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Season in review: The season began as normal as usual following a mild winter. Grain planting got off to a good start following rains in late March and early April limiting field activity. In many areas, conditions turned dry but rains then returned, splitting the planting season with some early crops and some later planted crops. The wheat crop struggled with a wet fall and spring followed by hot, dry spells that baked soils. The mild winter led to aphid infestations and Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus in many fields. The wheat crop came off early and was of decent quality with average yields. Conditions turned dry beginning in June and continuing into July. Not only were conditions dry, but excessive heat in July and into August affected pollination and plant health. Isolated showers towards the end of August provided some relief, but overall conditions remained dry heading into harvest. For the period of January 1 to October 21st, we have received 31.96 inches of precipitation, which is 7.51 inches below the historic average of 39.47 inches. The daily precipitation and temperature data from the National Weather Service station in Mechanicsville can be viewed on page 12. Corn yields are off considerably with quality issues also present. Summer vegetable crops, especially tomatoes, struggled in the high heat. The fall harvest has rebounded with cooler temperatures.

The Southern Maryland Ag Agent team has a full slate of educational offerings planned this winter. The So. MD Crops Conference will be held December 12th at the Baden VFD, the LPA Annual Meeting on December 13th in Loveville, and the So MD Hay and Pasture Conference will be held on January 21st at the Calvert County Fairgrounds. See pages 3-4 for a full listing of all upcoming meetings.

A note about pesticide recertification. If your license expires in December of 2024 and you do not yet have credits, please plan to attend one of the upcoming recertification courses. There are many options this year. First option to attend the pesticide recertification class on November 14th from 6-8 pm in the St. Mary's Extension office. Other options include attendance at the conferences listed above: Crops Conference, LPA Annual Meeting, So MD Hay and Pasture Conference and the So MD Fruit and Vegetable Conference. Finally, a group of Educators have created a hardcopy workbook that you may read, complete a quiz and then submit for credit. You may call any Extension office for a free copy of the workbook.



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In memoriam: We recently said goodbye to two long time Extension colleagues. Ed Swecker, who served as the County Agriculture Agent in St. Mary's County from 1972 to 1992 and taught the vocational agriculture program at Chopticon prior to that, passed away on August 16 at the age of 93. Ed will be remembered for his tireless support of farmers and their livelihoods. He was also known for his ability to pull a joke out of his pocket for any occasion. Ed was a man of many talents and many pockets. He will be missed. Sadly, we recently lost Stanton Gill, Greenhouse and Nursery IPM Specialist with University of Maryland Extension, who passed away October 6 at the age of 73. Stanton spent nearly 50 years as an Extension Specialist, touching most every greenhouse, nursery and cut flower operation in the state. He was the "go to guy" for solving issues in the field and will be sorely missed.

Finally, the excessive heat and drought is causing issues with grain quality, primarily from mycotoxins. If you are feeding grain to horses or livestock and notice off-colored, shrunken or damaged kernels, you may want to get grain tested. Based on samples submitted so far, about 25% of corn samples have elevated levels of fumonisin. Elevated levels of fumonisin can be especially problematic for horses. The University of Maryland is collaborating with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to assist farmers affected by drought with mycotoxin testing of grains and prussic acid/nitrate testing of forages. See page 5 for more information.

We hope to see everyone at the winter meetings this year. Hope you have a safe, productive and bountiful fall. —Ben Beale



UPCOMING FALL & WINTER EVENTS

Private Pesticide Certification Exam Review Course

Wednesday, October 30, 2024, 5-7 p.m.

St. Mary's Ag Service Center Leonardtown, MD

Register by calling the St. Mary's Extension Office at 301-475-4484 or 4477

Private Pesticide Certification Exam

Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 5-7 p.m.

St. Mary's Ag Service Center Leonardtown, MD

Register by calling the St. Mary's Extension Office at 301-475-4484 or 4477

Nutrient Voucher Recertification

Thursday, November 14, 2024, 4-6 p.m.

