



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

Larry Hogan, Governor
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Maryland Agricultural Commission

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Maryland Agricultural Commission Minutes April 14, 2021

Present:

Agribusiness: Thomas Mullineaux
Ag Education: Martha Clark
Agritourism: Kelly Dudeck
At Large Ag Service: Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service: Matthew Levi Sellers
Direct Farm Market: Amy Crone
Equine: Michael Pons
Food Processing: Cheryl DeBerry

Forestry: Elizabeth Hill
Livestock: Sean Hough
Nursery I: James Raley
Poultry I: Michael Levengood
Poultry II: Michelle Protani-Chesnik
State Grange: Clifford Newsome Jr.
Turf: Tom Warpinski

Absent:

Consumer: Carroll Shry Jr.
Dairy II: David Pyle
Farm Bureau: Jonathan Quinn
Field Crops: Donald Maring

Nursery II: Ray Greenstreet
Organic Farming: Matthew Nielsen
University: Dr. Craig Beyroudy
Veterinary: Dr. John Brooks
Viticulture: Matthew Corey Spies

MDA Staff:

Julie Oberg
Cassie Shirk
Kevin Conroy
Joe Bartenfelder
Rich Colburn
Steve Connelly
Jason Shellhardt

Guest/Speakers:

Steve McHenry
Sarah Fielder
Jane Thery (Maryland Horse Counsel)
Jonathan Cribbs Delmarva Farmer
Matthew Tefteau MD Rural Council

Approval of Minutes:

March minutes were approved 1st Tom Mullineaux and 2nd Tom Warpinski

Commodity Reports:

Tom Mullineaux- Agribusiness:

- Grower's attitudes are very positive. Strong Commodity prices across the board make everyone smile.
- Dealers are going full bore when weather permits top dressing wheat and barley, applying dry fertilizer and tuning up equipment for corn and beans.
- Seed sales for corn and beans are strong. Expect more acres of each. Some elevators have written contracts for 2022 wheat.
- Down side: Fertilizer prices began rising when commodity prices rose. Chemical prices rose as well.
- Retail Report: Chicks, chicks, chicks..... sales are through the roof along with feed, etc. Gearing up for another BIG year in Garden Centers.

Martha Clark- Ag Education:

- MAEF busy with Maryland Ag in classroom and has 4H working to get toward the summer and see what is available.
- Some schools are in full time and others are part time.
- Combined learning situation two days on and three days off.
- MAEF is preparing to get mobile labs back out in September.
- Have a lab in a box and the kit was \$35.00 and this is something new and will see how teachers are picking up and using the information.
- Coloring contest is going on right now and ends Monday May 3rd.
- Cash award for those who participate and posters go into the calendar.
- This year's book was Chuck's Ice Cream, Chuck Fry did a farm tour and was a success this spring.
- Hybrid conference June 28th through July 1st.
- Bonnie Warner is retiring on June 30th.
- Lot of updates and getting ready to do a complete strategic plan.
- Working with the state department for certifying the case program that is used in high school.
- Wanted to thank Michael Levengood for the follow up with the FFA on the eastern shore and his interest and boards interest
- Working with state county fairs to get program going for livestock for the kids with outdoor events.
- Most of the county fairs are in communication with the 4H kids again which is good.
- Held a four day 4H program online and raised nearly \$13,000.00.
- Process of hiring a new business specialist for the extension at 4H foundation, had a job announcement but no successful interviews yet.
- There are also scholarships out there available.

Kelly Dudeck:

- Some relaxation on some of the restrictions.
- Some numbers are on rise not sure if there will be a 4th wave or not, not sure when or if things will return to normal.
- Rely heavily on scheduled events and getting people out and it is still an issue.
- Campaign of glamping on farms is an issue.
- A lot of counties are saying no it is not allowed.

- Growth and fortify is opening to make accommodations for this to become possible, this is a priority.
- Watching the weather closely especially with grapes.
- Have a two-week cold snap heading our way which causes some concerns.

