

FARM NOTES

CARROLL COUNTY NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

JAN. - FEB. 24

University of
Maryland Extension

700 Agriculture Center
Westminster, MD 21157
M—F 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
(410) 386-2760

[extension.umd.edu/locations/
carroll-county](https://extension.umd.edu/locations/carroll-county)

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Bryan Butler
Extension Agent,
Ag & Food Systems



2024 HEALTHY SOILS GRANT

MDA News Release

The Maryland Department of Agriculture will accept Fiscal Year 2024 grant applications for its Healthy Soils Competitive Fund beginning January 3, 2024. This program provides financial assistance to eligible farmers and organizations to adopt conservation practices that benefit the climate, soil, and water. Regardless of farm size, Maryland farmers and organizations with innovative conservation ideas are encouraged to apply for these grants. Successful applicants will receive up to \$50,000 to support 3 years of enhanced soil health practices.

“This program funds innovative soil health and agroforestry practices that benefit cropland, improve water quality, and capture carbon from the atmosphere,” said Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks. “It’s a win-win for our farms, our Chesapeake Bay and our climate goals. I urge Maryland farmers with operations of all sizes to apply for these grants.”

Funds are available to farmers or organizations that want to manage the following practices in innovative ways:

- Cover Crops
- Conservation Tillage
- Pasture and Hay Planting
- Conservation Cover
- Critical Area Planting
- Conservation Crop Rotation
- Nutrient Management
- Integrated Pest Management
- New for 2024 - Soil Carbon Amendment

Additionally, the following Agroforestry practices are available for funding:

- Alley Cropping
- Hedgerow Planting
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
- Silvopasture
- Tree and Shrub Establishment

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2024 HEALTHY SOILS GRANT, CONTINUED

There are no minimum or maximum acreage requirements. Grant recipients will receive a portion of the funds (not to exceed 40%) up front, with the remainder distributed annually upon verification of progress. The allowable upfront payment will be dependent on the proposed scope of work.

Grants provided by the Healthy Soils Competitive Fund may be used to support the implementation of conservation practices, purchase equipment that supports the adoption of soil health practices, and cover research and administrative costs for organizations that provide technical support to producers.

Developed with input from Maryland's Soil Health Advisory Committee, the program is funded by the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund and the Moore-Miller Administration. Grant applications are available at mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages?Soil-Health.aspx. Applications should be submitted to the Maryland Department of Agriculture by 5 p.m. on March 6, 2024. Grant recipients will be notified by April 30, 2024. For more information, please contact Nick Miller at nicholas.miller2@maryland.gov or 410-980-2350.

UME—CARROLL COUNTY IN-PERSON PROGRAMS FOR PESTICIDE AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT CREDITS & NEW APPLICATORS

Upcoming Programs for Pesticide & Nutrient Management Credits

Date & Time	Program	Registration
February 5, 2024, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Private Applicator Recertification	Call 410-386-2760
February 22, 2024, 6 – 8 p.m.	New Private Applicator Training (optional)	Call 410-386-2760
February 29, 2024, 6 – 8 p.m.	New Private Applicator Exam	Call 410-386-2760
March 4, 2024, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Nutrient Management Voucher Training	Call 410-386-2760

Online, self-paced, Nutrient Management Voucher training and Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification is available, free of charge through UME by visiting: <https://umeagfs.teachable.com/>.

RENEWING YOUR PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE

For private pesticide applicators that expired in December 2023, remember that you must go online to renew and print your license by visiting <https://egov.maryland.gov/MDA/Pesticides/LicenseRenewal>.

You should have received a postcard from the Maryland Department of Agriculture in November. The postcard contains your permit number and your unique renewal code that is needed to renew your current license.

If your license expired in 2023, but you did not receive a postcard then you probably still need recertification credits. For more information, call Kelly Love at the Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410- 841-5710.

2023 MARYLAND SOYBEAN VARIETY TRIALS

Nicole Fiorellino, University of Maryland Extension

The University of Maryland offers a fee-based, soybean variety performance testing program to local and national seed companies. The results from these replicated trials provide agronomic performance information about soybean varieties tested at four locations in Maryland considered representative of the state's geography and weather conditions. The full report is available online at psla.umd.edu/extension/md-crops.

RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

MDA Press Release

The Maryland Department of Agriculture is currently accepting applications for the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RSFI) program designed to assist in strengthening Maryland's food supply chain between farmers and consumers by investing in infrastructure. The department has received \$3.8 million through USDA's RFSI program to administer and facilitate a competitive subaward grant process.

RFSI projects are expected to expand capacity for aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products including, but not limited to, specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other value-added food products. Projects should expand middle-of-the food supply chain capacity and offer more and better market opportunities to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, to include underserved producers that lack access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products.

The RFSI Program has two grant tracks: The Equipment-Only Grant and Infrastructure Grant. Applicants may only apply for one track. Grant applications are due by 11:59 p.m. EST on Friday, March 15, 2024.

- Equipment-Only Grants range from \$10,000 up to \$100,000. This fixed price grant can only fund equipment and should fit the scope and goals of the RFSI program. No match is required for Equipment-Only Grants.
- Infrastructure Grants range from \$100,000 up to \$3 million. This grant can fund capital investments such as construction, equipment (e.g. delivery vehicles, frozen or refrigerated storage, value-added food processing equipment, or other equipment for middle-of-the food supply chain activities), and building renovations. Infrastructure Grants can also fund facility design or engineering, staff time, modernizing systems (e.g. tracking, storage, information technology, etc.), plan development (e.g. Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan), and market development. A match is required for Infrastructure Grants and starts at 50% of the total project cost. However, if the main applicant qualifies as underserved, the match requirement will be reduced to 25% of the total project cost.

MARBIDCO has partnered with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide matching funds for this program. If eligible, MARBIDCO's funds can be used to help the grant applicants meet their non-federal match requirement if the project involves the aggregation of local farm products for wholesale or institutional sales. More specifically:

- For historically underserved farmers, ranchers or other businesses that qualify under SBA categories of small, disadvantaged business, women-owned small business, or veteran-owned small business- grant of up to 100% match, up to a maximum of \$50,000.
- For all other eligible applicants- grants of up to 50% match, up to a maximum of \$50,000, with this exception: if a unit of local government, rural regional council, or county school system is the applicant, the maximum award could be up to \$400,000.

MARBIDCO's RFSI matching grant application form will be posted on their website on February 1, 2024. The deadline for submission will be February 29, 2024.

An informational Zoom webinar about the RFSI program and grants will be held at 3 p.m. on January 24, 2024. Virtual office hours for prospective applicants to connect with Maryland Department of Agriculture representatives, are scheduled for February 7 and February 21, 2024 at 10 a.m. Registration is required for each session.

For RFSI program information, application details, and webinar registration, please visit MDA.Maryland.gov.

For questions or more information about Maryland's RFSI program and the application process, please contact Karen Fedor at rfsi.mda@maryland.gov or 410-841-5773.

University of Maryland Extension



This course is designed for people in Maryland who are considering or are in the beginning stages of starting a farm as a business.

Topics covered will include: business planning, marketing, crop production, livestock husbandry, soil health, integrated pest management, food safety, regulations and certifications, acquiring land and zoning, specialty crops, organic production, and urban agriculture.

Students will learn from over 14 speakers, including agricultural Extension educators, farmers, and agricultural industry professionals.

This 10-week course will be offered in a blended in-person and online format.

- The class will meet on Thursday evenings, from 7—8:30 p.m., from February 8, 2024—April 11, 2024.
- The course kick-off session on February 8 and the final class and graduation ceremony on April 11 will be offered in person and online. Small groups of students will meet in person at one of several locations across the state of Maryland, depending on where the most registrants reside. In past years we have offered the in-person sessions in Baltimore City or County, Montgomery County, and Charles County.
- In weeks 2 through 9 of the course, students will complete at-your-own pace homework on the course website on campus.extension.org and will meet online each Thursday from 7—8:30p.m. for a live class using the software Zoom.

This course does not provide college credit or an exam-based certification. Students who complete the course will receive a certificate stating that they completed the course requirements. To complete the course, students will need to both attend the weekly class and complete weekly homework on the course website.

By actively engaging in this program, participants will:

- Understand each of the topics covered at a beginner’s level, so they will be prepared to take more advanced trainings in future.
- Decide what they need to learn more about next to launch their farm business.

