



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Joseph Bartenfelder, Secretary
Julianne A. Oberg, Deputy Secretary

Maryland Agricultural Commission

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

410.841.5882 Baltimore/Washington
410.841.5914 Fax
800.492.5590 Toll Free

Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes June 10, 2020

Present:

Ag Education: Martha Clark
Agribusiness: Thomas Mullineaux
Agritourism: Kelly Dudeck
At Large Ag Service: Matthew Levi Sellers
At Large Ag Service: Frank Allnut
Direct Farm Market: Amy Crone
Equine: Michael Pons
Horticulture: Keith Ohlinger

Livestock: Sean Hough
Nursery I: James Raley
Poultry I: Michael Levengood
Poultry II: Michelle Protani-Chesnik
State Grange: Clifford Newsome Jr.
Veterinary: Dr. John Brooks

Absent:

Aquaculture: Talmage Petty
Consumer: Carroll Shry Jr.
Dairy II: David Pyle
Farm Bureau: Jonathan Quinn
Field Crops: Donald Maring
Forestry: Elizabeth Hill

Food Processing: Cheryl DeBerry
Nursery II: Ray Greenstreet
Organic Farming: Matthew Nielsen
Turf: Tom Warpinski
University: Dr. Craig Beyroudy
Viticulture: Matthew Corey Spies

MDA Staff:

Hans Schmidt
Steve Connelly
Julie Oberg
Cassie Shirk
Kevin Conroy
Joe Bartenfelder
Rich Colburn
Jason Schellhardt

Guest/Speakers:

Steve McHenry MARBIDCO
Sean Clougherty

Approval of Minutes:

May minutes were approved 1st by Michelle Protani- Chesnik and 2nd by Tom Mullineaux.

Commodity Reports:

Martha Clark- Ag Education:

- As you may know this has been a year of extreme challenges for all of education. From Kindergarten to College Graduation every student has had their year turned upside down. And the future doesn't look to be much better. Knowing when and how the next year will begin is going to be dramatically different in many of the counties. Some will not make their buildings and facilities available until 2021. So online learning is going to be critical. I must say that when MAEF started its online program at Goucher College and decided not to do a summer workshop may have been an omen of things to come.
- **Communications:** As of today, our social media reach since the closing of Maryland schools has exceeded 350,000 individuals. We will continue to make daily posts to engage students, parents, and teachers in ag education content and resources. We are currently in the process of branding and indexing all content and lessons that have been posted to the Expedition Science website to prepare them for the migration to MAEF's own website and landing page. To assist with this, we have enlisted the help of intern Chase Ferguson, who has both experience in agricultural curriculum development, social media management, and communications.
- Plans for the upcoming month include collaborating on several grant projects, releasing a new fundraising campaign, and developing new content for all social media platforms and the MAEF website. The shutdown of schools has been a challenge, but we are finding creative ways to engage and communicate with our audiences to continue to bring them meaningful ag education experiences and resources.
- **Elementary Education:** In the world of Elementary Education at MAEF, we have undergone some major changes. While neither our mobile labs nor our showcases are running at this time, we are sharing MAEF's online resources (both existing and new ones from Amie) with our school system contacts so they can provide them to their teachers. We are also connecting with other states who have mobile science lab programs to share resources and ideas for program re-entry in the coming school year. Additionally, some of our wonderful lab teachers have agreed to help us with some short-term projects over the next few weeks, including updating curriculum and student resources for the labs.
- **Hybrid Workshop:** Our spring hybrid course became a fully online course, which set in motion many adjustments to assignments and the Canvas platform. Most notably, the two in-person sessions became pre-recorded workshop sessions with which teachers could participate using materials shipped to them in the mail. Our course wrapped up on Sunday, May 17th and was a success! Many enrolled teachers expressed their excitement about ag education throughout course discussions and projects. Many were unfamiliar with agriculture as a content-area prior to the course and were thrilled to work with all the wonderful resources available to them for lesson planning. One teacher remarked, "I was able to take some of the things we learned in this course and apply it right away to my classroom - even during a pandemic!"
- **Mobile Labs and Showcase:** Diana has been working with Dale to haul the labs to Jeff Blomquist at Ideal Services. We have begun annual mobile lab maintenance to prepare for next school year. Jeff has also made repairs to the Showcase, so it is ready to go when public events are able to have us.
- **Havre de Grace Office:** Calls for the office are being forwarded to Diana. She is also receiving the mail for the office to disseminate to the staff, processing bank deposits, as well as send the invoices and other financial documents for Bonnie to record and prepare for Susanne. She has been collecting all the wonderful calendar contests entries so that we can soon make our selections to prepare the calendar for next year.

