

## November, December and January 2008



### *From the Desk of Shannon Dill*

Winter is definitely upon us. We have had a least two good frosts as I write this newsletter and have even heard about possible flurries this weekend. The harvest is winding down and what an odd year of weather, prices and politics we have had.



### In This Issue:

**Agriculture Conservation  
New Website  
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MD Corn Hybrid Tests**

I have spoke with many of you about the poultry summit that was held the beginning of November on the lower shore. Once

again agriculture is being blamed for poor water quality and environmental issues. Once again agriculture must defend itself and state the well-documented facts. Once again agriculture must inform these very misinformed individuals. Below are some conservation practices statistics from the Maryland Department of Agriculture:



### **Agricultural Conservation Highlights Maryland Department of Agriculture**

Agriculture is a leading industry in Maryland and the single largest land use. Maryland farmers play a key role in protecting our state's natural resources, especially the Chesapeake Bay. During the last two decades, Maryland farmers have spent millions of dollars of their own money and countless hours of labor to install and maintain conservation practices on their farms to protect natural resources and enhance the health and vitality of the Chesapeake Bay.

Spurred by strong state and federal conservation technical and financial support, farmers incorporate soil conservation and water quality measures into their businesses. These conservation practices help farmers

balance crop and livestock production with the need to protect natural resources, while confronting two ongoing concerns—the continued availability of farmland and access to markets or profitability.

Well-managed agricultural land provides many more environmental benefits than developed land. At a time when development pressure may be at its greatest, it is in the Bay’s best interest for Maryland to look to ways to keep farmers farming the land.

Maryland’s agricultural conservation accomplishments are many and include the following:

- Since 1985, farmers have spent more than \$11 million of their own money to match about \$90 million in state water quality cost share funds to install more than 21,000 “best management practices (BMPs)” - about 3 BMPs every day for 22 years – to protect water quality. Examples of the 30 BMPs eligible to receive state cost share include manure storage structures, watering troughs, and fencing to keep livestock out of streams. Farmers who are not in compliance with the nutrient management law are prohibited from receiving MDA funding.
- According to the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program figures, these BMPs and others such as cover crops, have resulted in a significant achievement of Maryland’s 2005 Tributary Strategy goals for agriculture. Since 1985, Maryland agriculture has achieved 54 percent nitrogen reduction, 70 percent phosphorus reduction; and 54 percent sediment reduction toward the tributary strategy goal.
- Cover crops are widely recognized as one of the most cost-effective and environmentally promising ways to reduce

agricultural runoff into the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. In 2004, the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund was established to create a dedicated and stable funding source for Maryland’s cover crop cost-share program. Farmers responded to the expanded program by signing up in record numbers to plant cover crops. Last year, farmers planted a record 244,000 acres in cover crops and this year farmers are on track to meet or exceed this acreage. In addition, a pilot “hulless barley” program is being offered as a cover crop option to develop a feedstock for a future ethanol plant.

- Since 1999, through Maryland’s Manure Transport Program, approximately 252,000 tons of excess poultry litter and manure have been transported from areas with excess manure or high soil phosphorus levels to other farms or alternative use facilities that can use the product in an environmentally-sound manner. In 2007, approximately \$357,000 in state cost-share funding to transport manure was matched by Delmarva poultry companies, for a total of \$714,000 provided to participating poultry growers. The program expanded in 2002 to help other livestock producers with excess manure, accounting for an additional 51,000 tons of manure transported in 2007 and \$133,000 in state cost-share funds. New technologies and markets to use poultry litter and other animal manures are promising and may soon reduce the volume of nutrients while providing profit for farmers.
- As of September 30, 2007, 98 percent of the state’s 1.3 million acres of crop land and 96 percent of the state’s 6,300 eligible farmers have nutrient management plans and are complying with the state’s nutrient management law.

