

Fifth Annual Small Farm Conference Draws Record Attendance

Workshops Address Diverse Interests



Farmers, landowners, and gardening enthusiasts were offered tips and tools at the Fifth Annual Small Farm Conference, hosted by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Maryland Cooperative Extension, and Delaware State University. The conference was held in the Richard A. Henson Center at UMES on Saturday, November 1.

Left: Maryland Secretary of Agriculture addresses current issues in Maryland Agriculture.

Honorable Roger Richardson was on hand to give opening remarks and to advocate for MDA's commitment 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. Mr. Richardson highlighted a few new programs offered by MDA. He shared details about Maryland's Best, a website designed to help identify and locate Maryland's finest agricultural products, from produce, seafood, and specialty foods to grains, nursery items, and ag-recreational activities. Another program Richardson highlighted is the Maryland's Farm to School

Program, a program to bring Maryland grown products to school lunches.

The keynote address, *Small Farms: Wisdom from the Kitchen Table*, was given by Steven Truitt, a native of the Eastern Shore. Truitt took the audience back to the small farm kitchen where many youth have learned values and coping skills for life.

Over one hundred participants were exposed to a variety of workshops targeted at small-scale farming about profitable alternative enterprises, new direct marketing opportunities and other strategies to increase farm income and sustain small-scale agriculture. Berran Rogers, Small Farm Project Director, relates, "I'm am very pleased with the large turnout we had this year; this confirms that there is a strong need to establish and maintain educational programs to help beginning and existing farmers withstand and thrive during these economic hard times."

Seminar topics included *Growing and Marketing Fresh-cut Flowers*, *Growing Certified Organic Vegetables*, *Making the Web Work for Your Farm Business*, *Direct Marketing: Is it Right for You?*, *Fall is Fabulous for Gardening!*, *Benefits of Raising*

MARYLAND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE

MCE Connection

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Ginger S. Myers addresses a group about successful direct marketing and identifying innovative marketing strategies to increase farm sales.



Dr. Richard Taylor provided participants with information for Managing Forages for Pasture-fed Livestock—grass and legume species that work best, pasture rotation tips, and best management tips.



Network Grower Program with US Orchid Expanding



Medium-sized orchid plants in pots



Flowering orchid plants in pots



US Orchid employee waters pre-bloom plants

The network grower program is expanding as US Orchid Laboratory and Nursery, Inc. now has three local growers contracted to shepherd orchids through a part of the growing process. Tommy Howe of Pittsville, Dan. Medlin of Salisbury, and L. Hitchens of Pittsville have signed on to be independent growers. After entering into a contract, growers work in the UMES greenhouse operated by US Orchid to learn the growing process. The grower then selects a preferred stage of orchid development,

purchases orchids from US Orchid, raises them through that preferred stage, and then sells the plants back to the company at a pre-determined price. While the growing cycle for an orchid is eighteen months, network growers shepherd the plants through only a three month or so season.

Dr. Tom Handwerker, who helped to coordinate this project as well as the successful Bell Nursery network program, holds interest meetings to share details of the opportunity.

Growers Needed

The US Orchid program is always looking for new growers. Many successful growers begin without any farm experience. For information about the program, please call Dr. Tom Handwerker at 410-651-7994.

Lambing 'n Kidding School



Schoenian introduces her "helpers" to school participants

On December 6th, UMES hosted a Lambing and Kidding school, designed for veteran and novice shepherds. The school was led by Susan Schoenian, Maryland Cooperative Extension specialist and nationally recognized expert. Other speakers included Dahlia Johnson-O'Brien, Delaware State University; John Hall, Senior Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Extension Director; and Shannon Uzelac, a local shepherd. Workshop topics included *Preparing for Lambing and Kidding*, *Out of Season Breeding*, *Breeding for Better Results*, *Lamb and Kid Care*, and *Problems Encountered and Addressing Them*. According to Errol Mattox, Farm Management Specialist and workshop coordinator, "The quality of the presentations was impressive. The 4H shepherds benefited from Schoenian's explanation of difficult births using anatomically-correct stuffed animals." Participants inquired as to when more workshops on goat and sheep topics would be offered.

Small Farm Conference (cont.)

Pastured-fed Livestock and AG 101...So You Want to Start Farming.

