

# Maryland Department of Agriculture



**Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**January 19, 2016**



# At Md. Dept. of Agriculture...

Our Vision is:

**. . .to achieve excellence in programs and in services that preserve and protect agricultural resources and the environment, promote profitable agriculture and consumer confidence, and enhance the quality of life for all Marylanders.**

Our Mission is:

**. . .to provide leadership and support to agriculture and the citizens of Maryland by conducting regulatory, service, and educational activities that assure consumer confidence, protect the environment, and promote agriculture.**



# Agriculture in Maryland

- 12,256 farms on 2 million acres
- Average farm size: 166 acres
- Top Commodities:
  1. *Poultry*
  2. *Grain (corn and soybeans)*
  3. *Greenhouse and nursery*
  4. *Dairy*
- Maryland also has strong and expanding markets in local, value-added, fresh produce, and organic products that capitalize on regional demographics.



# Secretary's Goals



- Diversify and expand agricultural businesses;
- Rebuild farmer trust in the department; and
- Work directly with elected officials and legislators to promote the importance of agriculture.



# One Year's Progress

- **Diversify and Expand Agricultural Businesses**
  - Capitalizing on increasing demand for local products
  - New Maryland's Best logo
  - Ice Cream Trail, Governor's Buy Local Cookout, National Farmers Market Week, Havana International Trade Fair



# One Year's Progress



- **Diversify and Expand Agricultural Business**

- Buyer-Grower Expo: January 20
- Maryland's Horse Industry:
  - "Touch of Class" awards
  - Maryland Horse Chase
  - 11-day My Maryland Horse Festival at the Maryland State Fair
  - Preakness Stakes
  - State High School Rodeo Championship
  - Maryland Million



# One Year's Progress

- **Diversify and Expand Agricultural Business**
  - **Agricultural Education**
    - Homegrown School Lunch Week
    - Maryland FFA convention
    - National Ag Day/Read Across Maryland
    - Sam Ogle Middle School's garden initiative
    - Baltimore City School Initiative



# One Year's Progress



*Photo: Executive Office of the Governor*

- **Rebuilding Farmer Trust**
  - With industry implemented Phosphorous Management Tool (PMT) regulations.
    - Established PMT Advisory Committee
    - Eight farms enrolled in the on-farm economic impact study.
    - 62% of the soil phosphorous data received.
    - Only 18% of the acres are impacted by PMT.





# One Year's Progress

- **Rebuilding Farmer Trust**
  - Animal Waste Technology Fund
    - Funded five farm-scale projects
    - RFP - \$2.5 million additional projects
  - FY2016 Cover Crop Program
    - Record year with 492,244 acres planted
    - Have exceeded 400,000 acres last six years
    - Exceeding WIP milestone by 18%



# One Year's Progress



- **Working with Elected Officials**
  - Maryland Department of Agriculture's Open House
  - Legislative tours on 16 farms across seven counties
  - Breakfast reception on Ag Day at the Maryland State Fair



# 2016 Focus Areas



- **High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI)**
  - Fall migration is happening
  - Preparing for the past year
  - MDA has participated in several table top exercises and simulations
  - Public outreach and education
  - Animal health diagnostic labs have increased activity
  - Have a prepared Declaration of Emergency
  - “Light years” ahead of Midwest counterparts



# 2016 Focus Areas

- **Pollinator Protection**
  - Managed Pollinator Protection Plan (MP3s)
  - Varied Pressures on honey bees and other pollinators
  - Pollinator protection summit January 20 at UMCP
    - Bringing together all stakeholders to develop MP3
  - MP3 implemented Spring 2016



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

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