- Over the last 10 years, Maryland farmers have converted approximately 74,000 acres of environmentally sensitive farmland into streamside buffers, wetlands other wildlife habitat areas through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The program helps protect water quality in local streams and rivers by reducing soil erosion, controlling nutrient runoff and increasing wildlife habitat.

- Approximately 22 percent of all Maryland farmland is managed as woodland, which promotes sustainable forestry to provide clean water, improve stream health, stabilize soil reduce nutrients and sequester of carbon through actively growing forests and tree biomass.

- More than 50 percent of Maryland farmers in targeted watersheds achieved the highest assistance rate available from the Conservation Security Program - a federal program that provides funds for the farmers that go the extra mile for conservation. More farms in Maryland qualified in their first year of eligibility than any other state in the Northeast.

- The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation has permanently preserved more than 265,000 acres of priority farmland for farming, with a public investment of nearly \$490 million since its founding in 1977. This is the greatest ratio of farmland preserved to total land mass of any state. The Foundation has preserved farmland in all of Maryland's 23 counties.

410-841-5778 or toll free at 800-492-5590  
E-mail: adamsjb@mda.state.md.us

**A new website for grain marketing has been created for Maryland Grain Producers**



**[www.mdgrainmarketing.umd.edu](http://www.mdgrainmarketing.umd.edu)**

This site has upcoming trainings, local data and historical prices. **Check it out!**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Grain Marketing**



Want to learn more about the Grain Market and what is happening now? The Easton Grain Marketing Club continues to meet every other Wednesday to discuss these issues and more. Speakers are scheduled and Everyone is welcome to attend. The club meets at Denny's in Easton at 6:30am. For more information contact Talbot County Cooperative Extension at 410-822-1244.

- November 28<sup>th</sup> – Chad Nagel, Nagels Grain Grain Outlook
- December 12<sup>th</sup> – Henry Leonard, CPA Tax Planning
- January 9<sup>th</sup> – Taylor Spies, Perdue Grain Outlook and World Supply
- January 23<sup>rd</sup> – Eddie Johnson and Shannon Dill, MCE Winning the Game
- February 6<sup>th</sup> – Kathi Levan, Farm Credit Crop Insurance





**Winning the Game 4:  
Launch and Land your Post-Harvest  
Marketing Plan**

Starting your post-harvest marketing plan can be a challenge. But once you have started, how do you finish? In the newest workshop in the Winning the Game series, you learn what questions to ask to better size-up the market after harvest. You will write your own post-harvest plan and practice exit strategies during yet another marketing game simulation. How long will you hold onto your grain?

**Workshops: Winning the Game 4:  
Launch and Land your Post-Harvest Plan**  
November 20<sup>th</sup> – Galena, FireHall, Contact Jenny Rhodes 410-758-0166  
November 27<sup>th</sup> – Hurlock, Unity Wash. Church, Contact Shannon Dill 410-822-1244  
December 7<sup>th</sup> – Ruthsburg, Community Center, Contact Jenny Rhodes 410-758-0166  
December 13<sup>th</sup> – Princess Anne, Extension Office, Contact Eddie Johnson 410-749-6141  
Times: 9:00am – 1:00pm all locations

**Winning the Game 2:  
Launch Your  
Pre-Harvest Marketing Plan**

This workshop focuses on practicing marketing skills. During the session you will review an actual marketing plan and learn how crop insurance, target dates and target prices can help you more consistently secure a good average crop price. A market simulation game in this workshop demonstrates how a marketing plan can work and how to react to real-life market fluctuations.