- We continue to stay in contact with the schools that were booked this Spring to reschedule a mobile lab for next school year. We are also contacting the fairs and festivals as the uncertainty continues whether any of these events can happen this summer into fall. Diana has sent confirmations to the upcoming events along with event forms if they would like to reschedule for next year. We are keeping in touch with each other as decisions are made.
- Because of our wonderful staff working together, we have made this unprecedented situation work seamlessly and have not missed a step.
- **Middle School Education- MS Hybrid Workshop**: Middle school online course continues in development, with emphasis on assignments and evaluation. Work is beginning on DPI grant lesson packet with collaboration among Peggy, Amie, and Shannon. Planning now for Farm-Based Educators (FBE) training with Live Local, Maryland Coastal Bays, part of a newly funded program on the Eastern Shore. Peggy has continued online meetings for FBE every Friday and Wednesday, co-hosted by Shelburne Farms in Vermont. Consultations with MD FBE and classroom teachers continues on how to modify and adjust ag and natural resources education for summer and fall online and in-person (socially distanced) classes. Various PGC committee work continues with Higher Education and Careers.
- **Grants and Scholarships**: To date, all recipients of the Urban Garden Grant have been informed that they will be receiving a check at the beginning of next school year. After consulting multiple teachers, all felt it was best to wait to distribute the checks until it was clear what was happening with the 2020/2021 school year.
- **High School & Post- Secondary Education**: The high school and post-secondary team has been hard at work in the community. They have collected and sent for review State FFA Degree applications, State Star Greenhand Award applications, National Chapter Award applications and worked with Advisors in updating State proficiency award applications and American Degree Award Applications for submission to National FFA.
- They have also been busy supporting the following organizations and activities:
- Virtually attended the: MD Ag Council, Anne Arundel Co. Ag. Commission, Prince George's Co. Environmental, Ag & Natural Resources Program Advisory Committee and attending weekly MAEF Staff zoom meetings.
- Conducted research how to update the MAEF Board of Directors Handbook.
- Written letters of Recommendations and completed job evaluations for recent College Graduates for Ag Ed jobs and have assisted LSS with contacting possible applicants for open teaching positions.
- Met virtually with Dr. Melissa Welsh regarding a joint educational project between MAEF and UMCP Ag. Ed. Majors, reviewed student capstone projects, placement for UMCP Ag ED internships.
- Participated on the virtual National Association Supervisors of Agricultural Education (NASAE) State Staff meetings focusing on virtual FFA events, conventions and issues State Associations are facing.
- Participated in the Maryland State Fair-U-Learn Farm planning meeting.
- Attended virtual MD 4-H State Leadership meeting regarding livestock exhibits and involvement in fairs and shows.
- **Maryland FFA**: The team has virtually attended weekly State Officer Team meetings and are assisting in the planning and implementation of the virtual 92nd MD FFA State Convention June 23-26, 2020.
- They have attended virtually the MD FFA Foundation Board of Directors meeting, MD FFA Constitution and By-Laws committee meeting, and supported the MD FFA State Officer Nominating Committee & candidate interviews.

