

# ST. MARY'S COUNTY

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

## Trusted Research-Local Experts

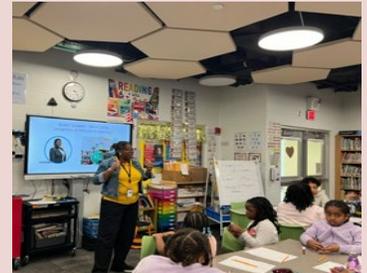
### Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS)

#### Programs reach and engagement:

- Collaborated with local schools, Boys and Girls Club of Southern Maryland, Farm to School initiatives, Farmers Feeding St Mary's County, senior centers, libraries, and the County Fair.
- Reached 2000 elementary youth and 30 parents through programs including four live cooking demonstrations.
- Reached over 1,600 community members, increasing access to fresh, locally grown produce and reinforcing healthy food choices.
- Reached over 1,500 students, strengthening knowledge of agriculture, local food systems, and healthy eating practices.

#### Adult-focused programs:

- Dining with Diabetes—16 Participants.
- Capture the Flavor—200+ community members.
- Food Safety Education—100+ community members.
- Shopping and Cooking on a Budget—80 community members.
- Cooking demonstrations conducted at the County Fair, libraries, and the Boys & Girls Club.



### SNAP-Ed

5 partnering elementary schools for policy, systems, and environment changes including:

- 18 elementary classrooms for Read for Health, 5 existing and 15 new Pre- K classrooms for Edible ABCs.
- SMCPS Judy Center Hubs at GW Carver Elementary, Green Holly, and Lexington Park Elementary Schools, including adult lessons from Healthy Cents and Raising Food Explorers.
- SMCPS summer meal distribution, Farmers' Feeding St. Mary's produce distribution recipients.
- Farm to School events including Read for Health and Exploring Maryland Foods curricula.
- Cooking demonstrations and resource distribution at local food pantry and partnered events.



### Master Gardener (MG)

- 43 Master Gardeners contributed **2,486 volunteer hours** into our community in 2025.
- Those 43 MGs spent **636 hours learning** about horticulture topics at continuing education programs to elevate their knowledge base and capacity to serve our community.
- Through Master Gardener activity in St. Mary's over **1,500 individuals** learned about sustainable horticulture practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities. To engage with the community in 2025 MGs:
  - Tabled at 9 community events/festivals
  - Hosted 13 plant clinics
  - Supported 11 educational events
  - Hosted 3 educational events



### Watershed Protection & Restoration Program (WPRP)

- Partnered with the MD Department of Natural Resources to offer the Backyard Buffers program that provides free native tree & shrub seedlings to residents in St. Mary's County. The Spring 2025 program had **100 participants** and distributed **2,000 seedlings**.
- Developed and taught the following workshops to **103 participants** in St. Mary's: Benefits, Use and Installation of Rain Barrels, Landscaping for Cleaner Waterways, How Trees Protect Water Resources.
- Partnered with DPW&T to offer Rain Barrel Workshop participants the opportunity to purchase rain barrels, **21 rain barrels distributed in St. Mary's in 2025**.
- Conducted **7 site visits** for community members with stormwater management concerns.
- Educator tabled at 3 events in the county: Earth Day Celebration at Summerseat Farm, St. Mary's County Fair and River Fest!



## Agricultural Nutrient Management Program (ANMP)

- Written plans covering a total of 16,311 acres.
- Served 74 Individual Cooperators covering 409 tracts of land primarily in St. Mary's County.
- 33 requested plans to qualify for participation in the Maryland Cover Crop Program.



## 4-H Youth Development (4-H)

- 164 4-H youth members.
- 93 UME certified adult volunteers.
- Reached 1,975 youth through school enrichment programs.
- Reached 134 military youth through various programs.
- 22 Youth attended 4-H Adventure Day at the St. Mary's County Fairgrounds.
- 250 Workshops/contests focusing on the following: Animal Science, Lego Robotics, Food & Nutrition, Food Preservation, Woodworking, Crafts, Gardening, Leadership, Public Speaking, Record Keeping and Shooting Sports.
- 4-H Youth prepared 1,686 exhibits at the St. Mary's County Fair.
- 76 Youth sold 200 animals (53 goats, 92 pigs, 38 lambs & 17 steers) at the livestock auction during the St. Mary's County Fair.
- 2 State 4-H events hosted by one of our county 4-H clubs.
- 45 Youth represented our county at state events such as Livestock Skillathon, Public Speaking Contest, Archery Competition, Shotgun Competition, State Fair, Livestock Judging, Poultry & Egg Judging, Horse Bowl, Horse Hippology & Horse Judging.
- 2 Youth represented our county at 3 National 4-H events: National 4-H Hippology Contest in Louisville, KY, National 4-H Livestock Skillathon in Louisville, KY, National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, GA.
- 14 Youth raised 76 Turkeys to feed their families for Thanksgiving.
- Teen Leadership Group with 8 members participating.
- 7,220 volunteer hours recorded for the 4-H program.
- 105 youth turned in Record Books and completed a total of 258 projects.
- 4-H clubs completed 25 community service projects.

*4-H engages youth as leaders using their Head, Heart, Hands & Health and gives them the power to take action. The 4-H mission is to teach youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.*



## Agriculture & Food Systems (AgFs)

### Programs Conducted:

- Provided 400 farm consultations focused on solving a variety of farm production needs.
- Farmers reported \$1,439,000 in average yearly economic activity by farmers from field teaching events.
- 500 + fact sheets, bulletins, and written recommendations distributed to agricultural producers.
- Offered 101 educational sessions, workshops or conferences including the So. MD Vegetable Conference, Farm to School Days, So. MD Crops Conference, Hay and Pasture Conference, and Vegetable Production Twilight Tour reaching 2,850 participants.
- Supported economic growth through knowledge gains regarding cropping practices and advances in technology, which are key components to increased profitability.
- Awarded \$3,364,745 in grant funding with \$69,327 directed to local St. Mary's county programming efforts.
- Provided assistance to farmers transitioning to other enterprises including vegetable, cut flower, cigar wrapper tobacco, greenhouse, forage and grape production.
- Collaborated with Farmers Feeding St. Mary's events reaching 1,652 families with 48,000 pounds of fresh local produce.

### Collaborative On-Farm Research Project conducted in 2025:

- Using soil steaming and grafting to manage diseases in high tunnel vegetable production.
- Watermelon grafting research to manage new soil borne diseases.
- Evaluation of Faba Bean as an alternative crop in the Mid-Atlantic.

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