



Welcome to the Maryland Department of Agriculture

The Maryland Department of Agriculture preserves agricultural land, protects the health and safety of citizens, livestock and companion animals, and myriad agricultural products and agricultural-related industries, all while conserving and protecting our state's treasured natural resources, especially the Chesapeake Bay.



Get to know us. We work for you!



Welcome to MDA: Serving & Preserving Maryland

Maryland's agricultural production is as diverse as the state and second to none in its importance to the state's economy, environment, food supply and quality of life. Maryland agriculture includes poultry and grain, livestock and equines, forests and nurseries, orchards and vineyards, dairy and ice cream, vegetables and fruit. The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) is committed to ensuring the safety and sustainability of this important sector of our economy.

MDA Services

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), the nation's oldest and most successful farmland preservation program, preserves prime agricultural land and woodland by purchasing easements and restricting development. Since 1980, MALPF has preserved 312,666 acres on 2,301 farms in all 23 counties. By June 2018, MALPF managed a public investment of approximately \$729 million in permanently preserved land.

Regulatory Information Center: MDA helps ensure compliance with environmental and consumer protection laws. When necessary, MDA initiates enforcement actions, such as imposing fines and penalties, and taking civil and/or criminal judicial actions. Enforcement actions are posted at:
www.mda.maryland.gov/Pages/Regulatory-Information-Center.aspx

Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service resolves agriculture-related conflicts through mediation, a confidential, voluntary, no-cost to low-cost process that helps involved parties develop mutually agreeable solutions.





MDAgriculture - Agricultural Conflict Resolution - Agricultural Land Preservation - Agricultural Marketing - Animal Health - Food Quality Assurance - Forest Pest Management - Maryland Horse Industry Board - Mosquito Control - Pesticide Regulation - Plant Protection - Resource Conservation - State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners - State Chemist - Turf and Seed - Weed Management - Weights and Measures.

Office of Marketing, Animal Industries & Consumer Services

Food Quality Assurance ensures that consumers and businesses that farm food products meet high standards for safety, freshness, quality and grade. MDA:

- Certifies the quality, weight, plant sanitation, production and processing practices, and labeling of agricultural commodities, such as eggs, poultry, meat, grain, fruits and vegetables
- Regulates the sale of eggs through licensing and inspection to ensure eggs meet standards for safety, quality, labeling and weight
- Regulates and licenses all persons buying, receiving, exchanging or storing grain from a producer
- Inspects and reviews organic production and handling operations as a USDA accredited certifier
- Inspects fruit and vegetable producers and handlers to determine compliance with Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices that minimize the risk of microbial contamination.



Animal Health safeguards the health of livestock and poultry through programs that control infectious diseases, some of which can affect humans. MDA:

- Regulates the movement of animals into and within the state to guard against the spread of disease
- Conducts disease monitoring and detection activities for livestock and poultry diseases
- Regulates, licenses and inspects livestock markets, dealers and haulers
- Regulates animal vaccines used in disease control programs
- Regulates and inspects poultry hatcheries; regulates live bird market activity; and registers poultry growers
- Operates animal disease diagnostic laboratories in Frederick and Salisbury
- Responds to disease outbreaks and other animal emergencies under the State Emergency Operations Plan.

Maryland Horse Industry Board promotes Maryland's horse industry and supports research related to equine health. The board also licenses and inspects equine stables that operate as boarding, sales and/or breeding facilities; and rental, instructional, rescue or training facilities.



State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ensures the safe practice of veterinary medicine in Maryland by enforcing the Veterinary Practice Act and its regulations. The board licenses, registers and inspects veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary hospital owners, and humane organizations; investigates complaints; and takes disciplinary actions when necessary.

Spay and Neuter Program provides grants for projects that aim to reduce the number of cats and dogs euthanized in shelters across the state.

Maryland Agricultural Fair Board supports agricultural fairs and shows across the state that provide educational opportunities for youth and the general public about the agriculture industry.



Weights and Measures ensures consumers get what they pay for by inspecting weighing and measuring devices, such as supermarket scales and gas pumps. MDA also:

- Inspects commercial establishments to ensure the price advertised on the shelf is the same price charged at checkout.
- Tests the net contents of packaged goods that are labeled by weight, volume, or length.
- Conducts undercover buying and selling to ensure honesty/accuracy.
- Investigates consumer complaints.

Agricultural Marketing develops profitable marketing opportunities for Maryland farmers and agricultural producers. MDA:



- Promotes farmers' markets and other consumer outlets for Maryland farm products
- Coordinates the Farmers Market Nutrition Program to help low income citizens who are at dietary risk obtain fresh, local produce
- Manages the Maryland's Best Agriculture, Buy Local, and Farm-to-School initiatives
- Connects farmers with buyers from grocery stores, restaurants, food service companies and schools
- Promotes crop insurance to help farmers manage production and market risk
- Works internationally to help Maryland agricultural producers find and expand sales overseas.