- They have been attending bi-weekly MSDE CTE staff meetings, Career & Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Joint training planning meetings, MSDE-EANR Program curriculum review meeting, MSDE bi-weekly meeting of the Maryland Career & Technology Education (CTE) Directors, and MSDE Division of Career & College Readiness team meetings. Read and rated Perkins Reserve fund grants for local school systems.
- They continue to adapt to the current situation to bring their expertise and resources to the FFA and post-secondary communities in Maryland.
- **The Last Word ...** The MAEF Team has been working hard to continue to promote the importance of agriculture in everyone's daily lives, supporting agricultural literacy and ag education in the midst of extremely challenging conditions. That team includes you. I have reached out to so many of you directors that I can't begin to name you all for fear of leaving someone out! Thank you all.
- As we address the current situation internally with our PPP loan and our new line of credit in place and externally with our tremendously successful online activities and support for our ag teachers and newly graduated Ag in the Classroom teachers, we are keeping an eye on the future.
- The education landscape has shifted in a massive way. We have to shift our strategies for delivering programming to meet a new set of needs, and we're already under way: Updating and indexing online lesson plans so both parents and teachers can use them, developing new resources that meet these new needs while providing a new revenue stream for MAEF, adapting technology to program delivery and visiting with both new and old partners to leverage positive outcomes.
- All things considered, we're in good shape. Over at the Maryland Food Bank, our board member Amy Cawley has shared they're facing a huge challenge to change their delivery methods while facing unprecedented demand and reduced donations, volunteers and access to food. They need to raise \$12 million by June 30 to meet the current needs, address delivery systems and keep them and the network of local food pantries open and supplied. More information on how you can help through financial or food donations, volunteering and more is in the link provided. And if all you can do is help spread the word, that is a big help as well.
- **Update from 4-H:** When the schools shut down so did 4-H programs. They have had to cancel and reorganize most of the programming. Fairs and contests have been canceled and while some sales were also cancelled there have been a few online sales.
- The 4-H program, like MAEF, has quickly responded with online & zoom meetings, Facebook activities and
- many recognitions for 4-Hers across the state. Many efforts to recognize senior members and volunteers.
- The Maryland 4-H Foundation is Accepting Scholarship Applications until June 15. So many things are up in the air, access to the U of MD campus has made actual operations very difficult but the Foundation Board is continuing its efforts to update its operations. A new Executive Directors position is hopefully going get emergency standing.
- Looks like people will still be living and learning with modern technology for the near future.

Tom Mullineaux- Agribusiness:

- After surveying agribusiness managers over the past 4 to 5 days, they generally have the same positive attitude. This includes equipment dealers, seed dealers, feed dealers and fertilizer dealers.
- Agriculture Business managers seem positive over all. Equipment dealers have had inquiries for fall harvest and planting equipment.

- Wrapping up a good corn and soy bean seed sales.
- We lost a herbicide and chemical program that controlled weeds and we are looking for a substitute to help farmers and agribusinesses.
- Some have sold new tillage equipment. No big-ticket sales (combines) some grain carts.
- Seed sales for corn and soybeans have wrapped up and are positive as compared to last year.
- Corn acreages are up and soy bean acreages are slightly down.
- Everyone is expecting a big wheat harvest with some frost damage.
- Retail sales are positive with some still selling baby chicks and the feed and supplies that go with them.
- All the companies are obeying the Covid guidelines with the mask and the social distancing rules.
- Spring and early summer sales in garden centers have been very strong. Veggies and flowers and necessary supplies have been leading the way.
- Sales has not been affected all that much except for more deliveries.
- Spring sales with veggie sales and flowers has been up.
- Concerns with bagged feed and supplies with the Fairs and show season being up in the air is serious.
- Seed in general has been lacking a little because there are a lot of 4H members whose projects are questionable with concern if fairs and shows are going to take place.
- There are 375 turkeys that are to be entered into the Frederick Fair.
- Concern with feed sales continues with race horses not coming up out of Florida and no racing going on.
- There is one dealer in Northern Baltimore County that sells \$100,000 worth of horse feed in a year so he is extremely impacted.
- Businesses are confident that the MDA will sort out the Dicamba mess and will give guidance and direction to agribusinesses and farmers.
- Major concern now is the Federal ban on Dicamba. This herbicide used hand in hand with soybeans that contain the gene are a very important tool for farmers to control RR Resistant mares tail, poke weed and Palmer in double crop soybeans.

Kelly Dudeck- Agritourism:

- Since entering Phase 1 of the reopen those Wineries that have outside areas have been slowly reopening.
- Making sure they have the proper pp to reopen.
- They may start to allow 25% of capacity into the wineries and tasting rooms across the state.
- We launched a value-added ag video about two weeks ago that is animated and SMADC did a value-added ag video as well.
- Some small businesses are not opening up yet because opening with 25% capacity it does not pay to open the doors.

