

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

TRUSTED RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATION DELIVERED BY LOCAL EXPERTS

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**University of Maryland Extension
Cecil County engages over:**

103,725 Residents with our

10 Faculty and staff along with

200 4-H & Master Gardener
volunteers and over

40 partnerships

**University of Maryland Extension
Cecil County 2021 Annual Impact Report**
extension.umd.edu/locations/cecil-county

**University of Maryland Extension
(UME)
Cecil County Office**

is a unique organization that provides research-based, informal education to residents of the County and local area. Our educational programs cover a wide range of topics, including agricultural production, natural resources, food safety, nutrition and healthy living, youth development, volunteer development, and agricultural nutrient management. These educational and training programs provide current, practical information through workshops, seminars, clinics, camps, displays and newsletters.

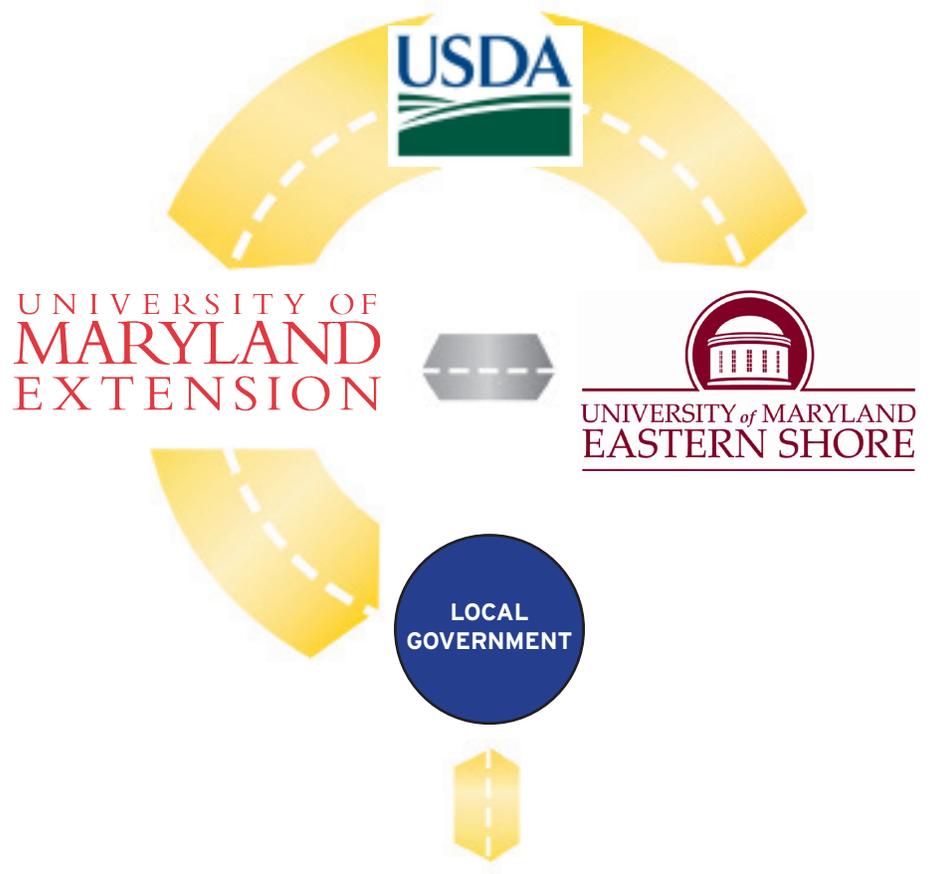
Each University of Maryland Extension Office is a partnership of county government, the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We are glad to share with you this summary of our activities and accomplishments that provided noticeable impacts for the benefit of our communities.

