



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

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Maryland Agricultural Commission

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Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes January 9, 2019

Present:

Ag Education- Martha Clark
Agribusiness- Tom Fisher
Agritourism- Taylor Huffman
At Large Ag Service- David Roles
Consumer- Carroll Shry Jr.
Dairy I- Tim Bishton
Dairy II- David Pyle
Farm Bureau- Jonathan Quinn

Food Processing- Cheryl DeBerry
Forestry- Elizabeth Hill
Livestock- Scott Barao
Nursery II- Ray Greenstreet
Poultry I- Michael Levengood
Poultry II- Michelle Protani- Chesnik
Viticulture- Matthew Corey Spies

Absent:

Aquaculture- Talmage Petty
At Large Ag Service- Vanessa Finney
Direct Farm Market- Keith Ohlinger
Equine- William Reightler Jr.
Field Crops- Donald Maring

Horticulture- Cole Mangum
Tobacco- Charles Cox
Turf- Tom Warpinski
University- Dr. Craig Beyrouthy
Veterinary- Dr. John Brooks

MDA Staff:

Rich Colburn
Steve Connelly
Kevin Conroy
Julie Oberg

Jason Schellhardt
Hans Schmidt
Cassie Shirk
Eric Von Paris

Speakers/Guest:

None

Review of November Minutes:

Minutes were reviewed by the Ag Commission and were approved first by Taylor Huffman and seconded by Michael Levengood with the amendment of changing the 4 saw mills to 3 saw mills all those in favor said I and there were no oppositions.

Commodity Reports:

Agribusiness- Tom Fisher: As we enter 2019, the economic situation with many farmers is very challenging. Ag dealers are saying that there are many credit issues with growers as we move in the New Year. As 2018 closed out, many crop yields were marginal, soybean acres were late being harvested, and many commodity prices were lower than previous years. Vegetable growers suffered significant damage due to weather and many acres were not harvested. Dealers are saying prepayments are down and some farmers are unable to pay off this year's expenses. I was told last week that an Ag credit individual has 240 active accounts and 109 were not going to be able to pay-out for 2018. I have mentioned the lawsuits regarding Roundup/Glyphosate in several of my recent

reports, well, this weekend I saw a TV ad with numbers to call if a person had been a Roundup user and was concerned about whether Roundup caused cancer. The ad mentioned non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

Ag Education- Martha Clark: Applications for new executive director were due Monday but will be reviewed the first of February so they may accept some late. We are celebrating 30 years of MAEF this year and there will be an event celebration in May or June. Also we will be celebrating the 1 millionth mobile science lab student in May. There was a new FFA chapter chartered in Howard County that is already up and running. Sadly we will be losing George Mayo at the end of the year but one positive note is that there was a generous donation from the Edward Charitable Foundation.

At Large Ag Services- David Roles: Despite the rain and the scheduling challenges it caused, 2018 was a successful and profitable year. The November snowfall presented its own set of challenges however; we had a good plan in place and were able to provide our customers the service they expected. Personnel – This is the time of year we start planning for spring. The biggest piece of the puzzle is having enough people to get the work done in a timely manner. In previous years we used job fairs, craigslist and social media to recruit. Our best results come from referrals from our existing employees. This is a great time of year to attend seminars to renew certifications, brush up on skills and learn about what's new in the industry. A comprehensive list of seminars can be found on the MDA website under plants and pests.