**Workshops: Pre-Harvest**

January 28<sup>th</sup> – Galena, FireHall, Contact Jenny Rhodes 410-758-0166  
January 31<sup>st</sup> – Hurlock, Unity Wash. Church, Contact Shannon Dill 410-822-1244  
February 4<sup>th</sup> - Ruthsburg, Community Center, Contact Jenny Rhodes 410-758-0166  
February 11<sup>th</sup> – Princess Anne, Extension Office, Contact Eddie Johnson 410-749-6141

Registration Fee: \$10  
(Includes Refreshments and Materials)  
Pre-registration is required 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

**Sponsored By:** Maryland Soybean Board, Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit, Colonial Farm Credit, United States Department of Agriculture, North East Center for Risk Management, Local Sponsors



**Hay and Pasture  
Conferences Focus on  
Key Management  
Topics**

The Delmarva Hay and Pasture Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, January 8, 2008 at the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington. Both day and evening sessions will be held. The day session is geared primarily for full time producers and agribusiness and agency personnel and the abbreviated evening session for part-time producers and those not able to attend during the day. Featured speaker will be Chris Teutsch, Forage Research and Extension Specialist at Va Tech's Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Blackstone.



**Talbot County  
Corn Club and  
Soybean  
Improvement  
Awards**

Samples have been collected for the 56<sup>th</sup> Talbot County Corn Club and the 37<sup>th</sup> Soybean Improvement awards. The recognition dinner will be held January 23, 2008 at the VFW in Easton. The event will begin with dinner at 6:30pm followed by keynote speaker Valerie Connelly of Maryland Farm Bureau and the crop report. Awards for participants and sponsors will follow.

**The club would again like to thank the participants, sponsors and unit leaders that make this event possible.**

**Annie's  
Project**



Annie's Project Mission - To empower farm women to be better business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information.

Objectives - Annie's project is designed to empower farm women to manage information systems used in critical decision making processes and to build local networks throughout the state. The target audience is farm women with a passion for business and involvement.

Project Topics cover the five areas of Risk Management – Production, Market, Financial, Legal Risk, Human Resources.

Wednesdays January 16 – March 2, 2008 at Chesapeake College from 6:00pm to 9:00pm For more information call 410-822-1244.

**Advanced Small Farm  
Courses**



Are you looking for more information for your small farm? A business idea, alternative crop or pasture management? These sessions are for you. Held Saturdays from 9am-12pm at the Talbot County Cooperative Extension Office these sessions are designed to provide more in-depth information for your farm enterprise.

These courses are open anyone interested in small farm production and pre-registration is required. Sessions cost \$5 each to cover handouts and refreshments. For more information contact 410-822-1244 or [sdill@umd.edu](mailto:sdill@umd.edu).

**January 12, 2008 –  
READY FOR YOUR HOBBY TO  
BECOME A BUSINESS?**

Deciding whether to transfer your farm “hobby” into business requires some research and commitment. This session will focus on the basics of business planning as well as tax implications. Get the information you need to become a successful farm business.

Instructors:  
Henry Leonard, CPA CBIZ Accounting, Tax & Advisory Services, LLC  
Shannon Dill, Agriculture Educator, Talbot County Cooperative Extension

**February 16, 2008 –  
MANAGING PASTURES**

One of the most asked questions at the Extension Office. Attend this session and learn more about forage species, weed control and setting up a rotational grazing system. Have your pastures looking great for this summer.

Instructors:

Eddie Johnson, Agriculture Educator,  
Wicomico County Cooperative Extension  
Shannon Dill, Agriculture Educator, Talbot  
County Cooperative Extension

**March 1, 2008 –**

### **ALTERNATIVE CROP PRODUCTION**

Corn and soybeans are major crops on the Mid-Shore, but there are alternatives to these that can supplement or support a modest income. This session will focus on future alternative crop opportunities for small farms. Come learn what new crops and markets are available along with some information on what you need to know to start up a nursery business.