St. Mary's Ag Service Center Leonardtown, MD

Leonardtown, MD

Register by calling the St. Mary's County Extension office at 301-475-4484

Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Class

Thursday November 14, 2024, 6-8 p.m.

St. Mary's Ag Service Center Leonardtown, MD

Register by calling the St. Mary's Extension Office at 301-475-4484 or 4477

Southern Maryland Crops Conference and Dinner

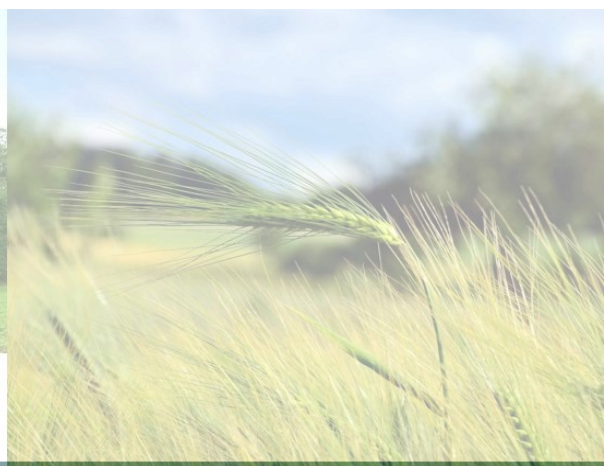
The Southern Maryland Agents would like to invite everyone to join with our University specialists to have your questions answered about crop production and pest control at the Southern MD Crops Dinner on **Thursday, December 12, 2024, 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Baden Firehouse Hall, 16608 Brandywine Rd., Brandy wine, MD 20613**

Attendance at this conference will satisfy the requirement for the Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification & Nutrient Applicator Voucher. Registration is required. Register by calling the Charles Co. Extension Office at 301-934-5403.



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UPCOMING FALL & WINTER EVENTS

Cultivating Innovation in MD Ag and Technology Conference

Crowne Plaza Annapolis, Thursday, December 12, 2024 8am-5pm
173 Jennifer Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401

Loveville Produce Auction Annual Buyers Growers Meeting

Friday, December 13, 2024. Dove Point Variety Store, 9am to 3pm
25120 Dove Point Lane, Leonardtown, MD 20650
Registration not required.

Vegetable and Fruit Production & IPM Workshop

Anne Arundel Extension Office, Thursday, December 19, 2024 6-9pm
97 Dairy Ln, Gambrills, MD 21054

Southern Maryland Hay & Pasture Conference

Tuesday, January 21, 2024, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Calvert County Fairgrounds 140 Calvert Fair Drive
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

This meeting will provide Private Applicator Recertification &
Nutrient Applicator Voucher Recertification.

Topics will be presented covering all aspects of hay and pasture production. The programs will address key issues and concerns facing hay and pasture producers. The conference also features displays and exhibits by numerous agribusinesses. Attendees will be able to obtain information on seed, fertilizer, equipment, fencing, etc. needed for hay and pasture production and management.

Live Online Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification

Online Zoom, Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 6-8pm

[Online Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

Live Online Nutrient Management Voucher Training

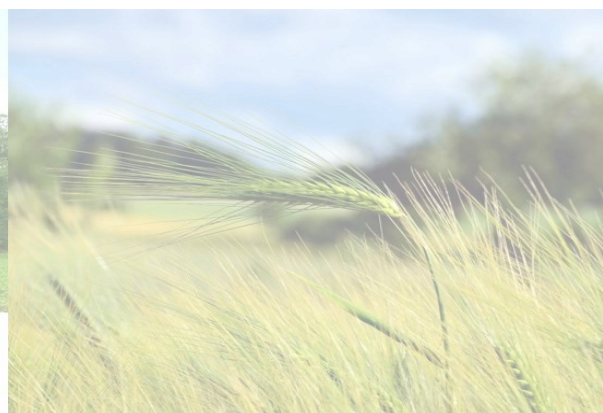
Online Zoom, Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 6-8pm

[Online Nutrient Applicator Voucher Recertification \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jessica Hackett, 410-841-5888

