



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Joseph Bartenfelder, Secretary
Steve Connelly, Deputy Secretary

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

410.841.5700 Baltimore/Washington
301.261.8106 Washington, D.C.
410.841.5914 Fax
800.492.5590 Toll Free

Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes November 9, 2022

Present: Joseph Dymek
Thomas Mullineaux
Rajneesh Kathuria
Amy Crown
Michael Pons
Paula Linthicum
Matthew Levi Sellers

John Murphy
Michael Levensgood
Far Nasir
Gordon Kretser
Rebecca Stoecker
Dr. Marianne Bailey

Absent: Kelly Dudeck
Richard Pelz
Frank Allnutt
Benjamin Sowers
Sean Hough

Matthew Nielsen
Clifford Newsome
Dr. Craig Beyrouy

MDA Staff: Hans Schmidt
Joe Bartenfelder
Steve Connelly
Cassie Shirk
Jessica Hackett
Rich Colburn
Karen Kirkley
Kevin Conroy
Marbidco

Approval of Minutes:

September minutes were approved 1st by Joe Dymek and 2nd by Paula Linthicum.

Commodity Reports:

Ag Education- Joseph Dymek:

MAEF

- Annual banquet was held on November 3rd at the Marriott at BWI. Over 150 people attended with about \$7,000 raised
- A grant from MSDE to support Maryland FFA was finally approved. There had been some concern due to a change in procedures with the new administration.

- MAEF held a professional development workshop on November 5th at the First Fruits Farm in Baltimore County, with 12 elementary and secondary teachers attending. The next professional development workshop will be held April 22-23 on the Eastern Shore.
- MAEF's Middle School Committee is looking into outreach to high school counselors who could provide key guidance to students on career and educational pathways in agriculture.
- MAEF is working with the Blueprint committee of the Maryland AG Teachers Association to investigate opportunities to create an Office of Agricultural Education through the Blueprint appropriations and restoring the resources needed for agriculture programs to thrive.
- The MAEF partnered with the Maryland Million Horse Race and provided the MAEF Showcase for the event.
- Special thanks to the Farm Credit Foundation for providing a \$10,000 grant to MAEF to support the Mobile Labs.
- MAEF has been asked to conduct a breakout session at the upcoming MD Farm Bureau Convention.

FFA

- Many Maryland FFA members attended the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, In. held October 26-29. FFA members participated in 24 National FFA Career and Leadership Development events.
- Six FFA members earned the American FFA Degree,
- Five Maryland FFA members captured top 20 honors in the respective career development event.
- Six Maryland FFA members/teams received silver medal awards.
- Fifteen Maryland FFA/teams received bronze medals.
- The American FFA Degree was earned by 6 Maryland FFA members. These members successfully completed 540 hours of agricultural education instruction, productively invested \$7,000 or \$2,000 and 2,250 hours in a supervised agricultural experience program and demonstrated leadership abilities above the state level. Less than 1% of the total National FFA membership receives this degree.
- Mr. Greg Stull, Agriculture teacher at Walkersville High School, received the Honorary American FFA Degree.
- Five FFA Chapters received National Chapter Awards: Boonsboro FFA, Brunswick FFA, Catoclin FFA, Southern FFA and Parkside CTE.
- Three Maryland FFA State Officers served as official delegates: Kendall Abruzzese, Hannah Haines and Teagan Flaherty. Maryland received a state award for increasing membership.

MATA

- The MATA Blueprint committee has met almost every week since September. The committee has developed a proposal for leadership of Agriculture Education in Maryland, in the hopes that it will be appealing to the Blueprint CTE Committee. It is hoped that a meeting will be scheduled with the committee in the near future.

The proposal includes:

- Creating an office of Agricultural Education for Maryland that will be staffed by Agricultural Education professionals/leaders and support staff
- Administering the full three-ringed Agricultural Education model
- Calling for elevating funding for the FFA office and staff
- Program expansion across Maryland and elevated support to existing Agriculture Education programs (local schools, FFA, etc....)