Levi Sellers- Ag Services:

- May marks the beginning of the hemp planting season as some farmers are getting an early start planting their seeds and transplants in the fields, while others will wait till June or possibly even planting late in early July. A heavy frost and freeze in some regions of Maryland early May surprised some farmers, but no reports on damage to early planted hemp were reported.
- An increase of 32 new registered hemp producers in May have brought us to a total of 85 MD Hemp producers with 1,159 acres and 482,536 sq. ft. of greenhouse space. Even with

the increase in registered producers we are still under the approximate 1,400 acres of hemp produced in the 2019 season with only 69 registered producers. Collectively the mindset of producers still appears to be one of caution and the current events (COVID-19 and Protests/Riots) are maintaining the uncertainty of markets come harvest season.

- **Grants Open to Hemp:** MARBIDCO had extended a grant opportunity to farmers and included hemp farmers, we thank them for this opportunity. For specifics of this grant it was called the Pandemic Adjustment Equipment Grant and available funds can be used to re-tool your operation to help with the sustainability of your business from the effects of COVID-19 business impacts. The closing date for applications is June 10th and a link provided has more information...
- https://www.marbidco.org/_pages/programs_grants/grant_programs_pagf.htm
- **New Local Markets:** As of May 18th, the Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission (MMCC) made effective a new set of regulations to allow Maryland grown hemp to be sold in dispensaries and to open medical cannabis processing facilities to MD hemp farmers. This new opportunity has great potential for farmers as establishing markets and processing raw materials into more valuable extracts due to a shortage of processing facilities has been a major bottleneck for the industry.
- The relevant COMAR provisions are below:
- Processors: COMAR(B)
<http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/10/10.62.22.03.htm>
- Dispensaries:
COMAR(B) <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/10/10.62.28.03.htm>
- Additionally, Commission staff put together this FAQs document which provides guidance on the process for acquiring hemp:
- [https://mmcc.maryland.gov/Documents/2020_Policy_Regulations/Hemp_Frequently_Asked_Questions_\(FAQs\)_5.14.20.pdf](https://mmcc.maryland.gov/Documents/2020_Policy_Regulations/Hemp_Frequently_Asked_Questions_(FAQs)_5.14.20.pdf)
- Thank you to Executive Director- William Tilburg and Policy Director- Taylor Kasky for providing the information and specifics of this great opportunity for MD hemp farmers.
- **Developing Research/Opportunities:** New findings, published in the journal American Chemical Society Infectious Diseases, highlight yet another cannabinoid found in hemp with great potential in future therapeutics. Researchers have uncovered the hidden antibiotic potential of cannabis at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. The study found that a chemical compound, or cannabinoid, called cannabigerol (CBG) is not only antibacterial but also effective against a resilient family of bacteria known as MRSA.
- New frontiers for discovery or even re-discovery awaits researchers of the uses for hemp-based products. Considering that there are over 100+ cannabinoids produced by the plant and the majority of research has been conducted on just two of them (CBD and THC), the cannabinoids found in hemp have yet to be fully understood and hold great research opportunities for leading Universities. The study I mentioned last month and its preliminary findings of CBD's potential prophylactic use against COVID-19 along with this new study on CBG's antibacterial effects, are just two examples of these opportunities. A partnership between Maryland universities and Maryland hemp producers for studying these cannabinoids could benefit both drastically, by lowering expenses to universities sourcing raw materials and also establish a better understanding of new markets and interest for hemp-based products.
- Cannabinoids are not the only component of the plant that could be studied. As I also mentioned last month Wisconsin University Stevens-Point has partnered with the US military to test out hemp-based textiles. Given that Maryland is home to Under Armor, a large textile corporation that has a great relationship with the University of Maryland, a partnership and study of a similar nature could be established. I believe that this could be

a spark the Maryland hemp industry needs to accelerate its growth and to establish the necessary markets the farmers have been looking for.