<https://mda.maryland.gov/plantspests/Documents/Recert%20Courses%20Schedule%20by%20Category.pdf>. On December 8th residence of Howard and neighboring counties as well as from states as far as Colorado, Ohio and Pennsylvania gathered to watch The Great Lisbon Farmers Feed the Hungry Christmas Parade. The event meets or exceeded its fundraising goal of \$15,000 and collected over 3,400 pounds of canned, nonperishable food that was donated to the Howard County Food Bank and Carroll County Food Sunday. Kasur, Joan M., "Christmas Parade draws huge crowd." The Delmarva Farmer, December 21, 2018
<https://americanfarmpublications.com/christmas-parade-draws-huge-crowd/>

Ag-Tourism- Taylor Huffman: There is not much of an update in the Agritourism world. Therefore, I wanted to touch base on something that does often coordinate with Agritourism and that is the obstacles that Young Farmers face. As we all know, Agritourism businesses offer a unique and sometimes, unconventional approach to farming. These businesses provide an income for farmers to help satisfy debts that would otherwise be difficult with traditional crop farming. I wanted to share a recent article I found from the Huffington Post. It is an interview of a young 4th generation farm family with three small children who chose to move onto the family's hobby farm to pursue farming full time. They mention that had the farm not been in the family, they would likely have chosen other career paths. It is rare for farmer's children and people without farm experience to want to return to the farm to work when there are other career paths with much higher salaries to offer. Facing high farmland and a capital-intensive industry, farmers under the age of 40 are at a unique disadvantage in becoming the next generation of landowners. The article also quotes: "Since 1978, the share of principal farm operators who are 65 and older has grown while share of Young farmers has declined." According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Census of Agriculture. One way that young farmers are finding a way to get started in farming or even take over a family farm is through Agritourism. "Several types of agriculture-related businesses are growing, however, wineries, craft breweries and distilleries are examples of that trend, while younger industries such as agritourism are expected to expand, according to a study at Salisbury University. The good news is President Trumps signing of the new farm bill will increase funding for farmland financing and training for young farmers! Hopefully we will see the trends change and more Young Farmers will have the resources and opportunities to establish a farm lifestyle!

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/young-farmers-agriculture_us_5c128387e4b00daec235d5cc

Consumer -Carroll Shry: Sustainable Agriculture resource offers an overview of many key concepts in sustain. Differing alternative farming concepts and systems such as natural farming, organic agriculture, perm culture, biodynamic, crop rotation, low-input systems and hydroponics. Soil and water management techniques, Environmental Wildlife control, integrated pest management (IPM), cultural control, pruning, pest traps, chemical sprays, biological control, companion planting and weed identification in the pest, disease and weed control, world healthy food production. What is the Maryland Ag Commission's position on the production of Hemp in

Maryland? Our secretary of agriculture said at the Farm Bureau Convention said that Industrial Hemp research is being initiated in our state. Our state was one of the foundation states that approval medical marijuana. Is there a foreseeable market for this crop in Maryland? Maryland Ag was featured in the December Issue of Southwest Airlines promoting our Famous Maryland Crab Cakes (made in MD) with delivery anywhere in the world. Also I believe we are missing a golden opportunity by not having the MD Ag Commission not attending the MANTS Show in Baltimore to show our support of the Maryland Horticultural Industry! Do you hear what I hear? Do you hear the slow but steady disintegration of American agriculture? Can you hear the tears of farm families forced into bankruptcy as they say goodbye to their farms and dreams? Crippled by a deadly combination of low prices for commodities and ever-increasing input costs across the board, they are being squeezed out. Do you see what I see? The overflowing bins of soybeans that are waiting in vain for Chinese buyers who have forsaken U.S. markets in retaliation for Trump's trade war. China has placed a 25 percent tariff on American soybeans, corn, wheat, pork, beef, apples and cotton, and other agricultural markets, like Ukraine and Brazil, are rubbing their hands in glee! Nature abhors a vacuum, and that is what these countries are seeing with our trade war. China typically buys 33 million metric tons of U.S. beans a year, half of our production ... now it looks like that number will be close to zero. Four years ago, beans were selling at \$15 a bushel ... now they are down to \$9 a bushel or less. Trump's proposed soybean mitigation payments will be \$1.65 per bushel, although the markets have decreased by \$2 per bushel since May. A bushel of corn was going for more than \$8 in 2012 and is now selling for less than \$4 a bushel. In Kansas, wheat prices topped \$5.40 per bushel. But there were no sounds of joy as production costs there averaged \$5.70 a bushel. You do the math! The global markets that American farmers have carefully cultivated over decades have been destroyed in one fell swoop with the self-inflicted wound of Trump's trade war. Now with Trump's government shutdown, absolutely NO payments will be going to farms until the government opens again. Trump just claimed that it may last for months or even years! Do you see what I see? The empty barns, the abandoned fields and the growing collection of used agricultural equipment for sale are only the beginning. Just in Wisconsin alone, 500 dairy farms were lost in 2017. Lots of sad cows. Farmers support the many businesses in their communities, including equipment dealers, trucks and trains that carry commodities, feed and seed dealers and their taxes help provide for local services. Like a cascading row of dominoes, these