Instructors:

Dr. Andrew Ristvey, Extension Specialist,  
Wye Research Center



### ***Farm to Chef*** **Save the Date!**

Maryland farmers will meet with grocers and food service buyers (from restaurants, schools, hospitals, and more) at meetings in January and February 2008:

Large volume grocers and growers:  
Monday, Jan. 28 at MDA in Annapolis from 9-12

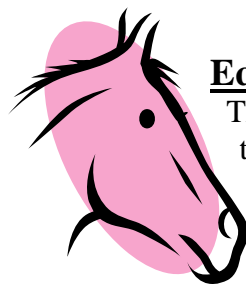
Food service buyers and growers: (all from 1-4)

Tuesday, Jan. 22 at Villa Julie College in Owings Mills

Monday, Jan. 28 at MDA in Annapolis

Monday, Feb. 18 at Tidewater Inn in Easton

If you are interested in this opportunity please contact [sdill@umd.edu](mailto:sdill@umd.edu) or 410-822-1244.



### **Equine Basics**

This course will focus on the basics of equine management, beginning with the purchase of a horse and includes daily care and maintenance. Topics include pasture management, hay quality, nutrition, safety and health care. New horse owners and those thinking about purchasing a horse should attend this class.

Date - Tuesdays February 5 and February 12 2008, Talbot County Cooperative Extension Office Cost - \$15



### **Beginning Grape Grower Course**

University of Maryland Cooperative Extension is offering a one-day regional workshop for beginner and prospective grape growers in Maryland. This course offers a broad overview of commercial vineyard development from pre-plant planning into the third year including economics and marketing information, variety, clone, and rootstock choices, site selection and preparation, pre-plant decisions, equipment and supply requirements. We will also cover the basics of ordering, planting, and tending the vines through the third year of growth, as well as best practices for training, canopy management, and pest management. This seminar is a good overview of what is involved with getting a commercial vineyard started in Maryland.

Tentatively scheduled for February 20<sup>th</sup> 2008 at Chesapeake College. For more information contact [sdill@umd.edu](mailto:sdill@umd.edu) or 410-822-1244.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **Grain Marketing**

November 28, December 12, January 9, 23  
February 6, 20 March 5, 19  
Denny's Restaurant, Easton

## **Pesticide Re-Certification**

Talbot County Extension Office, Easton  
Register at 410-822-1244  
December 10, 2007, 7-9pm  
January 14, 2008, 7-9pm

## **Delaware Ag Week**

January 7 – 12, 2008  
Delaware State Fair Grounds  
Harrington DE



## **Talbot County Corn Club and Soybean Improvement Awards**

January 23, VFW, Easton MD

## **Annie's Project**

January 16 – March 2, 2008  
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills MD

## **Farming for Profit and Stewardship**

**Conference:** Future Harvest Conference  
Jan. 18-19, 2008, Hagerstown, Maryland

## **Horse World Expo**

January 17 – 20, 2008  
Maryland State Fair Grounds  
Timonium, MD

## **Women in Agriculture**

January 24-25, 2008  
Dover Downs, Dover DE  
For more information call Laurie G.  
Wolinski at the University of Delaware at  
302-831-2538 or email her at [lgw@udel.edu](mailto:lgw@udel.edu)

## **Equine Basics**

February 5 and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
Talbot Extension Office

## **MADMC Conference**

Dover DE, Sheraton  
February 6-9, 2008  
302-831-1317 or [www.madmc.com](http://www.madmc.com)

## **Farm to Chef**

February 18, 2008  
Tidewater Inn, Easton, MD

## **Grape Growers Course**

February 20, 2008  
Chesapeake College

## **Nutrient Management Voucher Certification**

February 26, 2008  
6:30 – 8:30pm  
Talbot County Ag  
Center



## **Pesticide Certification**

March 6, 2008 Class  
March 13, 2008 Test  
Caroline County Register  
at 410-479-4030

*ALL OF US  
WISH ALL OF YOU  
ALL THE BEST  
FOR THE NEW YEAR!*

Sincerely,

Shannon Dill  
AGNR Educator  
[sdill@umd.edu](mailto:sdill@umd.edu)

## **Maryland Cooperative Extension**

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(410) 822-1244

