

### AGRICULTURAL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT (NM)

The local Nutrient Management (NM) program is coordinated by Greg Simpson, a Maryland Nutrient Management Advisor. The NM Advisor conducts farm visits, processes soil, manure, and plant tissue tests and also provides technical support to any farm operator in the county who requests it. Upon gathering information from a farm operation, the advisor provides recommendations for the efficient use of both chemical and organic nutrients. These recommendations are provided to each producer in the form of a “Nutrient Management Plan.” The goal of this plan is to maximize crop yields while minimizing nutrient losses into the environment. Upon receiving a plan, farm operators have the information and tools required to remain in compliance with Maryland Nutrient Management regulations. Salary, training, mileage, and program expenses are funded through a grant from the Department of Agriculture.

During 2021, NM plans covering a total of 12,432 acres were completed for 72 individual cooperators covering 374 tracts of land farmed primarily in St. Mary’s County. Of these cooperators, a total of 39 requested plans to qualify for participation in the Maryland Cover Crop Program, and 15 had plans prepared for the Maryland Manure Transport Program.

The NM Advisor also assists Ben Beale, the County AG Extension Agent/Educator, in conducting various farm visits and nutrient-related seminars throughout the year.



### SNAP-EDUCATION (SNAP-Ed)

Maryland SNAP-Ed is a program within University of Maryland Extension that creates healthier environments and improves the health and wellbeing of limited income families across Maryland. SNAP-Ed programs encourage a nutritious and active lifestyle through increased food access, drinking more water, and promoting physical activity. SNAP-Ed provides comprehensive programs that consist of nutrition education lessons, social marketing programs and policy, system and environmental-level changes at partnering sites.

In St. Mary’s County, delivery of the program materials continued to respond to the changing needs of our six partnering SMCPs elementary schools and 2 food pantry access sites with the goal of continuing to reach as many of those participants as possible. Curricula was distributed to students via classroom teachers and the SNAP-Ed Project leader via teleconferencing directly to students on their school issued computers. Collaborations with partner sites are opening up for more direct instruction and SNAP-Ed support in 2022. SNAP-Ed is also available to work with farmers markets and farmers to accept SNAP EBT at their point of sale.



### EXTENSION ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC)

The St. Mary’s EAC is a group of representatives from the county who contribute to the overall program development of the Extension Office in program areas. Members help in identifying problem areas and establish program priorities. Members also maintain adequate fiscal internal control procedures, assist with informing the public about Extension programs, and assist in building support for Extension Programs. We would like to thank our members for 2021: *Wes Cory (President), Weylin Anderson (Vice President), George Baroniak, Ann Richards, John Richards, Jerry Spence, Tim Barnes, Kaitlin Fraer and Mary Wood.*

### UME ST. MARY’S STAFF 2021:

*Shelley King-Curry, Southern Area Extension Director  
Nicole Basenback, Agent Associate, WS  
Benjamin Beale, Senior Agent, AG  
Erin Jewell, Agent, FCS  
Mariah Dean, Agent Associate, MG  
Barbara Dobbins, Program Mgmt Specialist, 4-H  
Jamie Fleming, Administrative Assistant II  
Christine Allred, Agent Associate, SNAP-Ed  
Melissa Russell, Administrative Assistant I  
Greg Simpson, Coordinator, NMP  
Jackie Takacs, Senior Agent, Watershed Restoration Specialist  
Liz Ward, Project Assistant, SNAP-Ed*



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# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