No Cost Mycotoxin Testing Offered to Maryland Farmers

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 25, 2024) – The **Maryland Department of Agriculture** and the **University of Maryland Extension** is reminding Maryland farmers that mycotoxin (aflatoxin, fumonisin, vomitoxin, etc.) testing is offered at no cost to farmers for corn, wheat, oats, rye and other grains. The cooperative effort includes testing for nitrate and prussic acid in forage and mycotoxins in grain, all of which can have negative effects on livestock growth and performance. Mycotoxins, prussic acid and nitrates can all be issues following periods of drought. The program is a cooperative effort between the Department and Extension and testing is conducted by the department's **State Chemist Section**.

“The department offers many services to farmers through our programs,” said **Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks**. “I encourage farmers to take advantage of this testing to assist in assuring grains being sold in Maryland are safe”

Farmers interested in testing should contact their local [Extension office](#) for assistance to ensure proper protocol for sample collection and preparation. Farmers will submit samples to Extension, who will facilitate transportation to the department. The State Chemist Lab will then analyze for aflatoxin, fumonisin, ochratoxin, T2H2 toxin, vomitoxin, and zearalenone and forage samples for either nitrates or prussic acid. Results from the department will then be sent by Extension to farmers within 24-48 hours with guidance for interpreting the findings.

For more information please contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture's State Chemist Tom Phillips at 410-841-2721 or via email, tom.phillips@maryland.gov.

###

Maryland Department of Agriculture Pesticides Disposal Program Returns

Free disposal available to farmers and/or agricultural commodity producers

The Maryland Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the University of Maryland Extension, has announced the return of the Pesticide Disposal Program. Open to growers in Maryland, the program allows farmers and agricultural partners to dispose of unusable or unwanted agricultural pesticides in a safe manner.

“This is an excellent opportunity for growers to safely dispose of old, banned, unwanted or unusable pesticides that may have been stored on their property for years,” said Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks. “This program is part of the Department’s commitment to remove a potential source of environmental contamination in the Chesapeake Bay and other valuable water resources.”

