Agriculture News from In and Around Garrett County, Maryland

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Mountain Top Ag News

LEAD Maryland's G. C. Visit in June

LEAD Maryland, the leadership development program for agriculture in Maryland, brought the latest class to Garrett County for a 3-day session in June.

Focusing on rural issues, natural resources and energy, the class members met with local officials, businesses, and others to learn about how different Garrett County is, compared to other Counties in Maryland.

On the first day, the class members completed leadership development activities at the Western Maryland 4-H Center low ropes course. Then the class toured some Community Action projects, including the Judy Center, Adventure Sports Center International, and workforce housing. Afterwards they learned about the community support of the robotics programs in the County. The Garrett Preston Rural Development Coalition hosted a picnic at Bob & Alice Bender's farm in the evening.

On the second day, the class toured some forestry and timbering operations, then toured Wood Products in Oakland. Red Rock Enterprises spoke to the class about sustainable forestry certification and carbon credits. Then the class toured a windmill farm in Mount Storm, WV.

Other activities of the class included discussions about rural issues in Garrett County, a presentation by the Maryland Agriculture and Rural Business Development Corporation, a welcome by the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, and more.

For more information about LEAD Maryland, visit www.leadmaryland.umd.edu or contact the Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

Cove Run Farms Corn Maze to Benefit Operation Christmas Child

Cove Run Farms, owned by Bob and Alice Bender, will once again host a 10-acre corn maze this year. The theme for 2009 is 'Sending Love Around the World' and the farm is teaming up with "Operation Christmas Child" (OCC). OCC sends shoe boxes filled with Christmas gifts to children in need across the world. A percentage of the corn maze proceeds will be donated to OCC, and people visiting the farm will be given the opportunity to give a donation to the cause.

The corn maze will be opening in mid August—call 301-746-6111 or check the website for exact dates:

CoveRunFarmsCornMaze.com

Operation Christmas Child website: samaritanspurse.org/index.php/OCC/index/

From Operation Christmas Child's website: *Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled shoe boxes and the Good News of God's love. Since 1993, more than 61 million shoe boxes have been packed, shipped, and delivered across the globe. People of all ages can be involved in this simple, hands-on missions project while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas—Jesus Christ.*

Garrett Co. Master Gardeners Offer Plant Clinics and Lawn & Garden Q&A

The Garrett Co. Master Gardeners will set up at the Oakland and Deep Creek Lake Farmers Markets to answer your questions about lawn and garden care as well as diagnosis of "sick" plants.

Visit their table every Wednesday from 10 am to 1 pm at the Oakland Market through August 26 or every Thursday from 4 to 6 pm at the Deep Creek Lake Farmers Market through August 27.

For more information about the Garrett County Master Gardener Program, Contact the Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

Buy Local Meat at the Garrett Co. Fair

Enclosed in the newsletter is a brochure developed to help buyers at the 4-H & FFA livestock auction at the fair to understand the process better. If you'd like to purchase an animal at the fair, contact the Garrett Co. Extension Office at 301-334-6960. Or pass the brochure along to another potential buyer.

FireFly Farms Looking for Local Goat Milk Sources

FireFly Farms is looking to develop additional local sources of goat milk over the next 12-18 months. FireFly Farms produces artisanal goat milk cheeses in Garrett Co. Call for more information 301-245-4630.

Region's Tomatoes and Potatoes at Risk of Devastating Disease

The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States have been invaded this summer by one of the worst foliar diseases of tomatoes and potatoes ever recorded. The disease is commonly known as late blight and is caused by the fungus-like microorganism Phytophthora infestans.

"Late blight occurs occasionally in areas that have cool temperatures and frequent rainfall which favors disease development," says Jerry Brust, IPM vegetable specialist for the University of Maryland Extension. "Usually the disease shows up in late summer and is a moderate problem; however, this year—thanks to a prolonged period of wet and cool spring weather—it was first diagnosed in mid-June and confirmed up and down the Eastern seaboard in early July. Compounding the problem, large retail stores on the East Coast unintentionally sold blight-infected plants, resulting in an increased distribution of the disease."