Two course textbooks will be used, with supplementary readings and videos from additional sources. Both course textbooks are available for free digitally. Hard-copies can be ordered from the print-on-demand service *Lulu*. Course registration is \$60 plus Eventbrite fees of \$5.87. Two people from the same family/couple may attend the course under one registration.

If the registration fee is a financial barrier, please fill out the scholarship application at: https://ume.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cUtU6gGYpqMONKe.

To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/maryland-beginning-farmer-success-course-tickets-773968509647?aff=oddtcreator>. For additional information or questions, contact Shannon Dill at 410-822-1244.



CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Upcoming 2024 Forage Conferences

Each year, the University of Maryland Extension and University of Delaware Extension organize educational sessions related to forage production for growers and other agriculture professionals to benefit the community. These sessions help our farmers and agriculture community keep current with up-to-date information about timely agriculture-related topics. CEU credits for Pesticide and Nutrient Management recertification are offered at each conference.

January 16 – Southern MD Forage Conference
Calvert County Fair- Prince Frederick, MD

January 17– Western MD Forage Conference
Garrett College– McHenry, MD

January 18– Central MD Forage Conference
New Midway Fire Company– New Midway, MD

For more information and registration, please visit:

<https://go.umd.edu/forageevents>

Mid-Atlantic Women in Agriculture Conference

February 15, 2024 • 9:00 a.m.—3 p.m.

The conference's goals are to provide women involved in agriculture an opportunity to come together to learn about current issues and topics so they can make informed decisions concerning their agribusinesses and family lives.

Cost: \$50.00

Location: Chesapeake Bay Beach Club
500 Marina Club Rd., Stevensville, MD 21666

To register, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2024WIAConference>

Urban Farmer Winter Meeting

January 27, 2024 • 12 p.m.—4 p.m.

Attend this annual professional development event to be updated on the latest local issues and research results related to urban agriculture.

Cost: \$15.00 plus \$2.85 Eventbrite fee

Location: Red Emma's Bookstore and Coffee-house
3128 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218

To register, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/urban-farmer-winter-meeting-tickets-773969271927?aff=oddtcreator>

GREAT RESOURCES ARE JUST A CLICK AWAY!



Bryan R. Butler, Sr.
Extension Agent,
Agriculture and
Food Systems



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<https://extension.umd.edu/locations/carroll-county>



University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any event or activity, please contact your local University of Maryland Extension Office.

FARM NOTES

CARROLL COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Dates to remember

- | | | | |
|---------|---|---------|---|
| Jan. 19 | Grain Marketing Mtg. @ Plum Crazy Diner
7:30 a.m. | Feb. 29 | MARBIDCO RSFI Matching Grant
Application Due |
| Jan. 20 | Registration Deadline for MSBA Shearing
School | Feb. 16 | Grain Marketing Mtg. @ Plum Crazy Diner
7:30 a.m. |
| Jan. 20 | Grain Marketing Mtg. @ Plum Crazy Diner
7:30 a.m. | Feb. 22 | New Private Pesticide Applicator Exam
Training @ UME-Carroll County, 6:00 p.m. |
| Jan. 24 | Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI)
Grants Informational Webinar, Virtual, 3 p.m. | Feb. 29 | New Private Pesticide Applicator Exam @
UME-Carroll County, 6:00 p.m. |
| Jan. 31 | MD Grain Producers Scholarship Applications
Due | Mar. 1 | MD Grain Producers CDL Grant Applications
Due |
| Feb. 2 | Grain Marketing Mtg. @ Plum Crazy Diner
7:30 a.m. | Mar. 1 | Grain Marketing Mtg. @ Plum Crazy Diner
7:30 a.m. |
| Feb. 5 | Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification, @
UME-Carroll County Office, 5:30 p.m. | Mar. 6 | Healthy Soils Grant Due by 5:00 p.m. |
| | | Mar. 15 | RFSI Grant Application Due by 11:59 p.m. |

SUBSCRIBE TO FARM NOTES:

PROVIDE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW AND RETURN TO THE
REGISTRATION TABLE

OR

CALL THE OFFICE AT 410-386-2760

OR EMAIL ATREECE@UMD.EDU

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PREFERRED DELIVERY METHOD (CIRCLE ONE): EMAIL USPS

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