businesses will soon feel an economic pinch if not a punch. The largest farms, or rather agri-biz companies, are surviving, but the small family farms are the ones in peril. According to the USDA, 51 percent of the total value of American farm production in 2015 was generated by large farms with at least \$1 million in sales a year. The USDA predicts that net farm income in 2018 will be the lowest since 2006. Note that since 2013, it has dropped 35 percent. It's easy to say "go big or go home," but land prices are astronomical and renting land is not much cheaper. In Colorado this year, a farm sold for \$29,583 per acre, and in Iowa, recent sales have averaged from \$9,300 to \$10,500 per acre. In Kansas, the prices were lower, from \$1,400 to \$2,625 an acre, but you get the picture. Why care? Well, the U.S. has lost more than 40 million acres of farmland since 1997. Our "amber waves of grain" are disappearing. Most of a farmer's equity is in the land, a fact that favors the mega-farms. A banker in Iowa writes, "The time to get out of production agriculture is when they still have some equity left. As a banker, I swing axes, and I swing early. If you get out now, you still have your dignity." Sage advice. Global change is a real threat to farmers — not just in America, but

worldwide. Did you hear that New Mexico is in its 16th year of drought? New research shows that the crackling of wildfires that we hear and the orange flames we see lighting up the night sky are creating pollution that can damage crops hundreds of miles from the blazes. Rising temperatures, more extreme weather and unpredictable rainfall are all combining to make agriculture an even more risky business that it already is. Few of us hear of the epidemic of suicide that is sweeping our nation unless one is personally affected. There is growing murmur about military veterans' suicides, but barely a whisper about the growing number of farmers who are taking their own lives. Some statistics suggest that farmers are three times more likely to kill themselves than the general public, a tragic result of the increasing hopelessness and heartache felt by those tillers of the land. Our country needs to do everything it can to keep those who want to grow our food successful. We need government policies that help, not hinder, our hardworking farmers. But Trump's trade war looks to become the last straw for many farm families. What is tragic for them now will inevitably reverberate throughout our country for many years and in ways that we cannot begin to imagine. Do you hear what I hear?

Dairy I- Tim Bishton: Under the new farm bill, the MPP or margin protection program includes much needed improvements. The MPP was introduced in 2014 and was significantly different previous safety provisions. It unfortunately was passed at the beginning of the long streak of low milk prices and could not have come at a worse time when the industry needed it the most. The new program, Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) is much different in the level of margin support and premium costs. This new program will provide many more safety net options for producers of various sizes. Wisconsin lost a total of 691 dairy farms in 2018. The rate of loss this year was more than double the rate of loss over 10 years. However, cow numbers are up 12,000 cows from 10 years ago reflecting an average of 60% increase in herd size. Unfortunately, Maryland has lost numerous farms this year and over the past 4 years.