Levi Sellers:

- This April marks the beginning of the third Hemp season in MD. Producers start this season hopeful for more industry growth with better defined regulatory guidelines from the USDA amongst the impacts of COVID-19.
- **USDA New Regs:** The USDA's Final Rule for hemp production went into effect March 22, 2021. With the new regulations in place and after some revisions at the request of the industry, producers have greater flexibility.
- **DEA's Proposed Hemp Rules:** Two House Committee Chairmen recently sent a letter to the heads of the Justice Department and USDA, urging them to address a problem stakeholder have identified in a DEA proposed rule on hemp. Farmers have expressed concern that DEA's Interim Final Rule (IFR) for the crop would effectively criminalize "in-process" hemp extracts. Businesses are worried that the agency's rule could lead to enforcement action during a stage of manufacturing for extracts when the product temporarily exceeds the 0.3 percent THC limit.
- As expressed in the letter, when Congress passed the Farm Bill legalizing hemp, the intent was to "vest primary regulatory authority over the production of hemp with USDA," rather than DEA. There is hope that the agencies would consider jointly meeting with industry stakeholders to resolve these concerns and ensure consistency across Federal agencies.
- The DEA's Rule is still in litigation pending the results of a lawsuit filed by The Hemp Industries Association and a South Carolina CBD manufacturer.
- **MD Hemp Registration Status:** As of April 4th, MDA is still accepting applications for the 2021 growing season. This season applicants have two options when applying, to either apply for a Hemp Research registration following the 2014 Farm Bill guidelines that were in place in previous seasons or to apply for the Production Program following the new rules established by the USDA's newly established Final Rule (which is in-line with the 2018 Farm Bill).
- Currently the two programs have the following registrations:
 - **Hemp Research** - 27 growers, 158 acres and 185,538 sq.ft. of greenhouse production
 - **Production Program** - 16 growers, 149 acres and 79,000 sq.ft. of greenhouse production
 - **Total** - 43 growers, 307 acres and 264,538 sq.ft. of greenhouse production approved
 - **Pending** - 27 applicants are still pending
- This total shows a slight decrease (approx. -10%) in approved applications from the 2020 growing season which by March had 48 growers, 802 acres and 320,172 sq.ft. of greenhouse production approved. Compared to MD's first hemp season (2019) this is a drastic decline (approx. -37%) in approved applications, which had 69 growers, 1577 acres and 1,069,000 sq.ft. of greenhouse production approved. I believe these numbers really highlight the initial surge of interest in cultivating the newly legal crop and the maturation of the industry with new regulations and industry struggles.

Amy Crone- Direct Farm Market:

- Demand for local expected to stay strong in 2021
- Markets are opening – JFX last weekend, Crossroads today; largest markets all open in the state
- 17 markets closed in 2020; still waiting to confirm which of those will close permanently or which will reopen in 2021

- Vaccinations for ag workers/farmers have helped on-farm stores and operations open timely
- Extension of grant deadlines for federal grants like FMPP / GusNIP have been helpful for those working in ag support roles (nonprofits, matching programs)
- Maryland Market Money program is open for farmers markets and also added on-farm markets to the locations that can accept the matching incentive this year (now run by SMADC)
- Conferences pretty much wrapped up for the year; some fall conferences still determining whether will be in person or not (NAFMNP) and others have already committed to in-person for 2022
- Jack Miltenberger, a farmer who has sold at Allegany County farmers markets for many years with his wife Hilda recognized with Distinguished Service Award from Allegany County Farm Bureau

Michael Pons- Equine:

- The Equine Herpes outbreak reported in our last meeting, resulted in cancellation of six racing days in March and quarantines being placed on both Laurel Park and Pimlico racetracks. Swift action was taken by veterinarians at both tracks, in concert with the Maryland State Veterinarian, to quickly isolate stricken horses, and to test horses possibly exposed. Fortunately, there have been no new cases. The quarantine at Laurel Park was lifted last week, and racing resumed for Laurel Park-domiciled horses only last Thursday, April 8, 2021. Pimlico's quarantine should be lifted on Friday, April 16, 2021. Horses from both racetracks, as well as from racetracks and training centers throughout the region will be allowed to compete in the Laurel Park races.
- The Maryland Jockey Club announced that 400 fans are now allowed to attend the races at Laurel Park. This year's Preakness, scheduled for May 15, 2021, will be restricted to 10,000 fans, with no infield concert being held. The Kentucky Derby will be restricted to 50% attendance levels.
- The Maryland General Assembly has approved a framework for Sports Betting in Maryland. Licenses for numerous sites will be offered soon. There is also legislation for mobile and online gambling. A large portion of the state's proceeds is directed towards education.
- This fall, the Maryland Five-Star Equine Competition, postponed in 2020, will be held at Fair Hill racecourse on October 14-17, 2021. This FEI Grade I event will attract some of the world's finest horses and riders. Details involving tickets and sponsoring opportunities will be forthcoming.
- One by one, most equine events like Steeple chasing and Point-to-Point races are being held again this year, with limited attendance and social-distancing. Activities at many riding stables and horse farms are resuming to their formal levels. Hopefully, as 2021 progresses resumption of all activities in our lives will open-up without negative consequences.

Cheryl DeBerry- Food Processing:

- Cottage Food guidance documents released from the Maryland Department of Health earlier this year listed many new excluded products that home/farm bakers had been selling for years. After repeated inquiries and a meeting between many interested parties, the MDH removed those documents from their website and are apparently revising the documents to clarify these products. Most of the new items on the excluded list may be allowed only if that particular baker/farmer can prove the safety of the product/recipe through tests of pH and/or water activity.

- The reason these products were excluded is that the Cottage Food law allows cottage foods to be sold both from the farm, at farmers markets, and retail stores. If sold in retail stores, those products could sit on the shelf for a week or more, and without preservatives unless refrigerated, would likely mold. However, when bakers are selling directly to the customer, there is an assumption that the product is fresh and it'll be eaten soon.
- MDH is concerned about these products because the purpose of the cottage food law is to allow individuals to safely sell foods in a limited capacity and with limited oversight. Recipes for the same product type (e.g., zucchini bread) can vary widely - some recipes may have a water activity and pH that require refrigeration while others do not. The only way to know for each recipe is to have the product tested.
- We have asked for a waiver for this season to allow bakers to continue selling the same products they always have. Or to be able to separate the direct sales vs. retail sales, so bakers could put a statement on the direct sales items to please eat within 2 days or refrigerate. We also asked for some sort of proof of "lethality" of the products in question, which includes items such as sweet breads (pumpkin, banana, and zucchini) as well as fudge and others. We've discussed the need for perhaps the food safety department at UMD to provide free/low-cost product testing for Maryland cottage food providers. We've discussed the possibility of MDH releasing approved recipes that could be used by bakers.
- As of now, we are waiting for updated guidance documents. Representatives from Delegate Charkoudian's office suggested a working group of industry stakeholders be formed to review forthcoming MDH guidance on cottage food products and address industry concerns. Senator Hester has requested the group of interested parties that met last month reconvene in late April for a status update.

Elizabeth Hill- Forestry:

- Senate bill 65: This bill reduces the amount of solar energy required under the State Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) each year from 2022 through 2029, while leaving the non-solar requirement generally unchanged, before realigning with current law beginning in 2030. The relative difference is more pronounced in the near-term. The bill also increases solar alternative compliance payments (ACPs) beginning in 2023, before gradually returning to near parity with current law by 2030. Non-solar ACPs are unchanged. The bill also (1) excludes black liquor, or any product derived from black liquor, from Tier 1 beginning with the 2022 compliance year and (2) continues Tier 2 in perpetuity at 2.5% beginning with the 2021 compliance year. A presently existing obligation or contract right may not be impaired in any way by the bill. The bill generally takes effect June 1, 2021, except for the provisions related to black liquor, which take effect October 1, 2021.
- Remove the possibility of wood biomass from RPF, so suggested amendments for bill to separate the two products but the bill died so black liquor and mill residue remains.
- Senate bill 549: Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Thermal Biomass Systems 3 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain biomass systems primarily fueled with qualifying 4 biomass other than animal manure to be eligible for renewable energy credits; 5 altering the definition of "thermal biomass system"; and generally relating to the 6 renewable energy portfolio standard and thermal biomass systems.
- MARBIDCO relief funding was a breath of fresh air for forestry with everyone excited and applying for the funding.
- There is a 4-H forestry club with 15 kids participating and will be putting together a tour for the kids. Any time we can get kids interested in learning about forestry is a wonderful thing.