While late blight is annoying for home gardeners, it poses a huge financial threat to commercial growers. And while commercial growers know that spraying fungicides can help manage and prevent its spread, homeowners unaware of this contagious disease may not take timely corrective action. Their lack of knowledge can have a devastating impact because wind currents can easily carry disease spores from their vegetable gardens to farm fields several miles away.

Late blight lesions can develop on tomato leaves, stems and fruit. Initial symptoms on the leaves are water-soaked, gray or brown lesions that spread rapidly to cover

(Continued on page 2)

FSA County Committee Nominations Due

USDA's Farm Service Agency in Garrett and Allegany counties reminds farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers that they have until Aug. 3, 2009, to nominate eligible candidates to serve on local FSA county committees.

To be eligible to serve on an FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area in which the person is a candidate.

Producers may also nominate themselves, and organizations representing minorities and women may also nominate candidates. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce. Nomination forms for the 2009 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 3, 2009.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning Nov. 6. The voted ballots are due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 7, 2009.

Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan. 1, 2009.

Find FSA news releases on the agency's Web site at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov.

Sign Up: Penn State Ag Progress Days Trip

The Penn State University will be hosting the 2009 Ag Progress Days from August 18 – 20th at the Russell E. Larson Agriculture Research Center which is located 9 miles southwest of State College, PA. Ag Progress Days features research and exhibits, outreach education, guided tours and interactive fun for the whole family.

This year's event will feature over 400 exhibitors. Some of the tours will include: High Tunnel Vegetable Production, Harvesting BTU's While Improving the Woodlot and Targeted Grazing. The event also features equipment demonstrations such as corn silage chopping. The Russell E. Larson Agriculture Research Center is also home to newly expanded Pasto Agricultural Museum.

The Garrett County Office of University of Maryland Extension is coordinating transportation to Ag Progress days on Thursday, August 20th. Plans will be to car pool, van or bus depending on the interest. The cost will be $15-$20 per person depending on the mode of travel and the number of people participating.

Contact the Extension office by August 7th if you are interested in participating by calling 301-334-6960. For more information on Ag Progress Days, check out: http://apd.psu.edu/Default.htm

Energy Efficiency Program for MD

A new program is now available for all agricultural producers in Maryland. The Maryland Statewide Farm Energy Audit Program is funded by the Maryland Energy Administration, and administered by Eastern Shore Resource Conservation & Development Council and EnSave, Inc. Other program partners include USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Rural Development, the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the Maryland Agriculture and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation, Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education, and Washington County Soil Conservation District.

This program will help farmers reduce their energy costs through farm energy audits and equipment incentives for qualifying energy saving projects.

Farmers who qualify to receive a farm energy audit through this program will pay $300, just 25% of the normal auditing fee. This cost is fully refunded if they install any of the equipment recommended in their audit reports. An energy audit is not necessary for farmers to complete in order to be eligible to apply for incentives on energy saving projects in this program. Farmers who have recently installed qualifying equipment or are planning to do so are welcome to apply.

The program offers incentives for equipment such as energy efficient lighting, heating, refrigeration, ventilation, motors, and more. The incentives cannot exceed 50% of the total project cost, and are based on $0.06 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) saved for any lighting projects, $0.08 per kWh saved for any other electric saving projects, and $1.63 per British Thermal Unit (BTU) saved from any non-electric savings projects.

For more information, interested producers can call Corey Conant, EnSave's Program Manager, at (800) 732-1399, or e-mail Corey at coreyc@ensave.com.

...Devastating Disease

(Continued from page 1)

the entire leaf. The undersides of the lesions may be covered with a white fuzzy growth that contains the spores of the pathogen. On the stems, late blight lesions appear brown to almost black. Similar lesions also will develop on the fruit, either while it is still on the infected plant or after a few days of sitting on a kitchen counter. A fact sheet with photos is available online at Extension's Home and Garden Information Center website at hgic.umd.edu/_media/documents/hg38.pdf. Additional information is available at http://growit.umd.edu/

Late blight is not a danger to humans, so the fruit can be used if the affected area is removed. Any plants found with symptoms should be removed from the garden and placed in a sealed plastic bag and disposed of in the garbage. Do not put the infected plants in a compost pile because the spores will continue to spread.

