development of a statewide guidance document to help agritourism businesses, regulators, and partners navigate the existing framework that value added agricultural businesses operate in. The Committee revisited conversations surrounding the pros and cons of establishing statewide definitions for agriculture and value added agriculture, acknowledging that most agricultural businesses and partners understand agriculture in its fundamental forms, but regulating authorities often don't and arbitrarily may define agriculture contrary to agriculture's definition of agriculture.

### **Meeting Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Kellie Hinkle, second by Janna Howley.





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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON WATERSHED STRATEGIES AGENDA

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 3:15 pm

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82956329374?pwd=O897VwEyN65h0qhb4iFWadShSU35pN.1>

Meeting ID: 829 5632 9374 Passcode: 616591

XVII.Welcome: Gordon Kretser, Chair (3:15)

XVIII.Review & approval of November minutes

XIX.FSRC Recommendations (3:20)

The FSRC requests that the Maryland Agricultural Commission (MAC) examine the regulatory challenges and barriers impacting small and beginning farmers, such as zoning, permitting, business licensing, and land use agreements. Recommendations provided by the MAC will help producers navigate contradictory regulations, economies of scale, risks associated with non-commodity or non-traditional crops, and accessing essential resources.

XX.Committee Member Discussion (4:05)

XXI.Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
<b>Bio-Fuel</b>	<b>Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria</b>
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
<b>Forestry</b>	<b>Hunter Pusey</b>
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
<b>Livestock</b>	<b>Sean Hough</b>
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair
Nursery II	John Murphy
Organic Farming	Emma Jagoz
<b>Poultry I</b>	<b>Zach Evans</b>
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## MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON WATERSHED STRATEGIES

Minutes

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 3:15 pm

Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82956329374?pwd=O897VwEyN65h0qhb4iFWadShSU35pN.1>

Meeting ID: 829 5632 9374 Passcode: 616591

### **Committee Members Present:**

Raj Kathuria  
Hunter Pusey  
Sean Hough  
Zach Evans  
Gordon Kretser

### **Committee Members Absent:**

N/A

### **Guests:**

Alisha Mulkey  
Elizabeth Hoffman

### **Call to Order:**

The February 2025 Committee on Watershed Strategies meeting was called to order by Gordon Kretser, Chair, at 3:18 pm.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The November 2024 Committee on Watershed Strategies meeting minutes were approved by Raj Kathuria, second by Sean Hough.

### **Meeting Minutes:**

The Committee began discussing the recommendations from the Food System Resilience Council to analyze barriers to entry and regulatory challenges for new and beginning farmers as it pertains to watershed strategies and conservation. Often, the perspective and comprehension of conservation for new and beginning farmers is shaped on which partner office they start with first (FSA, Farm Credit, MARBIDCO, Soil Conservation, etc.). When new and beginning folks are getting into the industry, they don't always have the opportunity to work with a third party (bank, realtor, etc.) that understands agriculture. The development of an "Ag



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Service Providers 101" presentation or flow chart would be a beneficial resource to understand the interconnections and roles of each entity, and where a farmer can go for assistance.

### **Meeting Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Sean Hough, second by Raj Kathuria.