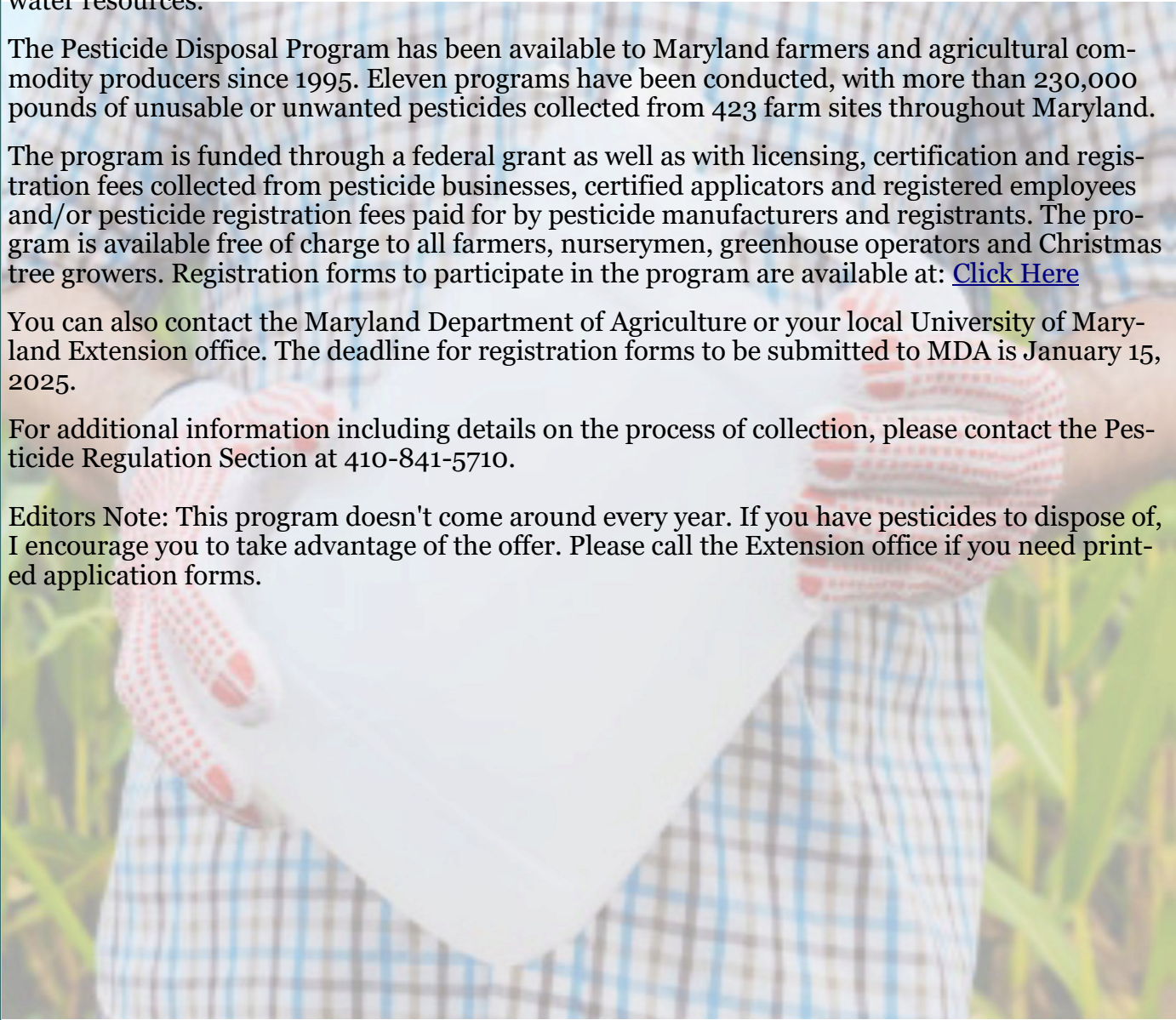
The Pesticide Disposal Program has been available to Maryland farmers and agricultural commodity producers since 1995. Eleven programs have been conducted, with more than 230,000 pounds of unusable or unwanted pesticides collected from 423 farm sites throughout Maryland.

The program is funded through a federal grant as well as with licensing, certification and registration fees collected from pesticide businesses, certified applicators and registered employees and/or pesticide registration fees paid for by pesticide manufacturers and registrants. The program is available free of charge to all farmers, nurserymen, greenhouse operators and Christmas tree growers. Registration forms to participate in the program are available at: [Click Here](#)

You can also contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture or your local University of Maryland Extension office. The deadline for registration forms to be submitted to MDA is January 15, 2025.

For additional information including details on the process of collection, please contact the Pesticide Regulation Section at 410-841-5710.

Editors Note: This program doesn't come around every year. If you have pesticides to dispose of, I encourage you to take advantage of the offer. Please call the Extension office if you need printed application forms.



Small Equine and Livestock Operations Now Eligible for Conservation Funding

ANNAPOLIS, MD (October 1, 2024) – The Maryland Department of Agriculture has announced that cost-share funding to install a range of popular best management practices is now available for small-scale equine and livestock operations with at least 1,000 pounds of live animal weight. This expansion of the [Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share \(MACS\) Program](#) extends the popular conservation assistance program to these smaller farms. Previously, participation in MACS was limited to operations with 8,000 or more pounds of live animal weight.

“We are actively seeking out and working with small farms to get them the financial assistance they need to improve the natural resources that support their operations,” said **Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks**. “Erosion and runoff are issues that all equine and livestock operations—large and small—face. We are excited to expand our conservation programs to help everyone do their part to protect the natural resources we all depend on.”

MACS currently funds 40 conservation practices that help farmers and landowners reduce soil erosion, manage animal manure, and control nutrient runoff to protect the health of local streams and the Chesapeake Bay, as well as mitigate impacts associated with climate change. The program provides up to 100% cost-share for high-priority practices such as forest buffers and stream exclusion fencing.