Agribusiness- Thomas Mullineaux:

- After good corn and soybean yields and very encouraging commodity prices, growers are focused finishing up wheat planting. Early order and Prepay orders for 2023 seed and fertilizer are up as compared to 2022.
- Fall fertilizer sales have been good even though fertilizer prices continue to rise. Crop Protection products continue to have spot shortages. Glyphosate is still short? Prices continue to inch up.
- Dairymen are encouraged by expected increases in milk prices projected for 2023.
- Retail farm stores have enjoyed good several months of store traffic. Fall plants, feed and general supplies sales have been surprisingly good.
- Equipment dealers are telling me that farmers have money to spend on new equipment before year end.

Bio-Fuel- Rajneesh Kathuria:

- There was a great interest in Hemp based Biofuels-
- I would urge them this article to understand the Benefits and challenges of Hemp based Biofuels.
- <https://cannabislifenetwork.com/hemp-biofuel/>
- **What is Hemp Fuel?**
- Hemp is a source of the two types of biofuels: bioethanol and biodiesel. The biofuel is derived from both the fruit and grain of the plant as well as the fiber which is plentiful in hemp.
- Ethanol is mainly derived from grains such as barley, wheat, and corn. When used as a biofuel it is usually mixed with petrol. Motor vehicles that run on petrol can only tolerate up to 10% addition of ethanol. Other cars can use up to 80% ethanol.

- Biodiesel is mostly obtained from vegetable oil and requires methanol. It is usually mixed with regular diesel and can be used by almost any diesel car. This is a clear advantage over bioethanol.
- Hemp is able to produce both biofuels with a hectare producing about 200 gallons of biofuel from hemp seed. This is lower than what one would get from palm and coconut, but it is almost four times as much as you would get from soybean. The other parts of the hemp plant can be fermented in anaerobic conditions to produce ethanol.
- **How is Hemp Biofuel Made?**
- This process begins with cultivation of the hemp for the purpose of producing fuel. Once harvested, the hemp fiber is shredded to increase surface area and then it is heated with chemicals which break down the fibers and cellulose is released in the process. Enzymes are introduced to break down the cellulose into sugars. To aid the process of fermentation microorganisms are introduced and the sugars are broken down into ethanol. The ethanol is then purified to produce pure biofuel.
- Overall state of Biofuels in the U.S.
- U.S. biodiesel consumption and production increased substantially, largely because of the availability over time of various [government incentives and requirements](#) to produce, sell, and use biodiesel.
- In order to meet targets for advanced biofuels use under the U.S. Renewable Fuel Standard Program, some of the important incentives to biodiesel blenders and producers, the [Biodiesel Mixture Excise Tax Credit](#) and the [Biodiesel Income Tax Credit](#) of \$1.00 per gallon of biodiesel has been extended (originally set to expire December 2022) to December 2024.
- According to the [U.S. Renewable Diesel Fuel and Other Biofuels Plant Production Capacity](#) report, as of January 1, 2021, there were six operating U.S. renewable diesel production facilities with a combined total production capacity of about 791 million gallons per year. Two of these facilities are former petroleum refineries converted to processing biofuels. In 2021, U.S. renewable diesel production equaled about 815 million gallons (0.82 billion gallons) and consumption equaled about 1,163 million gallons (1.16 billion gallons), which included about 392 million gallons of imports.

Equine- Michael Pons:

- October was Maryland Horse month and there were several equine activities that brought both international and national attention to the Free State.
- On October 3 and 4, 2022, the Fasig-Tipton Mid-Atlantic Yearling Sales was conducted at the Timonium Sales Pavilion. The gross and average were off slight from 2021, which set record levels. The sales topper was an Uncle Mo MD-bred filly, bred by Determined Stud, bringing \$320,000. While demand for yearlings was strong, the progeny of Maryland stallions sold for less than their Kentucky counterparts, which continues the recent trend of a Kentucky-centric industry.
- On October 13-15, 2022, the Fair Hill Five-Star Equestrian Event was held for the second

time, and featured horses, riders, owners and their connections from Europe, South America and the United States. The \$25 million state-funded renovations to the Fair Hill facilities and grandstand are paying dividends, as both competitors and patrons enjoyed first-class competition and amenities. The gorgeous fall weather during the three-day event also helped to showcase this year's contest. Plans are already being made for the 2023 event.