Homeowners can purchase a few products that are effective if used before the disease appears and reapplied every few days if wet weather continues. The common name of the fungicide is cholorothalonil, which should appear on the label. Be sure to read and follow all label directions.

Commercial growers concerned about their fields should contact the Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

Biodiesel Seminar Slated

Friday, August the 14th an all-day Biodiesel Seminar will be conducted by Jim Farris of Magnatone Products in North Lawrence, Ohio. Jim represents Fuel Meister products and is an authorized dealer for bio-diesel processing systems. It will be a full day seminar and cover everything you always wanted to know about and how to make bio-diesel. There will be a complete step by step class and demonstration on how to use the equipment.

The event will be hosted by the Mountain Maryland Green Committee and the Savage River Lodge and lunch will be provided as a part of the class fee. The $20 preregistration fee per person is required by Tuesday, August 11 by cash or credit card and is non-refundable. Call the Savage River Lodge at 301-689-3200 and ask for Mike to RSVP or for further information. There will be a limited number of spaces in this seminar so register early.

Classifieds

Small Cattle Herd for Sale - Dexter cows, young bulls, & feeders. Call 301-895-5197

What's Happening?

August 3
Nomations due for FSA County Committees
www.fsa.usda.gov

August 8 - 15
Garrett Co. Fair
Visit www.GarrettCountyFair.org

August 10
Mt. Top Grazing Network Pasture Walk
10 am to noon at Bill Yoder farm in Meyersdale. To carpool, call 301-334-6960. For information, call 814-940-5989.

August 14
Biodiesel Seminar
Call 301-689-3200

August 20
Potential Penn State Ag Progress Days Trip
Call the Extension Office by August 7 to sign up

September 5
Customer Appreciation Day Corn Roast at Mt. Fresh Farmers Market in Oakland
10 am to 1 pm. Call 301-334-6960 for information.

October 7-11
42nd Autumn Glory Festival
Garrett County area—visit www.AutumnGloryFestival.com

October 9
Somerset Fall Greenhouse Meeting
8:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Berlin Community Building on North Street in Berlin, PA.

October 10
University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Open House
http://agnropenhouse.umd.edu

2009 Somerset Fall Greenhouse Meeting

The 2009 Somerset Fall greenhouse Meeting will be held Friday, October 9 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Berlin Community Building on North Street in Berlin, PA.

Sessions will include: Making Your Own Soil Media to Cut Costs—Pros & Cons; Diseases in Greenhouses; Being Safe as You Work; Insects in Greenhouses; Greenhouse Risk Management Tools & Crop Insurance; Trial Gardens; Crop Fertilization: Finding the Right Formula for Your Needs; Table Discussion with Local Growers on Flowers and Vegetables.

A trade show of exhibitors from various seed, greenhouse, chemical, and other companies will take place from 10:15 to 4:00. Exhibitors include Ball Seed Company, Farfard, Fred C. Gloeckner & Company, Griffin Greenhouse & Nursery Supplies, Hortica, Miller Chemical & Fertilizer, Oglevee Ltd., Rob Marshall, and Wetsel Inc.

The cost is $8.00 per person (including lunch). The registration deadline is Friday, October 2.

For more information or to get a registration form, call 814-445-8911, Extension 7.

General Forestry Course Fall 2009

Registration for the General Forestry Course opens August 1, 2009. Late registration begins September 1 and continues until September 14. Both the paper and online version will be offered. From the comfort of your own home, learn about forests and forest management covering such topics as tree ID, forest ecology, fire and pests, silviculture, timber harvest techniques, the business of forestry and much more. You will design your own forest management plan framework. Call 301-334-6960 for more information.

