



**Maryland
Department of Agriculture**

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary
Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board

Agriculture | *Maryland's Leading Industry*
mda.maryland.gov

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

410-841-5882 Baltimore/Washington
410-841-5914 Fax

MARYLAND YOUNG FARMER ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes

April 17th, 2024

In-Person Location: 50 Harry S. Truman Pkwy, Annapolis MD 21401

Virtual Option: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83114742746>

Meeting ID: 831 1474 2746

Passcode: MDA

Present:

Mason Grahame
Charlie Sasscer
Jennell Eck McHenry
Martin Proulx
JT Albright
Edward Goodman
Kelly Stevens

Harry Huntley
Tyler Mercure
Matt Hurd
Brandon Boyer
Emily Jackson
Tyler Rill

Absent:

Nora Crist
Amy Rowe
Gale Livingstone
Miranda Rounds

MDA Staff:

Hans Schmidt

Guests:

Welcome:

The April 2024 Young Farmers Advisory Board meeting was called to order by Jenell Eck McHenry, Chair, at 10:06 am.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the January 2024 minutes made by Edwin Goodman seconded by Harry Huntley

Executive Secretary's Report:

Executive Secretary Harrison Palmer gave a brief administrative update and shared resources for Francis Scott Key Bridge Collapse impact grants.

Young Farmer Reports:

- Mason Grahame
 - o Early dry weather in March and April opened an opportunity for an early spring planting.
 - o Hugh McPherson will be presenting to SMADC on Value Added Agriculture and Agritourism.
 - o USDA has released data points for the 2023 Census of Agriculture.

- Charlie Sasscer
 - o Currently in the midst of calving season for most ranchers.
 - o Cold weather and wet soil have contributed to the challenges.
 - o Maryland Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers will be hosting a summer tour of Carroll County, YFAB is encouraged to attend.

- Jennell Eck McHenry, Chair
 - o Representing Young Farmers on the Maryland Agricultural Commission and Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.
 - o Taste of Maryland Agriculture will be held on February 6th, 2025
 - o Proposed a tour for the Fall meeting of YFAB.
 - o Horizon Farm Credit Jumpstart Program is an opportunity for young farmers to gain education and expose themselves to opportunities in the ag sector.
 - o Interest rates appear to be up for the remainder of the year, critical for making equipment and land purchase decisions.
 - o 7/25/2024 is the Commodity Classic, YFAB is encouraged to attend.
 - o Small Grain Field Days with University of Maryland Extension will be held on 5/22-5/23.
 - o Cattle market appears to remain down nationwide.
 - o High Path Avian Influenza has been detected in dairy cattle.
 - o No poultry flocks in Maryland are infected with HPAI right now.
 - o El Nino has peaked.
 - o Attended MDA & EPA meeting on analyzing endangered species.
 - New line from EPA on herbicides with live station updates.

- Martin Proulx
 - o Representing MDA at the CAIC Producer Unveiled event.
 - o National Urban Farm Festival will be held on 4/21 in Brandywine, MD.

- Regulatory Seminars kicked off to equip and support Ag Marketing Professionals with necessary functions and assist in navigating permitting processes across the state.
- JT Albright
 - Baltimore County Office of Ag held a listening session
 - Expanded and offered young farmers county funded grant opportunities.
 - LEAD Maryland Class XII visited Panama for 10 days in February, exposing fellows to international markets.
 - Currently in the midst of hauling manure for spring application.
 - Planting for spring and summer markets, working to take advantage of opportunities in Mother's Day flower markets.
- Edward Goodman, Vice Chair
 - Represented YFAB Agriculture Reengagement Roundtable in March
 - Currently Maryland is meeting and exceeding WIP goals in the Ag sector.
 - Board discussed the impact on young farmers when the overarching theme will be more pressure for conservation and increased need to meet statewide and regional conservation goals.
 - These overarching standards could price people out of the ag business.
 - Greenhouses are full, the public interest in stormwater management and small fruits in their landscaping continues to grow.
 - SMADC is working to reconnect with Farm Bureau through dinners and connection meetings.
 - HB979 passed during the 2024 legislative session- Biodiversity and Agricultural Protection, banning the sales of nonnatives in Maryland.
- Kelly Stevens
 - First Place Flock opportunity arising in the poultry industry.
 - Middle School Summer Academy is an opportunity to be engaging with youth and teaching them about agriculture.
 - MSSA is a month long summer program focused on agriculture supported by Worcester County Public Schools.
- Harry Huntley
 - Whole Watershed bill was a main priority bill.
 - Waverly Farmers Market opens in June.
 - Began LEAD Class XIII
- Matt Hurd, DNR
 - Busy spring with the early dry spell in the forestry industry
 - Warm winter with no deep freeze opened up an early planting season.
 - Very productive prescribed burn season
 - Lower sure burned over 1,000 acres in Wicomico County
 - New Jr. Achievement Center in Salisbury, inviting 6th graders to visit the Bay Friendly Farm Program.
- Brandon Boyer, MD FFA
 - MD FFA traveling to Ag Awareness Days bridging the gap in youth ag education.
 - In February, 150 FFA students visited Annapolis to advocate for agriculture and learn about the legislative process.
 - MD Ag Ed Council is working with MDA to host and Agricultural Education Summit.
 - MD FFA State Convention will be held June 24-26.

- Emily Jackson
 - o Strawberries are starting to flourish.
 - o Began LEAD Class XIII
 - o Noticing a lot of movement from the MAEF Mobile Education Units
 - This creates opportunities for volunteering and engaging with youth.
- Tyler Rill
 - o Wet spring created challenges getting into the fields, and increased the damage from cows to pastures and sacrifice areas.

MDA Reports:

- Hans Schmidt, Assistant Secretary for Resource Conservation
 - o In April, MPT will be running commercials to engage with the equine outreach program.
 - o The equine industry lost a major outlet for moving manure and importing woodchips with the closure of a large private business.
 - o MDA is taking the lead on the DAF permitting process that will go into effect on July 1st, 2024.
 - o MACS funding was cut from \$8 million to \$5 million; MDA will need to use carryover funds to ensure all eligible conservation projects will be funded.
 - o 4/21-4/27 Chesapeake Bay Week on MPT
 - o Hughes Center project announced to address vulnerability in ag with respect to climate change.

Board Discussion:

- Issues of Concern Document
 - o The board discussed updates to the Issues of Concern Document, highlighting the number of bills this past legislative session that had an impact on agriculture.
- Statewide Survey
 - o A final survey was provided to the board for review. Minor changes were made to remove duplicate questions and clarify target audience.
 - o Chair Jenell Eck McHenry proposed the board accept sponsorships from agricultural groups to pay for the survey software, survey promotion, and incentives for respondents. The motion was moved by Harry Huntley and second by Brandon Boyer.
 - Sponsorship will be offered at 2 tiers
 - \$100 sponsors will have their logo displayed on the survey and promotions
 - \$250 sponsors will have their logo displayed and can sponsor a specific analysis of the data that will be available to the public (data assorted by region, commodity, age group, etc.).
 - The board set a sponsorship target of \$1,000.
- Young Farmer Events

- Chair Jenell Eck McHenry requested that the Executive Secretary create a shared document for the board to track young farmer events across the state to ensure the board is represented and involved with partner groups.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Edwin Goodman, second by Brandon Boyer at 12:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Harrison B. Palmer, Executive Secretary