Amy Crone- Direct Farm Market:

- Baltimore Farmers Market & Bazaar Opening this weekend (6/14)
- Farmers markets continue to implement social distancing guidelines and following guidelines – many have the first hour of market reserved for immuno-compromised and elderly shoppers.
- On-farm markets and pick-your-own operations continue to innovate and figure out ways to schedule folks to have separate times and enable social distancing
- Working with Farm Bureau to provide resources to its members for acceptance of federal benefits by direct marketing farmers and farmers markets
- With the increase in SNAP participants due to the pandemic, direct-marketing farmers and markets are taking advantage of a USDA program to accept SNAP directly;
 - State Program: <http://dhs.maryland.gov/bureau-special-grants/mobile-point-sale-equipment-program-mposep/>
 - USDA-funded program: www.marketlink.org
- NAFMNP has submitted a proposal to USDA for an online portal to accept SNAP for farmers and markets.
- A map was developed to share local food resources (markets and direct-marketing farmers) with consumers who are seeking alternatives to the grocery store and might be in search of items that are in shorter supply at the chain stores (such as meat).
 - <https://bit.ly/FindaFarmerorMarketMap>
- With outside seating now allowed for restaurants, farmers have some of their accounts now able to purchase again
- USDA FNS has enabled a temporary rule change for farmers markets:
 - “As a result of the COVID national emergency, from now until October 31, 2020, Farmers’ Markets can operate from alternate locations; this option helps Markets enable their adherence to local guidance regarding capacity.
 - A Farmers’ Market can operate from an alternate location after leaving a voice mail for FNS at 312-353-6609 and providing the Market’s:
 - name as authorized by FNS,
 - FNS number,
 - current operating location,
 - new, alternate location, and
 - contact phone number.
 - FNS will note the interim change and will only contact the Market, if necessary. This option remains in effect through October 31, 2020. In October 2020, FNS will revisit the continued impacts of the COVID national emergency.

Michael Pons- Equine:

- Maryland thoroughbred racing resumed at Laurel Park on Saturday, May 30, 2020, after nearly a three-month suspension due to Covid-19. No fans are currently being allowed to attend. This protocol will be in effect probably for the duration of the first condition book, which runs through the end of June. The balance of the year’s schedule is being

planned and discussed as we speak. A critical component of this discussion is the re-opening of Maryland's six casinos, whose VLT machines provide significant funding to the Maryland Purse and Bred Fund.

- The Preakness is now scheduled for Saturday, October 3, 2020 with the Mid-Atlantic Yearling Sale being moved to Monday, October 5, 2020 and Tuesday, October 6, 2020. October will probably be named "Maryland Horse Month" as both the Preakness and Maryland Million will be contested, for the first time, in the same month.
- The Fasig-Tipton May 2-Year-Old in Training Sales, the strongest of region's annual horse sales, has been moved to June 29th and 30th this year. Normally, it's held on the Monday and Tuesday after the Preakness. Last year, this sale set a new Maryland auction record when the Into Mischief filly, Gamine, was purchased for \$1.8M by Maryland Michael Lund Peterson, owner of Pandora Jewelry. She is unbeaten in two starts.
- Protocols for Covid-19 are being met at nearly every horse farm, riding stable and training center. For nearly the entire spring, most visitors have not been allowed on horse farms. However, with Phase Two, recently being passed, the opening of riding stables and other horse facilities will be permitted. Currently, owners and partners can visit their horses by appointments.
- The 2020 Maryland Horse Racing and Urban Renewal Act will become law on July 1, 2020. Municipal bonds necessary for the \$375M reconstruction of Pimlico Racecourse and Laurel Park will be sold, with construction beginning perhaps this fall. This is a significant capital project, which will act as an economic stimulus for Baltimore City, Laurel and Maryland in terms of jobs, materials and cost of construction. It's estimated that the project will require about four years to complete. When construction is finished, the result will be a brand-new Pimlico and Laurel Park. Pimlico will be owned by the Maryland Stadium Authority-created partnership of representatives of Baltimore City and State of Maryland, and it will continue to host the Preakness festivities annually as well as a host of other activities throughout the year. Laurel Park will have brand new grandstand and barns as well as a new polytrack. It will be open for year-round racing and stabling. Maryland's racing facilities will be state-of-the-art, and perhaps the finest in the nation.
- Fair Hill is nearing the completion of a \$25M overhaul, which includes a brand-new turf course, grandstand and three-day event facilities to host events like the Grade One F.E.I Classic. However, the Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill scheduled for October 14-17, 2020 has been postponed until 2021.
- There is a lot going on in the Maryland horse industry, and I will do my best to keep this commission apprised of the latest activities.