Leadership Academy Tours State

Western Maryland Rural Leadership Academy (WMRLA) participants recently spent three days touring farms, agribusinesses and government organizations that support agriculture across Maryland. The statewide trip was designed to introduce the participants to the variability of agriculture across the state of Maryland, meet with government officials to learn about agriculture policies and regulations, and to learn more about the support network for agriculture entrepreneurs.

Some of the farms that were visited by the group on the trip were: South Mountain Creamery, which processes milk and ice cream and does home delivery in the D.C. metro area; Mason Dixon Farm, which uses robotic milkers to milk about 500 over their over 2,000 milk cows and produces electricity from a methane digester; Meadow Ridge Farm, a grain, wine grape and commercial greenhouse operation on the Eastern Shore; Chanceland Farm, a breeder of thoroughbred horses near Friendship, MD. The group also toured Bell Nursery near Silver Spring, MD. Bell Nursery provides all of the flowers for Home Depot stores in Maryland and various locations in PA, VA, WV and Ohio.

The group met with Kurt Fuchs, Assistant Director of Government Relations with Maryland Farm Bureau. Kurt explained how Maryland Farm Bureau worked with state legislators to assist farmers. While in Annapolis, the participants toured the Maryland Department of Agriculture and the State House. The group met with Senator George Edwards to discuss agriculture issues in Maryland and learn more about the legislative process. Participants were able to view a legislative session in progress after their visit with Senator Edwards.

Another stop on the tour was the Beltsville Agriculture Research station. The Beltsville facility is part of a nationwide network of agriculture research stations operated by USDA under the Agriculture Research Service (ARS). The Beltsville facility is the largest of the ARS stations and is the largest agriculture research station in the world. The group also toured several University of Maryland facilities including the Wye Angus Farm at the Wye Research and Education Center near Queenstown, the research greenhouse on the College Park Campus and the Maryland campus of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Cheng-i Wei, Dean & Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station & University of Maryland Extension and Dr. Nick Place, Associate Director of University of Maryland Extension met with the participants to help them understand the mission of the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The WMRLA is a Garrett and Allegany County-based 15-month leadership program sponsored and operated by Maryland Cooperative Extension. The primary focus of the program is to develop the leadership skills of the participants though hands-on leadership training. The participants will also learn about local and statewide agriculture issues by visiting farms and agribusinesses. If you any questions about the Leadership Academy, contact Willie Lantz at 301-334-6960.

Mt. Top Grazing Network

A pasture walk as part of the Mt. Top Grazing Network will be held at the farm of Bill Yoder located at 3554 Rockdale Rd, Meyersdale, PA 15552 on August 10th from 10 am to Noon. Bill operates an organic, seasonal dairy. Cows freshen in September and are dry in July and August. During the summer they rotationally graze the cows and produce organic crops for winter. Come learn how Bill manages his pastures within Organic Standards and his fall-season calving.

Contact Brian Kelly at the Blair County Office of Penn State Cooperative Extension at 814-940-5989 for more details. For carpooling information contact Willie Lantz at the Garrett County Extension Office at 301-334-6960.

Get to know AGNR!

Learn about the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
. . .spend a day on the farm at the AGNR Open House!

Saturday ▪ October 10, 2009

Central Maryland Research & Education Center
Clarksville Facility
4240 Folly Quarter Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

- **Hay wagon tours**
- **Pedal tractor obstacle course**
- **Horses, cows and calves**
- **Master Gardener "plant clinic"**
- **College admission reps**
- **Insect races**
- **Educational displays**
- **Door prizes and food**
- **And much more!**

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Garrett County Agricultural Fair, Inc. 301-387-5408	Farm Service Agency 301-334-6954
MPWV Meat Goat Producers Assn. 301-334-4121	USDA Rural Development 301-334-6972
Garrett County Chamber of Commerce 301-387-4386	Garrett County Soil Conservation District 301-334-6958
Natural Resources Conservation Service 301-334-6957	MD Department of Agriculture Animal Health 301-334-2185

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