Dairy II- David Pyle: Ending the year 2018 with record rain fall has put many farmers under challenges not seen before. Thanks to the flexibility of MDA with nutrient management guide lines most if not enough manure has been hauled to get storage free up till spring. Because of the wet growing year forages are not of high quality so it will be a struggle to get high milk production through the rest of this year. Milk supply on the east coast has gotten tight so there is milk being trucked in from other parts of the country where supply is plentiful. Finishing 2018 with a \$14.69 class 3 milk price. Reports are showing at least another 6 months of below breakeven prices. There 2 new risk management tools brought to us this year. DRP coming through AFBF and the DMC through the new farm bill passing. DRP setup a lot like crop insurance. A dairyman can take a position on milk for a premium which will be subsidized 40% by USDA. MPP Margin Protection Plan or now DMC Dairy margin coverage. With the new farm bill comes an updated protection plan. 3 main parts I want to cover on this plan. The first is the capability to protect a \$1.50 margin increase from \$8 to \$9.50 while keeping the premium affordable for 5m lbs. If so choose signing up for 5 yrs will get you an additional \$.05/cwt discount on the premium. Lastly, Premiums paid for MPP for addition coverage during the last version can be reimburse minus the payments. Unfortunate with the Gov shut down the DRP is unavailable and it will take USDA some time to get organized and implement the DMC. MDA board is looking for good people to join their board of directors. So if anybody knows somebody that would be interested please make the connection. A few members are coming off the board and it would be good to get some more people involved. I see and hear more about suicide rates in our farming communities. The stress levels as we know are at a very high level so please keep this in your minds as we all may need to lend an ear or help a friend/neighbor get through this. 1 suicide is too many. Maryland Dairy industry association is looking for some additional board members and there is a Maryland Dairy Convention held in Frederick on February 22nd.

Farm Bureau- Jonathan Quinn: December 2nd- 4th the annual state Convention was held in ocean city. Our main business was national and state policy. National policy voted to pose local governments and share offices from putting animal groups in charge of inspection and enforcements of livestock and animal welfare cases. Under general aviation farm bureau has been informed about discussions about possibly removing congressional oversights of federal aviation. So this would cause small general airports to lose federal funding and result in crop dusters and a lot of cover crops that are supported by air to decrease. Small local airports support a lot of the local businesses. On state wide some of the main points are that we voted to amend the state code to remove the loop hole that developers use to keep from paying the Ag transfer tax when transferring development or taking land out of Ag use designation. Air quality imposed creation of state harm and tax/fee as well as imposed legislation effort would require the installation of air quality monitoring devices. In dairy industry urge MD public schools to offer minimum of 2% white milk and 1% flavored milk in food option program. Nutrient management policy was approved as for nutrient management plans to be more flexible to allow use of new technologies. Farmers use a lot of new technology such as green seeker to put on nitrogen of fields. Asking the university to fill vacant weed specialist positions particularly to focus on herbicide trials and weed management. There have also been many deer management policies passed. Summer study came back to put the weed palmer Amaranth on the obnoxious weed list. Came down to what it is going to cost to control this a year. For the first year predicted to be 377,500 to control it the first year and 454,000 years after. Discussing if it should be put on weed concern list. Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis on January 30th.

Food Processing- Cheryl DeBerry: With the new Farm Bill legalizing industrial hemp production, I'm seeing more interest among potential growers. I believe MDA needs to help facilitate processing of hemp products, to help those growers have markets for their products. Distillers and brewers are in need of additional small grains for their products – with the wet 2018 year, a lot of their regular growers didn't get those grains planted or harvested. Even if they had, the processors need additional grains. MDA and UME should be encouraging

growers to expand into this sector – by researching varieties that grow well here and helping farmers access those markets. I encourage everyone to check out the Pennsylvania Dairy Investment Program, established under Act 42 of 2018 for research and development organic transition, value-added processing, and marketing grants in support of Pennsylvania's Dairy Industry. Maybe MDA could work with MARBIDCO, MD Commerce, etc. to come up with a way to help.