- Will be doing a ribbon cutting at Delmarva Lumber which is in the process of opening back up. Should be up and running and fully operational in a few weeks. Ribbon cutting will be May 25th.

Sean Hough- Livestock:

- Calving season, pigs and sheep have been farrowing and lambing.
- Cattle and pig prices steady and climbing.
- Unfortunately feed prices are climbing which can cause issues later in the year.
- Biggest issues are the processing and slaughtering, the processors in the state cannot keep up with the demand of the farmers.
- More processing plants need to open up to help with the demand but USDA is affecting this with some plants being shut down due to violations.
- As we get into the fairs and shows and individuals try to get the sold animals into processing the back up will continue to increase.

James Raley- Nursery I:

- State Soil conservation meeting tomorrow.

Michael Levensgood- Poultry I:

- **Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) announced increase to the Manure Transport Program**
They have increased the cost-share rate for farmers and manure brokers hauling poultry manure to qualifying farms to **\$28 per ton**. This new assistance will further support Maryland farmers with making the switch to using poultry manure as a crop fertilizer and help reduce excess phosphorus from entering local waterways. - <https://news.maryland.gov/mda/press-release/2021/04/06/department-increases-cost-share-assistance-for-manure-transport-program/>
- **Booster BBQ:** In place of our annual Booster Banquet that is generally held in Salisbury in April, DCA is planning an indoor/outdoor BBQ event at the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington, Delaware on Friday, June 18. This event will be take into account all COVID protocols. More details to come.
- **USDA re-emphasizes that food packaging is not a coronavirus risk:** After more than a year since the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a global health emergency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to underscore that there is no credible evidence of food or food packaging associated with or as a likely source of viral transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus causing COVID-19. "Consumers should be reassured that we continue to believe, based on our understanding of currently available reliable scientific information, and supported by overwhelming international scientific consensus, that the foods they eat and food packaging they touch are highly unlikely to spread SARS-CoV-2," Acting USDA Secretary Kevin Shea and Acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock said in a statement. Read more in the National Chicken Council's [Washington Report](#).
- **DCA's position on ACT vs. MDE Montgomery County court decision, we have asked them to appeal:** Delmarva Chicken Association Director Holly Porter made the following statement after a Montgomery County, Md. Circuit Court judge issued an order in Assateague Coastal Trust v. Maryland Department of the Environment requiring further review of the general discharge permit for animal feeding operations.
- "It's no accident the plaintiffs in this case crossed the Chesapeake Bay to file their challenge in the chicken- farm-free Montgomery County. They deliberately searched for a forum that rarely adjudicates matters of agricultural law. And it's no accident that this

comes as Assateague Coastal Trust benefits from a \$3.6 million windfall from outside backers to fund new anti-agriculture lawsuits. Delmarva Chicken Association fully expects the state of Maryland to appeal this decision and see that the Maryland Department of the Environment's AFO permit – which received the Environmental Protection Agency's approval during review – is sustained by a higher court. “Ambient air quality data collected by Maryland environmental regulators shows that ammonia levels on Maryland Eastern Shore are far below an MDE – determined 350 parts-per-billion threshold, even in areas near chicken farms. The plaintiffs relied on a faulty mathematical model for ammonia emissions that assume chicken farms house birds every single day of the year (they don't), assumes farmers never control ammonia with litter amendments (they do), and assumes the Eastern Shore has no ammonia-absorbing forested land (needless to say, it does). The researchers have admitted their model is “not a realistic approach”, but it fit these plaintiffs' preconceived notions and they were only too eager to rely on it in court. While Maryland farmers work hard to achieve environmental progress, including sustained reductions in nutrients delivered to the Chesapeake Bay, these activists remain determined to put hundreds of farm families out of work by eradicating chicken farming on the eastern shore.”