**ON THE COVER:
TURKEY POINT VINEYARD
2963 TURKEY POINT ROAD
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND 21901**

**UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION**

extension.umd.edu

University of Maryland Extension, Cecil County
County, State, and Federal Partnerships



**For 103,725
Cecil County
Residents
(2020 census)**





Dr. Paul Rickert
Area Extension Director

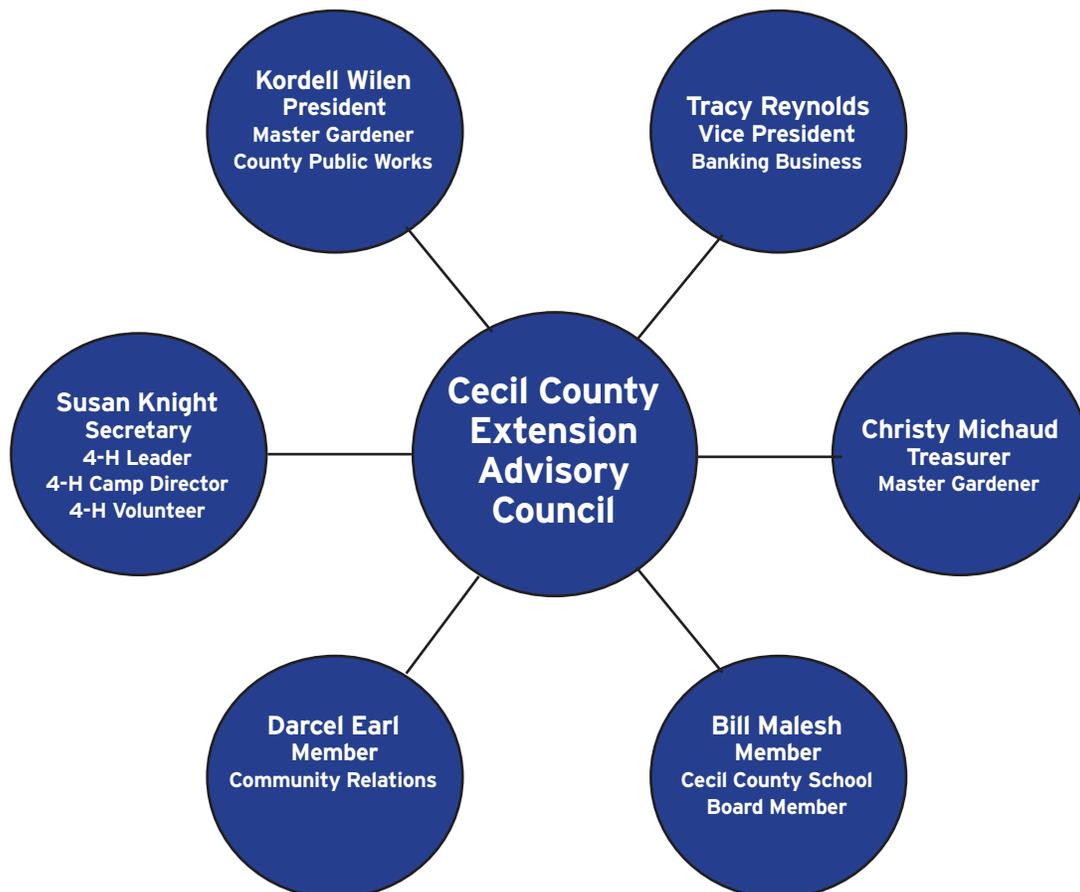
We are pleased to present our 2021 Annual Report for University of Maryland Extension in Cecil County. Though we were prevented from doing in-person programming for much of the year, our mission to serve did not change, only the manner of operation!

Our faculty and staff quickly learned the ropes of zoom, online learning, and Facebook Live (among other things) so we could continue to reach out to provide training, education, 4-H programming, and maintain some social connections for people other than family and work.

You will see the results of our efforts this past year in each of our program areas. We appreciate the support that Cecil County has provided Extension over the decades and consider it a great privilege to continue to provide research based programming that makes such a difference in the lives of Cecil County residents.

The Cecil County Extension Advisory Council (CCEAC)

The Cecil County Extension Advisory Council serves an essential function in better understanding our local community and searching for new opportunities. They help to promote and market University of Maryland Extension through their personal and professional networks. We are privileged to have engaged community leaders offer their time, on behalf of helping us to better serve Cecil County.





Agriculture and Food Systems (AgFS)

The UME Agriculture and Food Systems (AgFS) Program serves Maryland producers and communities by translating fundamental research into applied research and education programs that Marylanders can use. UM Extension Cecil County Office offers a variety of educational services to the commercial farm community. Some programs train or recertify agricultural producers to meet State regulations. Other seminars provide technical and business information that introduce new technologies or practices that help farmers improve production, operate more profitably, and maintain the environment.