Forestry- Elizabeth Hill: Everyone is hoping for a drier new year, as wet seems to be the only word used to describe 2018. Loggers and foresters are still scrambling looking for higher ground to stay productive. The last week December is typically a shutdown period for a lot of mills, but this year they opted for either longer shutdowns due to lack of logs, or to receive logs during vacation hoping to build inventory. Chip yards are also struggling to keep wood yards full. I would first like to announce my new position, as of December 1st I am the new Executive Director for Maryland Forests Association. I am excited for the opportunity to be a voice for forestry in Maryland, and I am looking forward to branching out and learning more about the issues across the state, as most of my expertise revolves around the shore. Going into this legislative session one issue concerning forestry weighs on my mind more heavily than any other, and that is finding a way to somehow maintain wood energy for the Eastern Correctional Institution near Princess Anne. In my mind it is essential for retaining a viable forest products industry on the shore. The ECI wood fired system is operated by Maryland Environmental Service and has been in operation since 1987 and has served as market for 1/3 of the chip production on the shore. The proposed natural gas line threatens that existing market. While the industry isn't objecting to the line in its entirety, we are in opposition of the conversion of ECI to a gas facility to be fed from this new line. We feel that due diligence has not been done to see what impacts this could have to the existing industry and the local economy. We feel that killing off existing industry with for a promise of industry yet to come could just be a "pipe dream". I have questions- Why sacrifice jobs in an already poverty-stricken area? Landowners benefit financially, and loggers and haulers keep the money local when chips are used. Who benefits from the gas line? Why make the switch to a fossil fuel when the state has already struggled to meet their green energy goals? Under Maryland's RPS (Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard) wood is considered a Tier 1 energy right along with solar and wind. I am not opposed to either of these choices per say, but they do seem to be more controversial than woody biomass. I've never heard a complaint about the prison being fueled by chips. How will timberland be managed without this market? Approximately 1,000 acres a year benefit from the management practices this market allows. Thinning the forests allows for faster growth which increases value to landowners by providing better future products for sawmills. Without markets these lands could be more prone to development, which is contrary to states No Net Loss of Forest Policy. How does the gas line affect the bay? The Sustainable Forestry Act of 2009 holds forestland to be the most beneficial land use for protecting water quality, due to their ability to capture, filter, and retain water. Anyone who wants healthier Chesapeake Bay would surely want a healthy industry to sustainably manage the forests in Maryland. The Act also specifically calls for promoting renewable energy from woody biomass. Why switch to a natural gas that has prices that fluctuate dramatically when wood prices have been steady and predictable for the facility since its inception? There is a surplus of wood of wood on the Eastern Shore. Annual growth outpaces removal at a rate of more than 2:1. I would like to see the Ag Community stand behind the timber industry on this issue. There aren't many farms that I know of that don't have a piece woodland adjoining it. Timber is an investment that many farmers depend on. In my own personal experience handled sales that have helped finance a piece of equipment, send a child to college, help a loved one through an illness, purchase additional land or shares, and fund retirement. This value cannot be realized if there aren't markets.

Livestock- Scott Barao: The single greatest issue the livestock industry is facing right now is with regard to quality hay and in some extent quantity of hay. With over 72 inches of rain 2018 hay production was a disaster even those that got stuff made didn't make it at the quality that it needs to be. It is almost impossible to find quality hay on the market and when you find it outside of Maryland and the region it is extremely expensive to bring it in transportation wise and just straight up the cost of the hay. Nice that we have had a mild winter so far and hope for an early spring to get grazing out earlier. The feeder calf market and the lamb market have been strong which has helped from an income standpoint but we are still spending a lot of money on feed that just hasn't been produced on the farm. Personally production in Frederick down 40% yield of hay. Going forward the three greatest concerns that need to be raised with regard to the livestock industry in the state are first the availability of livestock markets. Lost West Minister livestock so down to 3 viable livestock markets in the state and 2 in Garret County and one in Hagerstown. Have cattle, sheep, lamb going to Virginia markets and

Pennsylvania markets. Push towards retained ownership and direct marketing products but very small minorities of producers are capable of doing that. Finishing animals to the point of harvest to be sold as retail product. This brings up the second issues which are the availability of livestock harvest and post harvest processing plants. We have lost several plants and continue to lose small plants and that is not going to change. There is an Amish owned plant to be opening in Southern Maryland to help the burden of Southern Maryland producers. The questions still remains about post harvest processing. It is very easy to get animals harvested but it is very difficult to get them processed into retail cuts or value added cuts from the retail level that are legally marketable to the consumer. This means it must be USDA inspected and there are fewer plants doing inspections and labeling. The third issue is the coyote issue in Central and Western Maryland. There has been an explosion in the coyote population. There is tension between the control of the coyote population and the deer population. Hope to get someone in from DNR to hear how this can be handled.