Keith Ohlinger- Horticulture:

- As things begin to reopen and get hotter, we will see the affect social distancing and wearing mask has.
- For those I encourage to join LEAD MD it is a great experience.

Sean Hough- Livestock:

- On national level seen the processing of livestock cattle, pig, and sheep has been down.
- Lots of this is associated with the large packing plants in the mid-west and Dakotas shutting down due to the Covid 19 outbreaks.

- Hopefully those are starting to get back open and production can pick up.
- Pig prices have depressed around the country Maryland in particular.
- Cattle and sheep prices seem to be holding better but the pigs have taken a hit.
- Local grocery stores the shelves have been pretty bare from a meat stand point but this has pushed for more locally raised meat and the local butchers and processors have been really busy with lines wanting to buy their product.
- As animals are becoming ready to get processed there are not local butchers or processors available with dates to process.
- Hopefully the pig prices can rebound.
- With the plant being at capacity those 4H animals will not be able to be processed as planned.
- 1 day pig show held at the state fair on June 21st.
- Trying to hold at least a 1-day junior show and have an online auction for the kids being live is not possible.

James K. Raley, Jr. - Nursery:

- The spring rush to purchase material for landscaping and garden plantings is slowing down in some areas. Many businesses have remained open and busy since the beginning of restrictions in mid-March due to the COVID-19 virus. Businesses have adopted their customer service practices to adhere to social distancing, sanitation, and no-contact payments in order to serve customers while keeping employees and customers safe.
- A May 2020 survey by the Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association (MNLGA) reported that many MNLGA members overall are optimistic. The Association reported that, “It is also an encouraging sign that the market remains, overall, in high demand for our industry products. Many (survey respondents) have expressed cautious optimism that the normal spring season will be extended as homeowners are expected to travel less this summer, hence may wish to do more home improvements and gardening.”
- A similar optimism has been reported in an international survey conducted by the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) and Flora Culture International (FCI), which was published May 29, 2020 by the Nursery Management website at NurseryMag.com.
- The new survey of grower associations from many of the 27 counties that participated revealed that nearly three-quarters (71%) believe that most growers will soon recover after this crisis. Eighty-one percent respondents expect to see an increase in online sales, as consumers become familiar with this new way of buying ornamentals. Fifty-six percent expect to see a reduction in staffing by growers, and interestingly, 30% expect to see a reduction in the imported product, to the benefit of domestic production.
- It should be noted from both surveys that location played a significant role in the responses received from survey participants. Responses from regions that were impacted less by COVID-19 were more positive than from regions where the virus brought local economies almost to a standstill.

Michelle Protani-Chesnik- Poultry:

- Agriculture has had a rough go through the pandemic. Poultry Ag has been a rough road for all involved. The folks that had their chickens depopulated in April some as long as 8 week ago are still finding the remains inside of their houses due to improper composting by company they grew for. The departments of Ag in both States have worked hard to ensure proper handling of compost and have been doing their due diligence in seeing it is not removed until properly handled. The growers are the ones suffering the impact of this. The houses cannot receive another flock until the compost is removed and the houses properly sanitized and in receipt of new litter. These folks have now lost an entire

flock or 20 to 25 percent of their income for the year at this point. They have continued to incur electricity bills to keep the house ventilated through the process. By the time this is finally cleaned up and out they will have lost at least the part of another flock of income. Many will not be able to make the farm payments. The past economic bills have done nothing to help poultry producers.