- **Ag's op-ed: 'Readers deserve better coverage of farms and the Bay':** *DCA, Maryland Farm Bureau and Maryland Grain Producers collaborated on [an op-ed column](#) published in the Annapolis, Md. Capital Gazette after it published a series of opinion columns arguing that farmers should be the target of harsh new regulations, and merit no cooperation or cost sharing from states or environmental groups, to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. You can read the column below.*
- In Maryland, more than 350,000 people earn a living from agriculture. All of them – and, really, Marylanders of all walks of life – deserve fair, thoughtful coverage of their livelihood. But it has become clear to members of the Delmarva Chicken Association, Maryland Farm Bureau, and Maryland Grain Producers that Gerald Winegrad's long streak of columns focused on criticizing farms and the Chesapeake Bay don't rise to that standard.
- Winegrad returns to a frequent assertion in his March 7 column – that Maryland farms are unregulated or under-regulated. That's news to farmers who wade through county planning and zoning fine print to site and build farm structures, file and follow detailed nutrient management plans (whether they use chicken litter or commercial fertilizer) and report all fertilizer use through Annual Implementation Plans, or obtain CAFO permits and adhere to stormwater management requirements to build and operate new, energy-efficient chicken houses. Maryland's chicken-raising farms are subject to zero-discharge effluent limitations and must to report any pollutant discharges the same way urban permitholders are. Their manure storage structures must be engineered to withstand once-every-25-years weather. Recordkeeping to prove environmental compliance is a constant duty for modern farmers, a reality that was only dimly in view when Winegrad left public office 25 years ago. Improving the health of the Chesapeake Bay depends on four key sectors – wastewater treatment plants, farmers, suburban and urban homeowners and businesses, and septic system users – all working in concert to lower the pollutants they send to the Bay.
- **The little-noticed truth is that in Maryland only two of those sectors – wastewater plants and agriculture – have reduced their pollutant footprints over the long haul.** Since 1985, according to the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), Maryland's farmers have reduced their annual nitrogen loads to the Bay by 12.5 million pounds; cut their phosphorus loads by 1.2 million pounds; and trimmed their sediment loads by 216,000 tons. Winegrad labels it a myth that “widespread adoption of sound nutrient management” has happened on Maryland farms. But the sizeable pollutant

reductions farmers achieved directly follow from those very real changes. (Maryland's newest Watershed Implementation Plan calls for even more nutrient reductions to come from farmland.) The wastewater sector has contributed striking progress to the cause as well. While sewer plants and farmers have been turning the nutrient spigot tighter, developed areas – Maryland's neighborhoods, shopping malls, and office parks – have, unfortunately, become larger contributors of those same pollutants that farmers have reduced. Since 1985, annual nitrogen loads to the Chesapeake Bay from Maryland's cities and suburbs have ballooned by 2.9 million pounds, according to CAST – clawing back nearly one-fourth of the water quality gains Maryland farmers have made. Sprawl in urban and suburban areas has resulted in sending nearly 75,000 more pounds of phosphorus a year to the Bay now than in the 1980s, and these areas have increased their sediment loads to the point that developed regions now send more sediment to the Bay than farms do. Winegrad says the environmental community should stop cooperating with the agricultural community to implement conservation, in favor of advocating for stricter regulations. Yet Maryland farmers are the most regulated in the country. Each time a new regulation has been enacted, admittedly not without consternation, Maryland farmers have stepped up to the plate to get the job done. There are amazing examples of environmental organizations working with farmers to install best management practices resulting in real environmental benefits as opposed to fighting in Annapolis. Winegrad writes that there is "no logical reason" to sustain Maryland farms in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In truth there are abundant reasons: the millions of Americans our farmers feed, and the hundreds of thousands of Maryland families who earn their livelihoods on or supporting those farms, all while making substantial contributions to a cleaner Chesapeake Bay that Winegrad simply will not acknowledge. There is no sense in wishing away Maryland's agricultural sector, and your readers deserve more intelligent coverage of these issues than the one-note mantras Winegrad delivers in column after column.