Nursery II- Ray Greenstreet: MANTS is going on this week starting today at 9 o'clock. It is one of the best shows in MD. Christmas trees were really tough this year and were extremely hard to get with a result of the recession. This will most likely occur for the next 4 years. It is 12 months of trying to get trees and finding where you are going to get them. It cost about 7 to 10 thousand dollars to bring a truck across the country now. Poinsettias it was an ok year the extra week of sales however did not help as expected. The customers are there but the rain has impacted the industry greatly even residential landscaping they can't get in the fields to harvest or plant. If the weather can change it should be a decent spring. Things you don't think are affected by the rain such as dogwood was almost impossible to get this year because farmers couldn't get out harvest it. Ball seed wants to map the genome of all plants and are under construction with a new lab. The idea is too genetically engineer plants to help get rid of viruses. Getting ready for spring and get landscapers to give orders to get all the products secure. The market is tight and a lot of growers are behind financially from the wet year and labor is also difficult to find. A couple good days of spring would do a lot for the nursery industry. Some affects with Christmas trees is that they are being cut as early as September. There were a lot of trees that were not being properly taken care of and being kept. Pumpkins were also greatly impacted by all the rain this year. Pumpkins are already hard to grow because of the soil conditions and disease and the rain made it worse. Pumpkins were rotting so fast and the smaller the pumpkin the faster the rot.

Poultry I- Mike Levengood: Bill Satterfield retired from DPI after 32 years. A retirement reception was held on December 12 at the University of Delaware Carvel Center in Georgetown, De. The new Executive Director of DPI is Holly Porter, more info go to <https://www.dpichicken.org> Poultry Farm Management for New & Existing Growers The University of Maryland Extension has created a one-day workshop for new and existing poultry farmers on Delmarva focusing on poultry farm management. The topics that will be addressed include farm management, site management and maintenance, best management practices, mortality, manure handling, litter management, windbreaks/vegetative environmental buffers, financial recordkeeping, concentrated animal feeding operation regulations, nutrient management, comprehensive nutrient management plans, inspections and emergency preparedness. All the information will be shared in a memory stick to take back to the farm for future reference. A certificate of completion will be awarded to each participant. This took place in December and more will be scheduled in the future. DPI holds useful Lunch & Learn sessions (last one was on changes in tax codes) for farmers and will hold more of these in 2019. Update on avian disease testing in Wicomico County, Maryland On Dec. 13, in coordination with state, federal and industry partners, DPI informed grower members and the news media about a poultry farm in Wicomico County, Maryland that had experienced higher than normal mortality. Samples from the farm were submitted to the Maryland Department of Agriculture laboratory for a complete disease screening, which always includes testing for avian influenza. The flock was diagnosed with a common bacterial disease, treated, and the mortality returned to normal as expected. However, the influenza screening test was inconclusive. Out of an abundance of caution, the decision was made to depopulate the birds on this farm. There has been increased testing and surveillance to make sure that there are no other cases of illness in poultry flocks in the area. ANNAPOLIS, MD (Dec. 27, 2018) – Increased surveillance and further testing for avian influenza have confirmed no signs of the disease following inconclusive screening results from a Wicomico County commercial poultry flock during the week of December 10. Additional testing from the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory confirmed negative test results for the suspect flock and screening of nearby farms were also all negative. Event is over, great work by all involved. Great example of the results that can be achieved by preplanning and working together. Deep-dive training on Rotem controllers University of Maryland Extension, along with the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension and Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., will provide training on using Rotem controllers, useful whether you are a new grower or an existing grower. The workshops