- On October 21, 2022, the Maryland Horse Breeders and Maryland Million Ltd. hosted the Sip-and-Win Fundraiser to debut their new headquarters on Main Street in Reisterstown, MD. The former church, and bank, has been completed renovated into a Maryland equine gem. The facility features an extensive research library with more than 5,500 volumes as well as a first-rate museum of Maryland racing artifacts. The Maryland Horse Library and Research Center is open to the public, weekdays from 9:00 am-4:00 pm.
- On October 22, 2022, the 37th Maryland Million races were conducted at Laurel Racecourse, where a sizeable crowd helped contribute to a \$5.5M handle. While this total was down from last year, it was among the highest betting totals for Maryland Million. Twelve races, with nearly 200 horses running, were conducted under another beautiful fall day. Our nation parade returned to win his second career MM race, in taking the \$150,000 Classic in wire-to-wire fashion. Patrons not only saw terrific horse racing but several pony races, horse riding exhibitions, as well as a pair of local Clydesdales pulling a carriage and later, the New Carrollton fox hounds, horses and riders paraded down the stretch.
- The annual Washington D.C. Horse Show was moved from the Verizon Center in downtown Washington D.C. to the Prince George's Equestrian Center. The event was popular and well-attended, benefitting, too, from beautiful fall weather. This longtime event may have found a new home.
- The Maryland Stadium Authority's plans for renovating Pimlico and Laurel racetracks have been temporarily put-on-hold. The Stronach Group, owners of the Maryland Jockey Club, who operate both Laurel and Pimlico, are facing a dilemma. If they retain ownership of Laurel, they will owe significant income taxes on the cost of the capital improvements. This issue has prompted discussions of selling some of their racing interests. The Stronach Group would like to retain the Preakness and sell Laurel to an interested bidder. Currently, the Maryland Horsemen's group are discussing a plan to purchase Laurel. A deadline of December 15, 2022, has been set to consider what offers are available.

Farm Bureau- Paula Linthicum:

- Thank you to Secretary Joe Bartenfelder and staff for serving MD Agriculture in an exemplary manner over the past eight years. Their dedication to our industry is greatly appreciated. MD agriculture wouldn't be where it is today without their hard work and support.

- The MD Farm Bureau Annual Convention will take place December 4-6, 2022, in Cambridge, MD. With the Young Farmers Conference December 3-5. Registration is open until Friday, November 11, 2022, at <https://www.mdfarmbureau.com/convention/registration/>.
- At the Annual Convention, farm bureau delegates from across the state will assemble to vote on MD Farm Policy. This policy serves as a guide for MD Farm Bureau staff during the 2023 Legislative Session in Annapolis. MD Farm Bureau Agriculture Ambassadors will also be named to serve MD agriculture on behalf of MD Farm Bureau in 2023.

Hemp- Matthew Levi Sellers:

- October and early November is our busy season for the hemp industry. Cultivators of all hemp are in the middle of harvesting, labs are busy providing test results to assist the floral cultivators with an optimal harvest and compliance, and fiber hemp has been cut, retted, and bailed.
- I was able to obtain some numbers on MD licensed hemp producers from the MDA that I would like to share with everyone.
 - Licensed Producers - 62
 - Number of sq. ft. in greenhouse production - over 200,000 sq ft all floral
 - Total Number of acres in field production - over 6500 acres mixed markets
 - Percentage of fields by markets
 - CBD or floral hemp- 69.3%
 - Fiber - 17.3%
 - Grain - 5.3%
 - Seed - 8%
- This break-down of the different markets gives us a better visual than we have had in previous years and I thank the MDA for this information.
- It really shows that the MD hemp industry is heavily supported by floral or CBD hemp and we can see that there is growing interest in the other commodities of hemp like the fiber and grain.

Nursery II- John Murphy:

- Attended the Ag Environmental Law Conference and that was a good experience and good to know ag laws.
- Nice to hear about the Properties Act and how it's helping to protect properties.
- The Maryland Green Industry Household is waiting for elections to decide what to do this winter.
- Need to go to Annapolis to voice concerns with any new bills out there.
- MANTS if coming up January 11th-12th at Baltimore Convention Center.
- Recommend those that want to see the industry to attend the trade show.