- **USDA re-opens "Pandemic Assistance for Producers" after identifying gaps in earlier aid:** USDA is establishing new programs and efforts to bring financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and producers who felt the impact of COVID-19 market disruptions. The new initiative — USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers — will reach a broader set of producers than in previous COVID-19 aid programs. USDA is dedicating at least \$6 billion toward the new programs. USDA will reopen sign-up for [CFAP 2](#) for at least 60 days beginning on April 5, 2021. The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has committed at least \$2.5 million to improve outreach for CFAP 2 and will establish partnerships with organizations with strong connections to socially disadvantaged communities to ensure they are informed and aware of the application process. Information on how this new program can help contract growers who raise broiler chickens [is at this farmers.gov page](#). This section is notable: "Commodities grown under a contract in which the grower has ownership and production risk are eligible for CFAP 2, and certain contract growers are eligible for assistance through CFAP 2 under CFAP Additional Assistance. Payments for contract growers are currently on hold and are likely to require modifications to the regulation as part of a broader evaluation. FSA will continue to accept applications from interested contract growers during this evaluation period."

Clifford Newsome Jr- State Grange:

- April National Grange Month, Maryland state president attended a virtual national call with legislation to address items of concern in agriculture.
- Newsletter about the tire disposal and disposal of unused Ag chemicals and advised to contact MDA or Ag extension offices.

- Slowly getting back on course and this will affect how much the kids are involved this summer with the fairs throughout the state.
- Some fairs are limited on what exhibits they can have.
- Livestock exhibits are limited to only 4-H members and parents to attend.
- Maryland State Fair is looking to operate this year but to what extent is still to be determined.
- Maryland President Allen Stiles - his horse and cattle are on the national judging contest and this is an honor for him and his family. They have owned and shown jersey cattle since 1924.
- When you think Jersey cattle you think Spring Valley Jerseys.

Tom Warpinski- Turf:

- It's still pretty wet out in the fields. A lot of damage and loss from standing water. Lawn care companies and landscapers are in full spring mode.
- Most farms are finished up with their initial spring fertility and are now out in the fields mowing and harvesting.
- The continued wet cool weather has really allowed winter annual and perennials to flourish Not only on our farms but also on home lawns and sports fields. Broadleaf winter annuals are relatively easy to control. The tough ones are the grassy winter grasses. Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), and perennial Roughstalk bluegrass (*Poa Trivialis*). Both love cool wet weather and control treatment is very limited other than Roundup.
- Sod sales are up a bit so far this spring compared to last spring. New home sales and construction are up about 15% here in Maryland versus same period last year.
- Overall farm input costs are going up dramatically. Fertilizer is up over 45% and fuel up about the same amount from a year ago.
- Labor is very hard to find and payroll costs are up in an effort to keep key employees.
- Our national organization is currently debating on whether or not to set up a checkoff program for sod growers. All turf growers in the US would be required to pay a fee based on square footage harvested per year. Funds would be used for promotion, lobbying and research.
- Golf courses are experiencing heavy play. Average rounds are up above pre covid numbers by up to 40% as players flock to the outdoors, fresh air and green grass.
- And lastly, April is National lawn care month, an industry campaign to build awareness of proper lawn care, educate the public on the positive social and environmental benefits of natural grass, and to support Turfgrass growers and green industry companies and professionals who want to educate their clients about their lawns.

Staff/Guest Updates:

Cassie Shirk:

- The secretary and Julie commented on the supplemental budget and how that impacts the industry.
- Session ended on Monday and overall was a good legislative session for the department and the industry.
- Discussed in previous meetings about the bad bills that we were able to defeat including the ban on glyphosate, and earlier this session the legislature decided not to override the governor's veto of chlorpyrifos.

- Bill that would have affected Ag commission which was adding a hemp position did not move after passing the house.
- Tuesday governor held first bill signing including both of the department's bills.
- List of all the bills the department tracked this session to see where everything ended.