Examples of qualifying conservation practices that benefit equine and livestock operations include:

- Watering Facilities – Up to 87.5% cost-share
- Pasture Management – Up to 87.5% cost-share
- Animal Waste Storage Structures – Up to 87.5% cost-share
- Heavy Use Area Protection – Up to 87.5% cost-share
- Roof Runoff Structures – Up to 87.5% cost-share
- Stream Exclusion Fencing – Up to 100% cost-share
- Interior Pasture Fencing – Up to 50% cost-share

Since 1984, MACS has helped thousands of farmers protect natural resources on their farms, safeguard local water quality, and enhance the health of their livestock. Please contact your [local soil conservation district](#) to learn more about our conservation grants for small equine and livestock operations. Additional information for equine operations can be found on [MDA’s Horse Outreach Workgroup website](#).

MACS GRANTS EXPANDED

Cost-share funding to install a range of popular best management practices is **AVAILABLE NOW** for small-scale equine and livestock operations with at least 1,000 pounds of live animal weight

WWW.MDA.MARYLAND.GOV



October 11 World Agricultural Supply Demand Estimates (WASDE) summary

Corn

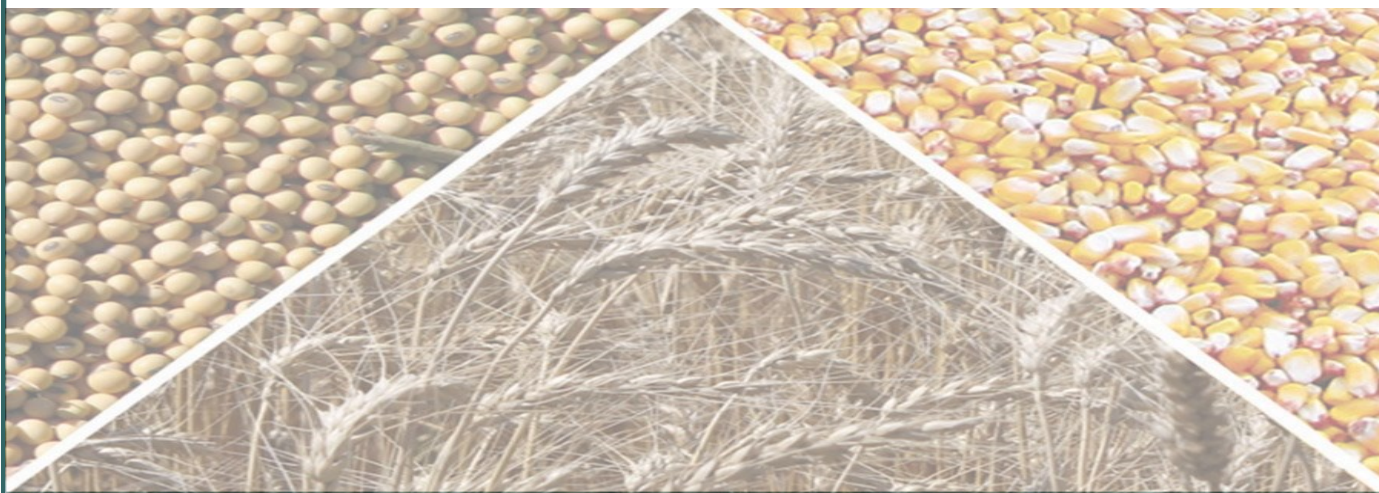
This month's 2024/25 U.S. corn outlook is for smaller supplies, larger exports, and reduced ending stocks. Projected beginning stocks for 2024/25 are 52 million bushels lower based on the Grain Stocks report. Corn production is forecast at 15.2 billion bushels, up 17 million from last month on a 0.2-bushel increase in yield to 183.8 bushels per acre. Harvested area for grain is unchanged at 82.7 million acres. Total use is raised slightly to 15.0 billion bushels reflecting greater exports. With supply falling and use rising, ending stocks are cut 58 million bushels to 2.0 billion. The season-average corn price received by producers is unchanged at \$4.10 per bushel.