Poultry I- Michael Levensgood:

- **Reusing litter can cut *Salmonella* prevalence:** A joint research collaboration between the University of Georgia's [Department of Poultry Science](#) and the [U.S. National Poultry Research Center](#) (USNPRC), housed within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Agricultural Research Service](#) (USDA-ARS), has been investigating the role that bacteria play in poultry health and food safety. [New research](#) from this group has found that the type of litter broiler chickens are raised on plays an important role in their pre-harvest health.
- Specifically, reusing litter instead of supplying fresh litter every time can help bolster the birds' immune systems. The same study also showed that reusing litter may help prevent the transfer of antibiotic resistance between bacterial species.
- At the end of [the study](#), chickens raised on reused litter had a lower *Salmonella* positivity rate (66%) compared to chickens raised on fresh litter (79%). Additionally, the researchers found that some of these *Salmonella*-infected chickens on fresh litter were infected with a multi-drug resistant strain of *Salmonella*, while they found no multi-drug resistant *Salmonella* in chickens on reused litter.
- **APHIS shares dashboard showing wild bird HPAI detections:** The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has developed a [publicly available dashboard](#) that displays the results from nation-wide avian influenza virus (AIV) monitoring in wild bird populations.
- Wild bird samples are routinely collected by the APHIS' Wildlife Services (WS) National Wildlife Disease Program and screened for AIV at laboratories that are part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network. Data presented in the [dashboard](#) can identify increased AIV risk and can provide information to poultry producers, wildlife managers, and members of the public on AIV activity in their area (as of this week, the dashboard displays data collected from July 2021-April 2022).
- **Kevin Garland, Randy Day join NCC leadership for 2023:** The National Chicken Council (NCC) has installed the four officers that will guide the organization through 2023. The installation took place at NCC's 67th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. **Kevin Garland**, CEO of Mountaire Farms, will serve as 2022-2023 Chairman. Perdue Farms' Chief Executive Officer **Randy Day** will serve as Vice Chairman. Randy leads the company's senior leadership team.
- **Grayson Middleton joins DCA in government affairs role:** Grayson Middleton has [joined DCA](#) as our first government relations manager. This role, a new position at DCA, evolves our approach to legislative affairs from hiring a contracted lobbyist who worked primarily on Maryland issues to developing in-house expertise to help us influence government in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia.

- Grayson graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2020 with degrees in government & politics and history. He served in Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan’s administration first as a constituent services liaison and later as Eastern Shore outreach coordinator, where he served as the direct line of communication between the governor’s office and Eastern Shore counties and municipalities.
- “I’m very happy to be part of the fight to protect Delmarva agriculture,” Grayson said. In his spare time, Grayson enjoys spending time with friends and family, going out on the boat, reading about history, cooking, and waterfowl hunting.
- **NCC sees red flags, flaws in new FSIS Salmonella policy:** In a [news release](#), the National Chicken Council said it has objections to a newly announced plan by USDA FSIS to change *Salmonella* regulations, including requiring incoming flocks be tested for *Salmonella* before entering an establishment.
- “We support the need to develop science-based approaches that will impact public health, but this is being done backwards,” said Ashley Peterson, Ph.D., National Chicken Council senior vice president of scientific and regulatory affairs.
- “The agency is formulating regulatory policies and drawing conclusions before gathering data, much less analyzing it. This isn’t science – it’s speculation. We continue to be disappointed that the agency has failed to use science and research to drive its regulatory policies.
- Since 2015, when a new performance standard for chicken parts went into effect, the industry has reduced *Salmonella* prevalence by 65%. And from 2017-2019, 89% of *Salmonella* illnesses associated with solved foodborne outbreaks came from food products other than chicken.
- [Read the full NCC statement here.](#)

Turf- Gordon Kretser:

- The Maryland Turfgrass Council will hold their annual Winter Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show on December 13th at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City. Educational breakout sessions with industry experts and recertification classes for Maryland’s Pesticide and Fertilizer applicator licenses will be held.
- Oakwood Sod Farm in Delmar closed their door officially on August 31st after 37 years in the turfgrass sod business. An auction was held on November 5th to sell their equipment. Oakwood grew Tall Fescue, Bluegrass, Bentgrass, Bermudagrass, and Zoysia. Oakwood was most well known for their sports field and golf course quality sod.
- Fall plantings at sod farms in Maryland was down significantly from the past several years. Fall is when the majority of turfgrass sod planting is done. The reason for this reduction in acres is a combination of factors. I believe speculation in the slowdown of new homes builds is a major reason. I also believe that the costs associated with planting, maintaining, and finding labor is contributing to the reduction. Increased commodity prices of traditional crops like wheat pay a roll as well.