will take place Jan. 23 Workshops to update nutrient management plans The Maryland Department of Agriculture and University of Maryland Extension will offer a series of workshops for certified farmers who need to update their nutrient management plans. Specialists will be available at locations across Maryland to assist farmers with updating their nutrient management plans using the nutrient management planning software, NuMan Pro 5.0. Sessions will be informal and participants will work at their own pace. An Eastern Shore training session will be held January 29 Poultry markets The US poultry market is in for a rough ride as we head into 2019. This downturn is being driven by oversupply, there are 7 new plants planned to come on line. Six of these plants will be operational in 2019 and the one scheduled for 2020 has been put on hold. The forecast volume these 6 plants will add in 2019 per week is 1.5 million pounds of live weight and an additional 1.8 million pounds in 2020. Another way to look at this if nothing changes we currently consume 94 pounds of chicken per year per person, to maintain profitability, we would have to all consume another 6 pounds per year per person. Most likely the only way to make this happen is lower price to clear all the meat, thus poor margins and things will have to change to stay in business. High cost areas generally will take the hit first; this is something we need to be aware of as we head into MD session.

Poultry II- Michelle Protani-Chesnik: The last part of November and the month of December have been a time of discontent for poultry and crop folks alike. The PMT Phosphorus Management Tool has taken a center stage. DPI Delmarva Poultry Industry set a letter requesting a delay to evaluate the status of the PMT before transitioning to the next planned implementation phase. It was carried by the PMT Advisory Committee representative Virgil Shockley to the meeting on November 20 2018. Letter attached there were only enough members available to have a quorum and with that a vote passed to allow an evaluation of the 2019 crop year. It is contentious as to whether this was for 2019 or 2020. The facts are our farmers who grow crops in at least the three lower counties are experiencing a devastating loss this year, the worst in at least two decades. On the poultry side we still do not have a viable alternative use up and running to process excess poultry litter. Last but not least, as Dr Stinhalber stated at the meeting this was implemented based on theoretical science later corrected to sound theoretical science. I attended this meeting and was astounded to hear that from a scientist. She also commented that this was what the higher ups wanted and it would have cost too much and taken three to five years to do a study. It shows just how much some people care about the lives of the poultry and crop farmers they are impacting. Let alone Ag is the biggest economic driver in the state. Don't forget Dr. Memo Diriker's comments to the Ag Commission in reference to Poultry Agriculture and the economic impact study performed in 2013 at the request of the Administration. Controversy has continued to fly in the face of these see attachments. <https://baysideoc.com/farmers-seeking-pmt-rollout-delay/> Poultry farmers and companies are still facing tough times; sadly it is the farmers who are going to suffer in the long haul of this. Time between flocks for most companies is 30 days or more. We have been fortunate with my integrator and times have gotten down to approximately 3 weeks for the time being. Companies are virtually destroying the property values / killing retirement nest eggs of existing farms. One integrator will not give a contract to a person purchasing your farm no matter age of farm and fact above average. At least two integrators will not give a contract to someone purchasing your farm even if the farm is above average, unless you upgrade to all the features of a current new house. For a 4 house farm I have heard quotes of over a half million dollars. Poultry farms that are new are in a dilemma of not receiving enough flocks a year to cash flow properly. Many new farms have loans made by out of town lenders and are financed for over 100 percent of the operation. What is even scarier many of these have been done as ARMS/ Balloons. Last but not least by any means I would like to share an article on Suicide and Maryland's farmers and give a heartfelt thanks to Keith Ohlinger from our Ag Commission for his part in this. This is a subject we all need to stay aware of everyday.

https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/economy_and_business/agriculture/the-hidden-loss-maryland-farmers-confront-rising-suicide-rates/article_8bcfba91-638e-581e-8077-5ea49d978222.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=user-share&fbclid=IwAR2ivIa2dZYBLyCGFTL_XHtWR6N5-R6I3c-qrG6wX4HaMF2zqgqxYjw3qps