Soybeans

Soybean production is forecast at 4.6 billion bushels, down 4 million on lower yields. Harvested area is unchanged at 86.3 million acres. The soybean yield is projected at 53.1 bushels per acre, down 0.1 bushels from the September forecast. With lower production partly offset by slightly higher beginning stocks, supplies are lowered 2.0 million bushels to 4.9 billion. With a slightly lower residual and no change to exports and crush, ending stocks are unchanged from last month at 550 million bushels. The U.S. season-average soybean price for 2024/25 is unchanged at \$10.80 per bushel. Soybean meal and oil prices are also unchanged at \$320 per short ton and 42 cents per pound, respectively.

Wheat

The outlook for 2024/25 U.S. wheat this month is for reduced supplies, larger domestic use, unchanged exports, and lower ending stocks. Supplies are lowered 6 million bushels to 2,783 million, as reduced beginning stocks and lower production are partly offset by larger imports. Production is reduced 11 million bushels to 1,971 million, as reported in the NASS Small Grains Annual Summary released September 30. Imports are raised 10 million bushels to 115 million based on a strong pace of imports for the first three months of the marketing year. Domestic use is raised 10 million bushels to 120 million on higher feed and residual use. The NASS Grain Stocks report released September 30 indicated a year-to-year increase for first quarter (June-August) feed and residual disappearance from a year earlier. Exports remain at 825 million bushels with several offsetting by-class changes. Projected ending stocks are lowered by 16 million bushels to 812 million, but still up 17 percent from the previous year. The season average farm price is unchanged at \$5.70 per bushel.



New Disease in Strawberries: Neopestalotiopsis (neo-p) ***Ben Beale, St. Mary's County Extension Educator-Ag Sciences***

In late August, many growers were alerted to a new strawberry disease that has made its way into the major plug suppliers for the Mid-Atlantic region. Growers have scrambled to find new sources of plugs. However, based on my observation, most plugs, regardless of source are exhibiting symptoms of neo-p. Unfortunately, this disease has the potential to greatly affect strawberry production, particularly for this season. Growers are encouraged to follow the recommended spray schedule this fall and next spring. We will have to wait and see if our climatic conditions limit the severity of the disease compared to Florida. Below is a summary of the new disease and recommendations for management from Mark Hoffman of North Carolina State University.

Neo-P Outbreak in Strawberry ***Mark Hoffman, Small Fruits Specialist*** ***North Carolina State University***

Several plant suppliers that usually ship strawberry tips to plug plant producers have had a large outbreak of Neopestalotiopsis (Neo-P) and therefore cannot deliver tips. Other tip suppliers might still deliver, but there is the possibility of an infection as well.

What to do if my plug plant order was cancelled? Please consult with your local agent or with the specialists. **IMPORTANT:** If you decide to plant, it is crucial to start out with plants that show no disease symptoms. It is also important to have sufficient spray equipment and deploy an aggressive spray schedule to be able to control this disease. You need to be able to spray from the first day of planting! To learn more about the spray program, please read this note from Dr. Phil Brannen.

If you decide to use plug plants and tips: It is important to only use plant material that is symptomless. Most nurseries already be sold out, but some might still take orders. You find a plant supplier list here. However, please also consult with your original plant supplier. They will be also doing their best to find other tip sources as well.

Bare-root with leaves & cut-offs: If you switch to bare-root planting material, green bare roots need to be watered daily (for 14 days). That requires a large water reservoir as well as soil that drains reasonably well. Cut-offs require considerably less overhead watering, and might be less prone to disease spread due less overheard water usage.

Late planting: Some of you might experience this year a late planting due to delayed plant delivery. If that is the case, after the initial rooting phase, please use row-covers (ideally before Thanksgiving) to increase crown development.

What to do if my plants show disease symptoms?

Disease Symptoms are described by Bill Cline in this note. Disease symptoms can however vary quite a bit. It is definitely advisable to let professionals identify the cause for your symptoms.