Kevin Conroy:

- Spotted Lantern Fly program will be receiving \$435,000.00.
- Surveillance in Pennsylvania and Southern Maryland, there have been some colonies identified in Northern Virginia to try to get ahead of it.
- Pesticide Disposal program cards came in, will be sending out emails and cards out, and also reaching out with social media.
- If need information on program please ask Jason.
- Everything else normal course of business.

Julie Oberg:

- Included in the supplemental budget was MDE received 1.5 million for Ag tire recycling.
- We will be working with MDE and farm bureau to make sure we get the word out.
- Announced that the Manure Transport program for increased cost share rate for farmers is \$28.00 per ton, help to get the manure further out from lower eastern shore to southern and western Maryland.
- Announced that the department has four new conservation practices that are eligible for cost share funding.
- These practices involve woody vegetation in and along fields to serve as national filters.
- Also expanded to help farmers install livestock fencing systems to improve pasture management.
- Also working with USDA to finalize on satellite manure facilities.
- For Resource Conservations Technical Assistance position pleased to tell everyone we filled 40 of 60 open positions and 19 new hires will be coming in April and May and we are continuing to work to fill the 20 remaining positions.
- Court of special appeals on the CAFO permit.

Steve Connelly:

- Dairy Margin Coverage program will be able to do calendar year 2020 similar to 2019 and able to support premiums for farmers that participate in the program.
- Situation with equine herpes virus 1 quarantine on three sites in Maryland. The quarantining for Pimlico went off on April 12th. Bowie goes off of quarantine on April 17th and Laurel Park goes off quarantine on April 18th.
- Fingers crossed that we are through this crisis.
- Maryland Jockey Club made some announcements that they had to cancel racing events and will be adding Thursdays in June and July to make up for the loss of racing days.
- Moved Spring Stakes race to April 19th.

Joe Bartenfelder:

- Have a cabinet meeting with the governor.
- Good legislative session due to hard work of our staff, Julie, Hans, Kevin, Steve, and especially Cassie.
- Governors supplemental budget he took care of the Maryland Rural Council with extra funding as well as the Dairy Margin Coverage program which is good news for agriculture and good news for our state.

Jason Schellhardt:

- Spending most time waiting for cicadas to appear.
- A lot of media interest in this event due to them only occurs once every 17 years.
- Working on advising the public and making sure everyone knows that they are harmless.

Steve McHenry:

- Next generation of farmers requisition program has been extended another 5 years.
- Extremely busy with relief act funding to deal with the pandemic.
- Launched 5 relief branch programs: two small programs for oyster farmers and urban farmers and three larger programs related to livestock equipment processing, cold storage equipment and wood processing.
- These are all things needed to help rural businesses and farmers make adjustments to their business due to the pandemic.
- Three larger grants deadline was April 1st.
- Overwhelmed with request for funding received over twice as many as we were expecting.
- Request for 4.1 million in funding but only have 1.3 million to fund.
- Will have to review and go through requests.
- Loan money under favorable terms to help complete started projects and have requested additional funding.
- Regular lending activity has picked up over the last month or two showing signs of recovery.

Sarah Fielder:

- Urban Farmer Relief Program and the Shellfish Aquaculture Relief program deadline is tomorrow.

Matt Teffeau:

- Excited about the money toward the Maryland Rural Program in the supplemental budget.
- Will have more information on Rural Maryland Prosperity Fund application process in the upcoming week.
- The committee on the grant funding has met so will be moving forward.
- In the supplemental budget the governor put 300 million dollars with 200 million going to infrastructure.
- Rural internet providers will be working with governor's office of rural broadband which will be changed to office and state broadband.
- First broadband internet customer hooked up in Caroline County with a ribbon cutting event.
- Money through office has been helpful for all internet providers in rural areas.

Jane They:

- Maryland Horse Council and advocate for 100,000 horses and 705,000 acres of land in Maryland.
- Excited for Fair Hill event in Cecil County.
- This is a triathlon of horses.
- This will be a great event for Maryland horse month in October.
- Outdoor recreation interested, new riders, horse prices are up, and competitions are high.
- Trying to link technical and financial assistance to horse farms.

- Soil conservation districts throughout the years, out reach through horse counsel magazine.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:36am respectfully submitted by: Jessica O'Sullivan