Turf- Tom Warpinski: Continued mild weather is allowing turf farms to harvest sod. Sales are relatively strong but supply is really getting tight. Some farms in Maryland and neighboring states have elected to limit sales or close completely to save inventory for the busy spring rush in April-May. There is a lot of uncertainty among some growers as to the severity of the damage from disease pressure from this past growing season. Time will tell when the spring green up begins to see if and how well the grass recovers. It has been extremely difficult to stay within Nutrient management guidelines this past year. Excessive moisture, causing excessive growth and early

depletion of nutrients, has thrown fertility timing for a loop. An extreme wet field, not allowing growers to traverse fields to apply fertilizer, has also added to the headaches. Some growers resorted to aerial fertilizer applications. The Maryland Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, held this past December 11th, was a huge success. Attendees experienced a great trade show with many educational seminars put together by the Maryland Turfgrass Council. Turfgrass Producers International welcomes you to attend their 2019 International Education Conference in Charlotte, NC Feb. 18-20. Many very informative educational sessions are planned.

Viticulture – Corey Spies: 2018 was wettest year on record and the wine industry suffered because of the excess moisture. Many wineries had to discard much of their fruit and sometimes juice that was already processed turned out to not be viable for wine making. Talking with one grower the comment was made that it's the first year that could be labeled a complete wash. On the bright side new hope comes with the new year. In 2019 grapes will be a premium product with most wineries waiting for harvest to fill some bottles for customers looking for wine that has been out of stock for a few months. Maryland Grape & Wine Industry Annual Conference is February 1-2.

General/Planning Session:

- Started by reviewing the Ag Commission Overview and what the role of the Ag Commission is.
- Vision and Mission: Formulate and make proposals for the advancement of Maryland agriculture by serving as an advisory body to the Secretary on matters pertaining to agriculture.
- Primary Function: The Maryland Agricultural Commission is appointed by the Governor of Maryland and serves as an advisory body to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. The Commission consists of 30 members representing various commodities across Maryland, and includes both a consumer and a University of Maryland (ex officio) representative. The Commission currently pursues the following priorities and activities.
- Encouraging the agricultural community to be more pro-active on issues affecting agriculture and rural life.
- Evaluating farm/agriculture industry labor and regulations.
- Increasing public awareness of food safety.
- Supporting the department's efforts to promote agriculture.
- There is a Maryland Agricultural Commission in the Department. It shall formulate and make proposals for the advancement of Maryland agriculture by serving as an advisory body to the Secretary on matters pertaining to agriculture.
- Act as the voice of the bodies that each member represents, Dairy, Poultry, Horticulture, etc.
- Hemp would be under Horticulture, wanting to create an additional spot on the board just for Hemp representative
- Board asked if these meetings could be a Webinar or done by conference call
- There needs to be a balance between sides
- The appointment office has been contacted about vacant positions on the board
- The board will vote next meeting on a New Chair and Vice Chair

Topics/ Speakers:

- The issue of the coyotes, such as a speaker from DNR
- The right to farm/ nescience farming, University of Maryland Law Clinic speaker Paul Goeringer or Sarah Everhart , the public health issues and concerns with air quality
- Getting MDA staff to come in to go through list of what they are working on example: Steve 3 things in mind
- Issues with respect to weeds and weed control around the state
- Under Sustainable Forestry Act 2009, section that Agriculture Preservation boards meeting annually with the Forestry boards at a county level and it is not happening. (write a letter to Joe stating this is supposed to be happening and asking why it is not happening)
- Motion to have the Ag Preservation Boards meet annually with the Forestry Boards as stated in law 1st by Tim Bishton 2nd by Cheryl DeBerry
- Nutrient Management University of Maryland Nutrient extension specialist Brooks Clayville

Meeting adjourned at 12:00

Respectfully Submitted by Jessica O'Sullivan.