We are also still learning about disease management. But there are a few things that we do know:

- Disease symptoms show typically more on plants that are more stressed (e.g. nutrition, other pathogens, irrigation etc.).
- There is a high correlation between rain events and disease spread. It seems that Neo-P is primarily spread through rain splash.

- We know that a few fungicides (Thiram, Switch, Rhyme/Tilt/ Inspire) can control Neo-P to a certain percentage.
- It is crucial to deploy an aggressive spray program and stay on top of it. That means early sprays, sprays before and after rain (but in dry conditions!).

It is not advisable to plant plug plants or bare-roots that show disease symptoms. Here are steps that you can take before and after planting:

- Do not plant unhealthy plants and destroy the ones not planted;
- Limit field operations, such as harvesting and spraying, when plants are wet;
- Sanitize hands, shoes, and clothing when moving out of infected fields;
- Clean and disinfect equipment when moving out of infected fields;
- Remove and destroy symptomatic plants (including crowns and roots) during production to reduce inoculum and disease spread;

Are there tolerant or resistant cultivars? There are no true resistant cultivars. However, it seems that there are cultivars that are more susceptible than others. Most of the data we have on this are either anecdotal or insufficient to really make a scientific claim. So the following information is only based on observations made by me and others in the industry, and should be seen as such.

It seems that 'Monterey', 'Rocco' and 'Fronteras' typically show less disease symptoms. 'Ruby June', 'Albion', 'Chandler', 'Camarosa', 'Sweet Charlie', 'Camino Real' all seem to be more affected by the disease. Same with 'Brilliance' and 'Sensation'. I want to stress out that this is based on observations of growers, extension and nursery men I spoke to in the past days. There is no research trial that sufficiently evaluated the impact of Neo-P on disease development in different cultivars.

Nutrient Management Program Update

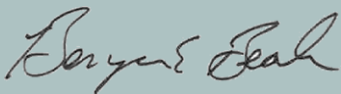
Greg Simpson, Nutrient Management Advisor

It is time once again to get your nutrient management plan updated for the 2025 growing season. If your farming operation grosses at least \$2,500/year and/or has 8,000 pounds or more of live animal weight, you are required to have a nutrient management plan. Plans should be completed prior to planting and nutrient applications. As regulated by MDA, spring nutrient applications may begin March 1 st provided that the ground is not frozen, saturated, or covered by more than one inch of snow.

Producers are urged to provide all the necessary information to update their plan to the UME Nutrient Management Advisor by December 31st . As always, the sooner the better. So please reach out to Greg Simpson your Nutrient Management Advisor today at simp-song@umd.edu or call 301-475-4480 to get the process started.

[http://extension.umd.edu/
st-marys-county](http://extension.umd.edu/st-marys-county)

**All the best for a
Productive
Year**



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University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender iden-

On the Lighter Side...

On the outskirts of a small Virginia town, there was a big, old pecan tree just inside the cemetery fence. One day, two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts. "One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me," said one boy. Several of the nuts dropped and rolled down toward the fence.

As they were dividing the nuts, another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough, he heard, "One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me." In an instant he just knew what it was. He jumped back on his bike and raced to find someone to tell about what he had heard..

Just around the bend he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along. "Come here quick," said the boy, "you won't believe what I heard! The devil and God are down at the cemetery dividing up the souls!" The man said, "Beat it kid, can't you see it's hard for me to walk." When the boy insisted though, the man hobbled slowly to the cemetery.

Standing by the fence they heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you, One for me." The old man whispered, "Boy, you've been telling me the truth. Let's see if we can see God." Shaking with fear, they peered through the fence, yet were still unable to see anything. The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the fence tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of God. At last they heard, "One for you, one for me. That's all... Now let's go get those nuts by the fence and we'll be done!"