Andy Hankins, an Extension Specialist in Alternative Agriculture in Virginia, conducted a fresh-cut flowers workshop. He noted that vegetable growers who sell produce at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and local supermarkets may find that they can bring in additional income by adding fresh-cut flowers to their current inventory of products. His session not only discussed recommended varieties and production requirements but also addressed the marketing potential of growing flowers.

Erroll Mattox and Faith Robinson conducted a workshop on growing certified organic vegetables.

With the increase in demand for healthy, pesticide-free, fresh vegetables and fruits, farmers can command a much higher premium price for growing certified organic produce. The workshop explained in detail the requirements and process for becoming a certified organic farmer.

In *Making the Web Work for your Farm Business*, Theresa Nartea explained how to post and update a variety of free web pages on internet farm directories that are visited by consumers who support small farmers. One of her tips is on the back of this newsletter.

The Shore's own Ginny Rosenkranz conducted *Fall Gardening and Landscaping Tips*. She shared tips for putting in a lawn, planting trees and shrubs, planting bulbs for beautiful spring color and planting

herbaceous perennials for summer color.

In *Ag 101... So You Want to Start Farming*, Terry Poole tackled the question, "Where do I begin if want to start farming?" There is an increasing trend of people with an expressed interest in farming on a small-scale. Poole addressed what one needs to consider before getting into farming as well as available resources for start-up.

Door prizes such as a deluxe tool set, fertilizer/grass seed, a standard spreader, decorative hanging sign, mums, a gift card, and a tool box were awarded during the morning session and at lunch. The success of the Small Farm Conference has led to expanding the conference for 2009. Next year's event will be held on November 6th and 7th.



Program Updates

Seafood Technology

Food safety and quality enhancement have been long-standing issues for regional and local food industries. Consumers and regulatory agencies are forces that constantly demand safe and quality products. The need for food safety education is particularly evident on the Delmarva Peninsula where the seafood industry is important to the economy. The Center for Food Science and Technology at UMES strives to conduct outreach initiatives that provide food safety education to consumers as well as industry representatives.

Through a collaborative effort, short courses were developed for safe food handling practices and conducted for local food producers and food handlers. A seafood Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) course was offered for the seafood industry and two workshops, the Delmarva Seafood Seminar "From Dock to Plate," were conducted. These workshops were supported by the Maryland Sea Grant program and the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Seafood Marketing Program and covered topics about safe handling of seafood.

In addition to the Delmarva Seafood Seminars and other workshops, educational materials have been developed to educate watermen and fishermen about scombrototoxin and to provide strategies for avoiding formation of this toxin in sensitive fish species, such as tuna and marlin. Flyers were distributed during workshops and appropriate fishing events in Ocean City and Crisfield, MD.

Each year UMES co-hosts Seafood HACCP "Segment 2" workshops with the University of Delaware. This training is offered by the National Seafood HACCP Alliance, is certified by the Association of Food and Drug Officials, and is accepted by the US FDA and state health departments. For more information on any of these workshops, contact Tom Rippen at (410) 651-6636 or E-mail: terippen@umes.edu or Jurgen Schwarz at (410) 651-7963.

Nutrition

The 1890 EFNEP Adult Nutrition Program *Family-based Prevention: A Key to Good Health* was launched this past September 2008 with the hiring of Margaret Bratton as the Extension Nutrition Assistant and is progressing well. Three area churches and three community groups are participating. The goal of the program is to organize ten groups each with at least ten participants and take them through six to eight nutrition and fitness education sessions culminating with a graduation ceremony.

This educational program is a combination of two curricula *Eat Right for Life and Power to Prevent: A Family Lifestyle Approach to Diabetes Prevention*. The activities of these curricula are a means by which we lead our participants in achieving the goal of EFNEP which is to educate limited resource families with young children with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior changes necessary to maintain nutritionally sound diets and enhance personal development. Each session focuses upon taking small steps that lead to big rewards.

The EFNEP Youth Program has been successfully integrated into the community. Many of the agencies and

organizations that were served over the summer contacted Michelle Thompson, Extension Nutrition Assistant, for additional nutritional programs for after and in-school programs. Ms. Thompson recently completed a six-week program in Somerset County for Youth with incarcerated parents. The children in the group were excited to learn about nutrition and were engaged and involved in the program. Additionally, Thompson received an invitation to teach nutrition at the newly opened Garland Hayward Youth Center in Princess Anne, MD. The after-school program at the Garland Center consists of approximately 70 students in grades 1-12. Finally, the program has been invited into the Somerset County Public Schools to teach EFNEP Nutrition.