- Poultry farmers overall are seeing longer lay out times. Two companies are running 48 to 50 days, a whole flock of income or 20 to 25 percent of their income for the year. Others are doing greatly reduced density. Most are turning the lights off 24 hours in the houses after the first four weeks and some are restricting the amount of feed the birds get to eat. This restriction of light and feed is being done with good reason. Processing ages are up by an average of 12 days or more at the companies on the shore. If the birds are not restricted, they would become too large to process at this older age and run would be in danger of needing to depopulate. So, for the sake of the birds and the farmers restriction is done. I would rather do that than euthanize the birds any day. Another factor is the amount of feed it would take to full feed these larger birds. Companies only have so many feed trucks and drivers. Feed ingredient scarcity is also another factor.
- Keeping birds longer and bigger leads to greater electricity costs and labor time for the farmer. It goes without saying this a deep impact to the companies as well. The supply chain disruption and the slowing of processing due to worker health and larger birds is costly.
- Processing plants are coming back up with employment attendance, but bigger birds mean slower processing, and this is helping to keep the age higher out in the field.
- The University Extension Staff has been doing a poultry lunch break on Wednesdays with zoom and teleconference. It is a good meeting and you don't have to be a poultry farmer to join in. see flyer.
- I still have major concerns about the mental and physical wellbeing of the Ag community as whole. The financial concerns the pandemic has created for the farmers and while many of us in poultry production live in very rural areas and are used to a certain amount of isolation the past three months plus have pushed the limit for many. I have asked Senators Addie Eckardt and Mary Beth Carozza to see what they can do to help. Even a mobile free checkup system in the areas to give folks a chance to get a free blood pressure or cholesterol check and information on counseling and mental health services. Farmers tend to push on and ignore pain, illness, and anguish.
- Delmarva Poultry has been in constant talks with State and Federal levels seeking assistance for poultry farmers.
- On the brighter side poultry health has been very good on the shore. Weather has been from very wet to very dry.

Mike Levengood- Poultry:

- We are past the peak of Covid-19. I can only speak for the Perdue plants that we have implemented many interventions at the plants and live operations to protect our associates.
- The plants are getting very close to running at normal levels.
- The plants that supply food service companies are just starting to ramp up and will take longer to get back to full harvest levels.

Clifford Newsome- State Grange:

- The Covid-19 is still with us while affecting the lives of all Americans.
- The economy is slowly taking steps to recover.
- A new respect for overlooked trades and professions has made everyone realize the importance of them in our lives.

- Farmers, truckers, grocery store workers, postal workers, doctors, nurses, nursing home workers and janitors have all stepped up to keep America healthy.
- People are still being admitted for positive testing and more are recovering.
- Over 2300 deaths have been reported thus far in the little old state of Md. Research for a vaccine or treatment has been given full attention worldwide.
- Farmers everywhere are waiting to see how much aid they can receive from the Covid-19 Aid Program.
- Dumping milk, killing chickens, hogs and beef cattle will have little effect if imports of the same commodities continue.
- Who will get relief funds? Sixty Minutes posed this question to National Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Purdue on a recent show.
- Apparently, large multi-organized farms can get a maximum payment for each partnership versus one payment to individual farmers. This is allowed under the rules and regulations as they presently exist.
- The Grange recognizes family farmers as the backbone of America. Every ag enterprise is important to insure we can keep food on the table.
- Covid-19 is and will have a lasting effect on the U.S. economy as well as the global economy.
- In the months and years to come, Agriculture will slowly recover but at a cost never foreseen during our present times.
- All of the closures of schools and businesses combined with loss of perishable crops unharvested in the fields will show up as food shortages.
- Getting farm labor from migrants has been halted due to new immigration policies.
- All of these things have slowed Agriculture to a crawl.
- The one bright spot is corn and soybean planting are well underway.
- Prices have hit the skids so any surplus by year-end will add to the drama.
- Everyone working together locally, state-wide and nationally will eventually return the nation and world back to “normal”.
- Using better health practices have usually stopped epidemics in the past and will be our best defense now.
- Remember to thank everyone for their part in getting us back.

Dr. John Brooks- Veterinary:

- The Covid 19 pandemic has not spared the veterinary community, as of this point the AVMA is announcing the loss of at least two practicing veterinarians, one a small animal practitioner in New York City, and an exotic practice veterinarian. I know of at least two other veterinarians that also have passed from the virus.
- Veterinarians, in so many ways, have been, and remain on the frontline in combatting this latest pandemic. The One Health Initiative, combining human, animal, and environmental health has now created a vast new awareness that we must all, whether directly involved or not, be a "player" in improving the health of our planet. If we don't, inevitably, we will be destined to experience more of these world-wide outbreaks.
- The most recent studies have confirmed that this particular Sars-, Covid 19 virus was the result of the corona virus from bat populations, and the pangolin specie, and, possibly a third specie of animal yet to be determined. As we know, there are many different corona viruses that affect many different animal species. In this case, the RNA from these species in the wild underwent a process called Recombination, or, in layman's terms, a mixing of the genomes, that jumped to the human animal. The researchers do not give much credence to the accidental mishandling of this virus from a Chinese research

facility. In part, because the Covid virus that infected millions, seem to have a " personality " uniquely its own.