Cecil County also has an educational program for high school students. The program, *Days of Learning*, started in 2018 with a partnership between the University of Maryland

Extension and the Cecil County School of Technology (CCST). The initial purpose of the program was to provide the Agricultural students with some real-life exposure. The CCST students were taken on field trips to local farms and Agricultural businesses to learn first-hand what it takes to run a successful farm/Ag business. The field trips offered a behind-the-scenes look at the everyday operations of the farm/Ag business. The program became more in-depth Ag Experiences in 2020. Cecil County Ag producers and agri-businesses were invited to Informational Days to explain the program and ask for their support and participation in this new program. In September 2021, several Cecil County Ag businesses visited the CCST to present information on their businesses and what they could offer the students in the way of hands-on experiences and training.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Training Sessions

50

participants in annual Winter Agronomy Meeting

90

participants in annual Cecil County Fair Ag Showcase

Days of Learning Program

4

Field Trips

2

Ag Experience Informational Days

2

Guest Speakers visited Cecil County School of Technology Students

12

Planning Sessions with Ag businesses to develop Ag Experiences for students



Agriculture and Food Systems Nutrient Management Program (NMP)

The largest private industry in Maryland is agriculture, which is comprised of row-crop production, commercial horticulture, poultry, and livestock. The gross cash income from Maryland crops and livestock sales was approximately \$2.65 billion in 2019, contributing roughly \$8.25 billion to the Maryland economy.¹

The UME NMP assists farmers with the Water Quality Act, which was created to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Farmers are required to have an up-to-date nutrient management plan written by a licensed planner. Our office assists agricultural producers by writing

and updating nutrient management plans that are required by Maryland regulations. Maryland's Nutrient Management Program provides clients with information on Best Management Practices (BMPs) that aim to balance nutrient applications with crop nutrient requirements, thereby enhancing farm profitability while protecting water quality.

¹ Maryland Manual On-line, Maryland State Government, visit go.umd.edu/MDmanual

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

8

**New Nutrient Management
Plans prepared with**

115.3

acres covered

76

**Updated Nutrient Management
Plans prepared with**

4,030.5

acres covered





Environment and Natural Resources Master Gardener Program

UME's Cecil County Master Gardeners are county residents who have been selected and trained by University of Maryland Extension (UME) to deliver research-based horticultural information to the public. Each Master Gardener, who received over 50 hours of training from UME, commits to donate 20 hours of volunteer service each year back to their community. The mission of the Master Gardeners is "educate residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities."

Master Gardeners assist county residents through several approaches, including demonstrations, workshops, lectures, and plant clinics at county libraries, schools,

parks, community gardens, demonstration gardens, fairs, and more. Program areas include, but are not limited to, Bay-Wise landscaping, water management, composting, Grow It Eat It (vegetable gardening), deer resistant gardening, integrated pest management (IPM), herbs, horticultural therapy, children's gardening, pollinators, native and invasive plants, and environmental horticulture. Although there was a decrease in volunteer hours in 2021 due to the pandemic, Master Gardeners were creative in reaching the public, completing virtual continuing education hours. Innovative online programming included gardening workshops, garden tours, Facebook and other social media campaigns, nature scavenger hunts, and more.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

26

Master Gardener Volunteers

4

Trained new Master Gardeners

1,200

Master Gardener Volunteer Hours

\$34,248

Volunteer Dollar Value

11

Workshops

400

people reached through direct contact





Environment and Natural Resources Watershed Protection and Restoration Program

Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy

The Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) is a partnership with the Cecil County Department of Public Works-Stormwater Management Division and the University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension. The WSA program trains adult community leaders in ways to reduce polluted stormwater runoff and improve local water quality. Participants will complete an intensive 16-course training program consisting of classroom and hands-on field work, a class project, and an individual capstone project in their community.

Once trained, participants achieve the designation of Master Watershed Steward and work with other members of their communities to assess watersheds to help identify sources of pollution and restoration opportunities, educate their community on pollution sources and how to reduce them, implement small-scale stormwater management practices such as installing rain barrels or constructing rain gardens, inspect and/or maintain small-scale stormwater management Best Management Practices (BMP), and connect communities with environmental resources and people who can help restore watersheds.

Participants in the fourth Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy completed the course and graduated in December 2021, proudly carrying the title, Master Watershed Steward. Their class project involved improvements to an existing rain garden at North East Town Park and was completed on October 2, 2021, as part of Cecil Cares Day of Service, in collaboration with the Town of North East, Friends of Cecil County Parks & Recreation, and the Elk and North East Rivers Watershed Association.

Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)

The Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan was approved in the summer, so the focus turned to getting feedback from stakeholders in Cecil County on programmatic milestones. In early November, the restoration specialist facilitated a workshop to solicit input on various draft milestones from key Cecil County stakeholders.

Education and Outreach

The restoration specialist was a guest speaker to the North East Rotary Club and to students in North Bay's summer program. He also gave two regional presentations, one highlighting the Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy at

the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the IECA annual meeting, and the second about local outreach related to the Conowingo WIP at the Sustainable Watersheds and Agriculture Symposium. In all, the restoration specialist reached 117 individuals as part of these presentations.

Technical and Grant Assistance to Landowners

The restoration specialist provided grant-related assistance to a homeowners association near the Town of North East and to a watershed group for a project south of Chesapeake City. The grant applications were to secure funding for engineered designs to help address stormwater runoff and precipitation-caused flooding. The restoration specialist, along with County Stormwater staff, met with the Town of Port Deposit to discuss local flooding issues and grant opportunities. The restoration specialist also participated in the Cecil County Program for Public Information (PPI) Plan Development as a member of their stakeholder committee. The PPI Plan is intended to increase public awareness on flooding and other natural disasters.



4-H Youth Development

The Cecil County 4-H Youth Development Program provides a supportive setting for youth to reach their fullest potential. Children learn beneficial cognitive and life skills through community-focused, research-based, experiential educational programs. Participation is open to all youth ages 5-18.

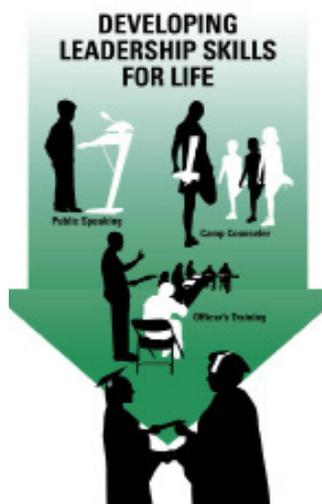
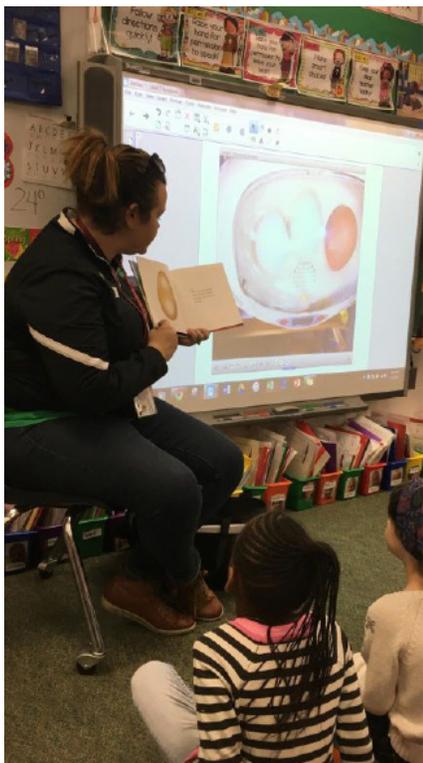
4-H has a 100+ year tradition of voluntary action through strong public-private partnerships at federal, state and community levels. Local volunteer leaders partner with Cecil County Extension staff to provide

direct leadership and educational support to young people in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

4-H youth develop relationships that inspire people to voluntarily help themselves and others as they interact with caring adults and peers.

4-H Program areas include:

- STEM and Agriculture
- Healthy Living
- Civic Engagement
- Volunteer Development



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

20

Community clubs

251

4-H Community Club Members

51

4-H Outreach educator programs
(6+ hours of 4-H programming)

9,279

Direct contacts through 4-H programming

+48,520

Indirect contacts through 4-H programming

= 57,799

youth & educational contacts

174 Volunteers

5,220 Volunteer Hours

\$148,979

Volunteer Dollar Value



Beverly A. Jackey, MS, RDN, LDN



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

38

virtual and in-person programs reached

325

residents

\$18,545

additional competitive grant funds received

91%

of participants found program useful and intended to use the information

12

monthly nutrition resources provided to the Elkton Senior Activity Center for

300

homebound meal recipients

Family and Consumer Sciences

The University of Maryland Extension's Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) agents educate and provide unbiased, research-based knowledge every Maryland resident needs to be healthy and economically successful regardless of income.