For more information about these programs or any of the Nutrition and Health programs, please contact Dr. Virginie Zoumenou at vmzoumenou@umes.edu or Sharon Waters at (410) 651-6218.

Rural Development Center Supports Delmarva Education Foundation

The Delmarva Education Foundation (DEF) is a local nonprofit organization that serves seven counties in the three states of the lower Delmarva Peninsula. DEF offers local residents a broad range of educational resources from the office in the Wicomico Public Library in Salisbury. DEF's mission is to improve educational opportunities for residents of lower Delmarva using a regional approach to facilitate accessibility, quality, and effectiveness of education for all ages.

DEF's Financial Aid Database is a compilation of information on regional scholarships and financial aid for local students that is easily accessed and searched from the website, www.delmarvaed.org. More than 800 resources are listed and updated annually.

Other educational services DEF provides include financial literacy workshops through a partnership with SECU-MD credit union; referral information on local home-schooling organizations, tutoring and test prep services, classes for GED, English as a second language and U.S. citizenship; contact listings and data on local schools; seminars to facilitate regional collaboration and awareness on various issues concerning rural education, college access, and financial aid; test proctoring for distance education courses; and community service and volunteer opportunities.

DEF operations are funded by charitable contributions, equipment donations, and volunteer labor from private individuals, local businesses, and non-profit organizations such as the Private Industry Council (now called the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance) and the Rural Development Center of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. UMES/RDC provided funds in support of the Rural Research Symposium, a Financial Aid Forum, and the development of the DEF Common Scholarship Application Form. The RDC also provided assistance for an improved information system.

For more information about the Rural Development Center or other programs RDC supports, contact Dan Kuennen at (410) 651-6183 or visit the website at http://www.skipjack.net/le_shore/rural/index.html.



NOTEWORTHY

MARYLAND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Hard to maintain weight during the holidays?

By Lindsay Carley, Preceptor: Dr. Virginie Zoumenou



Have you ever felt that no matter what you eat over the holidays, you just gain weight? It can be frustrating and you may feel overwhelmed. Here are 5 healthy tips that will help you enjoy the

holidays instead of dread the season.

1. Know and eat the right portion size. For example: one 3 oz serving size of meat would be the size of a deck of cards, one serving of butter would be the size of a thumb, one serving of fruit would be as big as a tennis ball, and one serving of bread would be the size of a cassette tape.

2. Eat Slowly. Take the time to sit down at a table to enjoy the holiday foods. Take a few seconds between each bite. This will help prevent people from over eating.

3. Drink Water. Try to drink a glass of water 20 minutes before you eat. This will help make you feel full faster when mealtime occurs.

4. Eat in moderation. There is no need to skip out on your favorite holiday foods, but remember to eat the higher calorie foods in moderation. Try and fill your plate half full with fruits and vegetables.

5. Stay Active. Through the hustle and bustle of the season, remember the importance of physical activity. It may seem like you have no time, but try and take a walk in between meals with family or friends.

Healthy Holiday Recipe

Apple Bear Bake

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour

Makes: 9 servings

6 cups thinly sliced baking apples

1 tsp. lemon juice

1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) margarine or butter

1/3 cup flour

2 Tbsp. brown sugar

1-1/2 cups TEDDY GRAHAMS

Cinnamon Graham Snacks

PREHEAT oven to 350°F.

Toss apples, lemon juice and cinnamon in 2-quart baking dish.

CUT margarine into combined flour and brown sugar in medium bowl until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in graham snacks. Spoon over apple mixture. Cover loosely with foil to prevent topping from over-browning.

BAKE 40 minutes or until apples are tender. Cool slightly.



www.kraftfoods.com

Web/Marketing Tip

<http://www.localharvest.org/>

Local Harvest, a website that promotes locally-grown products, allows you to develop a personal webpage about your farm and your products. Thanks to Theresa Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialist, for the tip.

Web/Marketing Tip

http://www.marylandsbest.net/register_now.php

Maryland's Best is a website guide to finding Maryland products from fruits and veggies to seafood to agrotourism. If you are a Maryland grower or processor, go to the link above to register and have your information available to consumers.