- The veterinary community is already quite experienced with the identification, and development of vaccines against many of the existing corona viruses that affect avian and mammalian species.
- As we speak, a multitude of research and academic institution's devoted to animal health, are turning their expertise to enhancing the time frame to reach a vaccine for the human population worldwide.
- A side note, the reported cases of Covid19 in cats, dogs, and big cats, all have been traced back to a positive human vector.

Staff Updates:

Cassie Shirk:

- Secretary Bartenfelder participated in a briefing with the house environment and transportation committee along with the department of natural resources secretary on the state of agriculture and seafood industry during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Continue to talk with legislators who are interested in agriculture and what they are thinking.
- People were concerned with the food supply chain and we continue to educate people on how the whole process works.

Kevin Conroy:

- As of Monday, all inspectors from all the programs are out in the field.
- Those on admin leave are returning.
- In the near future the turf and seed lab will be up and running at full capacity, just working on spacing.
- This is the same with the State Chemist Section.
- Trying to ensure that everyone is spaced out properly and following proper guidelines.
- Following the guidelines from EPA.
- After July 31st the herbicide Dicamba will no longer be on the market.
- Individuals are still able to use the product they have it will just not be available for purchase in the near future.
- If it has already been sold it can still be shipped.
- Most of the soybean farmers that use it will be used within the next 2-6 weeks.
- Educating farmers and resellers that they will not be breaking any rules.
- Reach out to Rob Hofstetter at the pesticide regulation section.
- Message sent out to the retailers.

Hans Schmidt:

- Cover crop program the announcement will go out soon. It is going to be a mail in form.
- Sign up will begin July 1st.
- Farmers should keep an eye out because there will be a cover crop program.
- Getting back out to the districts we are evaluating offices and working with our partners to make sure protocols are in place to protect the staff and the public.

Jason Schellhardt:

- Working on Fairs and Shows guidelines.
- MPT is doing special episode of Farm and Harvest to discuss how Covid 19 pandemic has affected agriculture across the state.
- Working on the reopening plan.

Steve Connelly:

- Update on the dairy margin coverage program.
- The governor funded the premiums at the \$9.50 margin which is the highest margin for our dairy producers that voluntarily sign up.
- There is a payment for March and April.
- Our dairy farmers through this program for the first quarter calendar year 2020 received \$1,351,000.
- We have had high sign up since paying the premiums for this year.
- Paid premiums for calendar year 2019 and 2020.
- Total amount that has gone to dairy farmers is around \$4 million dollars.
- There was quite a dip in milk price because of Covid 19.
- This had to do with disruption of supply chains specifically in class 3 and class 4 and specialty cheeses.
- The futures market for these products because of purchases by credit corporations and food boxes mean prices are steadily improving.
- Under the Corona Virus Food Assistance Program dairy farmers are looking to receive \$4.71 per hundred weight and there will be an addition first quarter payment coming from CCC funds of \$1.47 per hundred weight.
- Guidance for Fairs and Shows will be available we were waiting on the Maryland Health Department to approve.
- Horse Industry side the Thoroughbred auction will take place at the State Fair Grounds.
- Vets are now able to do spay and neuter procedures and grooming services are also allowed.

Julie Oberg:

- Trying to get people back into the building and working on protocols to get the office open.
- Those that are teleworking will continue to telework for the near future if not longer.
- There are a number of guidance documents the newest one being Fairs and Shows.

Joe Bartenfelder:

- There are a lot of questions and we are trying to get answers.
- We need to stick together and work together so we have something to look forward to in the future.
- Try to stay optimistic and positive.
- MDA is back open and we are trying to get people back in the office and deal with everything the best way we can.
- Hope that the worse of the virus is behind us and we don't see any drastic spikes in the future.
- If anyone needs anything or needs help, we are here to assist in any way we can.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 am respectfully submitted by: Jessica O'Sullivan