In 2021, through partnerships with the Cecil County Department of Health and Social Services, the Elkton Housing Authority, and the Cecil County Department of Community Services, 38 FCS programs reached 325 residents. Though the majority of programs were taught virtually, from October through December, some programs were offered in person.

The FCS Agent received an additional \$18,544.89 of competitive grants funds for local and state-wide projects that were implemented in Cecil County.

Education programs focused on:

- 1) Nutrition, Health, and Wellness
 - Dining with Diabetes a four-week program and 3 months follow up
 - Stepping Up Your Nutrition
 - Protein and Aging
 - Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Plus
 - Fresh Conversations
 - Holiday Tips for Diabetes
- 2) Food Safety and Food Preservation
 - Capture the Flavor: Using Herbs and Spices for Good Health
 - Grow It, Eat It, Preserve It, food preservation programs for safely drying foods and water bath canning

In addition to educational programs, 12 monthly nutrition resources were provided to the Elkton Senior Center staff to distribute to 300 Homebound Meal recipients.



Tammy Pryor

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Program

121

Youth received nutrition education

76%

improved dietary practices

46%

improved physical activity practices

Adult Program

88

Adults received nutrition education

344

People in program/families received nutrition education

94%

improved dietary quality behaviors

70%

improved food safety behaviors

87%

improved food resource management

71%

improved physical activity behaviors

Family and Consumer Sciences

Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP)

Federally Funded Nutrition Program

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a nutrition education program funded by USDA/NIFA. EFNEP empowers food-insecure families to make diet and physical activity-related behavior changes to facilitate a healthy lifestyle and reduce chronic disease risk. Building on this, EFNEP responded to the global pandemic by delivering virtual nutrition education. EFNEP enabled cross-county program collaboration, which facilitated better engagement of youth and adult participants in the successful delivery of virtual cooking classes.

The major goals of EFNEP are to help limited-income families and youth acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior changes necessary for health/wellness and prevention of chronic disease. EFNEP for Families reaches families with incomes at or below the poverty threshold or fami-

lies that qualify for federal food assistance programs when these families have school-aged or younger children living in the home; pregnant and/or breastfeeding mothers and pregnant teens who qualify for WIC (Women, Infants & Children's Supplemental Nutrition Program), also qualify for EFNEP.

EFNEP for Youth provides education to youth 5 to 18 years old at schools, community centers, and gardening/cooking workshops.

Typical partnerships include the Department of Social Services, Elkton Housing Authority, youth camps, Boys and Girls Clubs, local food pantries, Youth Empowerment Source, Meeting Ground Inc., Judy Center, halfway houses and shelters, Head Start, WISH Program, Kinship Care, and YMCA.





Molly Rusch, MS, RDN



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

1,239

students reached and

16

trained teachers



Family and Consumer Sciences

Maryland Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)

Federally Funded Nutrition Program

The Maryland Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Program works with youth and families to encourage healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors. SNAP-Ed uses a comprehensive multi-level approach to promote sustained improvements in health, and to shape environments that promote and remove barriers to healthy eating and physical activity.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, participants received SNAP-Ed programming at local partner sites through nutrition education sessions, educational resources, and social media or other electronic messaging.

Maryland Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is a nutrition education program that can be found in communities across the state. The program targets individuals and families eligible for SNAP (EBT) and offers resources to help people lead healthy lives through increased food access, improved nutrition quality, and physical activity.

SNAP-Ed partners with community organizations in every county and Baltimore City to bring education programs and change the policies, systems, and environments of the community in an effort to improve the lives of Marylanders.

About the University of Maryland Extension

University of Maryland Extension (UME) is a statewide, non-formal education system within the college of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. UME educational programs and problem solving assistance are available to residents and are based on the research and experience of land grant universities such as the University of Maryland, College Park.

In Maryland, UME employs approximately 200 faculty and approximately 200 support staff and contractual employees located at the University of Maryland, College Park; University of Maryland Eastern Shore; 23 counties; Baltimore City; and four research and education centers. Many UME faculty members located on the College Park and Eastern Shore campuses have joint appointments with research and academic programs. These joint appointments promote the exchange of knowledge between the universities and among academic specialties.

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