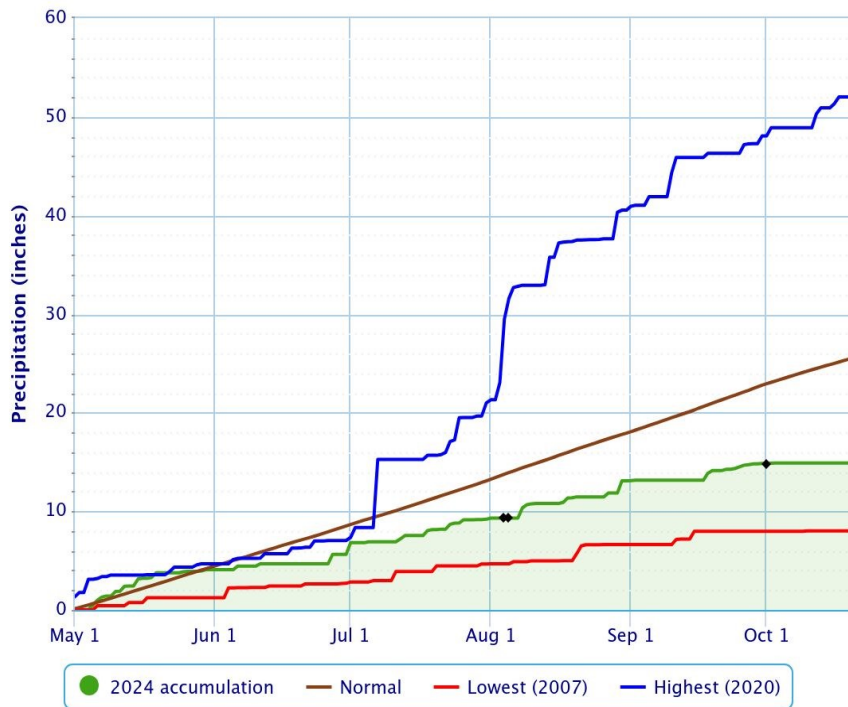
They say the old man had the lead for a good half-mile before the kid finally passed him on his bike.

Now that is what motivation can do for you.



Accumulated Precipitation – MECHANICSVILLE 5 NE, MD

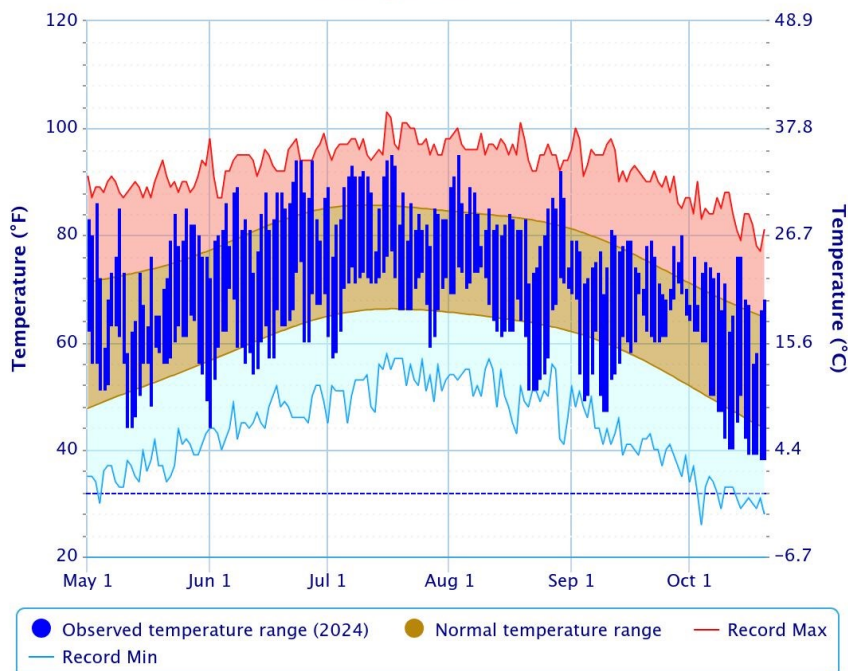
Click and drag to zoom to a shorter time interval; green/black diamonds represent subsequent/missing values



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Daily Temperature Data – MECHANICSVILLE 5 NE, MD

Period of Record – 1974-09-01 to 2024-10-20. Normals period: 1991-2020. Click and drag to zoom chart.



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