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Office of Plant Industries & Pest Management

Plant Protection & Weed Management protects the health of plants and honey bees and serves as the state's expert on plant pests and agricultural quarantines. MDA:

- Licenses anyone who advertises, sells, installs or produces nursery stock in Maryland
- Inspects garden centers, chain stores, landscape operations, nurseries and greenhouses to intercept dangerous pests and diseases that could damage the state's nursery stock
- Conducts surveys for invasive plant pests
- Manages honey bee diseases to protect the essential role of honey bees in crop pollination
- Operates an entomology, plant pathology and green house laboratory to test and analyze samples
- Issues quarantines to prevent the sale or movement of plant materials to control or contain a new or dangerous disease or pest
- Enforces the Maryland Weed Control Law which requires all landowners, not just farmers, to manage noxious weeds.



Turf & Seed ensures the continued availability of high quality seed and sod to Maryland's seed consumers, whether it is a farmer tilling hundreds of acres or a homeowner with a small garden. MDA:

- Inspects and certifies seeds for farmers, seed and sod dealers, and the public
- Enforces seed and sod labeling laws.
- Conducts lab tests on seed lots for purity, weed seeds, and germination.



Pesticide Regulation ensures that pesticides are used, sold, handled and disposed of safely by both commercial and private applicators. MDA:

- Licenses and inspects proper pesticide application
- Approves training courses and conducts pesticide applicator examinations
- Enforces federal and state laws on the sale and use of pesticides
- Investigates pesticide accidents/incidents and consumer complaints.



State Chemist registers animal feeds, pet foods, fertilizers, pesticides and other regulated commodities. The program performs laboratory analysis to ensure products meet label claims and are not harmful to the environment. MDA:



- Inspects retail outlets, distribution centers, warehouses, animal feed mills, pesticide manufacturers, and fertilizer production facilities
- Stops sale or distribution of products that are ineffective or harmful to humans, animals or the environment
- Serves as the primary chemistry lab for the state/federal Food Emergency Response Network.

Mosquito Control works to prevent mosquito-borne diseases in humans, pets and livestock by working with local jurisdictions to:

- Survey and monitor larval and adult mosquito populations
- Apply insecticide in high-need locations by airplane or truck
- Coordinate biological control activities, including breeding source reduction, and public education.

Forest Pest Management protects the state's forest and urban landscape trees from diseases, insects and other pests that can destroy landscape and forest trees. Conducting field activities from four regional field offices across the state, MDA:

- Develops and implements environmentally sound pest management practices
- Conducts Detection and Evaluation Surveys to identify the size, movement and potential of forest pests.



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Office of Resource Conservation

Working with farmers and soil conservation districts to plan and implement conservation practices that balance crop and livestock production while protecting natural resources & the Chesapeake Bay. The Office is comprised of five key areas:

Program Planning and Development develops and coordinates policy and programs among local soil conservation districts, federal and state agencies, and public and private agricultural and natural resource organizations. The program:

- Provides staff support to the State Soil Conservation Committee & Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Advisory Committee.
- Manages Maryland's Animal Waste Technology Fund
- Provides GIS services.

Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program provides grants to help farmers install best management practices to control soil erosion, manage nutrients, safeguard water quality, and comply with federal, state and local requirements.

Nutrient Management Program ensures that farmers and urban land managers apply commercial fertilizer and organic nutrients in an environmentally sound manner. The program:

- Trains, certifies and licenses individuals to prepare nutrient management plans
- Performs on-farm audits and inspections to ensure compliance.
- Implements Maryland's Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) regulations.
- Conducts an urban nutrient management enforcement program.

District Operations provides funding and staff support to the state's 24 soil conservation districts to deliver conservation programs to the agricultural community.

- Investigates agricultural complaints
- Helps Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations stay in compliance.
- Supports the Maryland Envirothon program for high school students

Watershed Implementation Program provides direction and leadership in developing and evaluating strategies for agricultural commitments included in Maryland's Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), as required by the Chesapeake Bay Agreement.



MDAgriculture

Frequently Requested Phone Numbers

Animal Health	410-841-5810
Fiscal Services	410-841-5855
Food Quality Assurance	410-841-5769
Forest Pest Management	410-841-5922
Marketing Services	410-841-5770
Maryland Agricultural Commission	410-841-5882
Maryland Agricultural Fair Board	410-841-5770
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	410-841-5860
Maryland Agricultural Statistics Service	410-841-5740
Maryland Horse Industry Board	410-841-5861
Mosquito Control	410-841-5870
Office of the Secretary	410-841-5880
Pesticide Regulation	410-841-5710
Plant Industries & Pest Management	410-841-5870
Plant Protection & Weed Management	410-841-5920
Resource Conservation	410-841-5865
State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners	410-841-5862
State Chemist	410-841-2721
State Soil Conservation Committee	410-841-5863
Switchboard	410-841-5700
Turf & Seed	410-841-5960
Weed Control	410-841-5920
Weights & Measures	410-841-5790



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Maryland
for the Better

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