- Maryland fertilizer blackout dates for residents and lawn care professionals begins November 16th and goes through February 28th.

Staff Updates:

Cassie Shirk:

- No updates on legislative right now.
- No plans to put in departmental legislative this year.
- After a 2-year hiatus bring back Maryland Best Expo Tues January 10th at the Navy Marine Corp Stadium.
- Reach out to Cassie or Mark.

Steve Connelly:

- FFA provides Dairy Margin Coverage Program and enrollment is from October 17th- Dec 9th.
- State of Maryland is not paying for premiums this year.
- High path avian influenza just wants to remind people to practice enhanced biosecurity on their flocks.
- In 2022, 604 flocks across the country that have tested positive for high path and in 46 states 259 were commercial operations and 345 backyard flocks affecting a little over 50 million poultry.
- In Maryland we had 1.7 million birds.
- 3 flocks at one location.
- New cases this past week confirmed for high path avian influenza in wild birds.
- Only 3 states New Mexico, West Virginia, Arkansas have not seen high path in wild birds.
- Follow company guidelines and try to keep migratory waterfowl and vultures away from your flocks.
- Had a backyard flock 6 weeks ago in Pasadena that had 4 ducks that needed to be depopulated.
- Delaware had at least 2 backyard flocks infected in the last two months.

Joe Bartenfelder:

- Transition is completely up to the new governor that comes in. It is a wide-open process he or she can take recommendations or go on their own. All depends on what they want to do.
- What do you say the day after the election?
- Tell everyone including team at MDA what a great job you all have done for agriculture in the state and the other industries we represent.
- To the members that give their time and help us do a better job and make agriculture better for everyone.

- Greatly appreciate everyone's help.
- Very fortunate to have a great governor Larry Hogan who contributed to agriculture in the state and was there not only for the ag industry but for the farmers as individuals.
- Farming affects everyone.
- Not sure what is going to happen after January yet. We should hear from one of the transition teams soon.
- Once we hear something we will let everyone know.

Rich Colburn:

- Joe and Rich visited an operation on the sale on manure in Chester County.
- New governor will be sworn in on January 18th at noon.

Kevin Conroy:

- Normal course business.
- Hemp finalizing.
- Not many fields left to test.
- Product registrations in ahead of deadlines in state chemist section.
- Normal business for the programs.

Hans Schmidt:

- Resource conservation continues to fill vacancies in soil conservation offices.
- Went through interviews and offers going out the end of the month for additional bodies in offices.
- Strategic plan to help healthy soil program and small urban program.
- Introduced cover crop program, which takes our traditional cover crop program to another level which is a longer-term commitment to farmers to put cover crops on same fields.
- Have had good response for first year.
- Small urban farm program introduced cover crop program for them.
- Working on regs on urban power and water infrastructure act which would offer some cost share for small urban farms to connect to public utility systems whether water or electric.
- Tree solutions act passed two years ago, MDA, DNR, have been working on developing report on the purpose to plant 5 million trees by 2031
- Pay \$1000 incentive
- Looking at other types of tree programs to meet our tree planting goals.
- Some nutrient management regulations for incorporation of food processing residuals, nutrient management advisory committee developed regs and they were approved and go into effect Jan 1.

Jessica Hackett:

- Working on getting out egg mass spotted lanternfly campaign.
- Meeting later today to discuss with Baltimore Sun.
- Summer campaign on adults was successful so now going to focus on egg masses.
- We continue to communicate with the public going forward on what to do when you see spotted lanternflies or egg masses.
- Still number one message received is what do we do when we see them.
- Scrap off and kill egg masses that you see.
- Always check your trees and your vehicles.
- Going to mostly be a digital campaign on Facebook and in the Baltimore Sun.
- USDA reaches out to communications to promote the ag census which will go out November 22nd.
- Not all counties have spotted lanternfly yet primarily it is seen in the northern counties, Harford County has seen an increase in the spotted lanternfly.
- If you see them kill them.

Meeting Adjourned at Respectfully Submitted by Jessica O'Sullivan