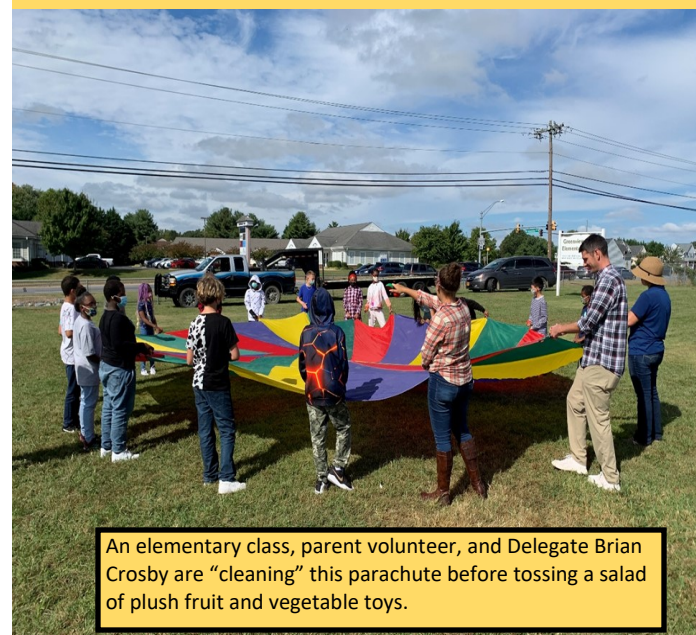
## Trusted Research Local Experts

### FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES (FCS)

In 2021, the FCS Program topics included chronic disease prevention and management and innovative approaches to health and wellness. Programs reached 625 adults and 1072 youth through 17 handouts/presentations, 11 workshops, 11 webinars, 3 all-day youth events, 2 video recordings, 1 research project, 1 e-newsletter, and 1 teleconference.

The following are highlights of some of these program efforts.

- **Dining with Diabetes (DWD)** – Four week program offered virtually teaching skills needed to manage and prevent pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes. Learning included meal planning, health promotion, preparation of diabetic friendly recipes and goal setting.
- **Fresh Conversations** – Adults 50 years or older joined the conversation in-person to learn from each other, discuss current nutrition and health topics, discover new ways to be active, and taste new cost-effective healthy recipes. Members of St. Mary’s three Senior Activity Centers participated in one of three, four-week series.
- **Farm to School** – Annual all day event during Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week in partnership with St. Mary’s public schools to promote agriculture in the public schools in the cafeteria and classrooms. FCS educator conducted an interactive 15-20 minute nutrition/food safety station component of the event along with parent volunteers.
- **Intuitive Eating** – An innovative approach to health and wellness removing the focus from dieting and weight loss. Uses 10 guiding principles to aid a person in achieving a positive relationship with food, body and exercise. Outcomes are:
  - A. Increased attunement to their body’s physical sensation to meet biological and psychological needs.
  - B. Removing obstacles (mental rules, beliefs, and thoughts) to attunement
- **Mindfulness** – Using another innovative approach to health and wellness, various youth and adult audiences learned how mindfulness can be used to help manage stress and participated in practices from the . Attached you will find the link for mindfulness Activity Guide for Adults: <https://extension.umd.edu/news-events/news/university-maryland-extension-educators-produce-new-mindfulness-instruction-guide>



An elementary class, parent volunteer, and Delegate Brian Crosby are “cleaning” this parachute before tossing a salad of plush fruit and vegetable toys.

## St. Mary’s County Annual Report 2021

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AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS (AgFs)

St. Mary’s County is home to a variety of agricultural enterprises, including tobacco, row crops, vegetables, greenhouse and nursery crops, as well as hay and livestock. University of Maryland Extension strives to provide the practical tools and information that farmers need to maintain profitable and sustainable operations. Using non-biased, research-based information and the network of extension agents and specialists throughout the state, farmers and those seeking alternative crops have direct access to the latest technology, marketing, and production information to improve their operations.



2021 Program Highlights:

- The AgFs program conducted over 400 farm consultations at the request of producers, focused on solving a variety of production issues, such as insect, weed, disease, fertility or cultural techniques. On average, 500 fact sheets, bulletins, or written recommendations are distributed to agricultural producers each year. A farmer survey conducted in 2020 indicated the average yearly economic activity from individual field teaching events is \$1,439,000.
- Six applied field research trials were conducted in collaboration with farmers across the county during the last year to address current production issues. Field trials include watermelon grafting trial (2 farm locations), field trials evaluating tomato varieties best suited for warming climate (12 locations), herbicide resistant palmer amaranth weed control in field crops, small fruit (blackberry, raspberry, and blueberry) variety trials, and artisanal tomato variety trial in high-tunnels. The program is a partner (PI or Co-PI) on grant funded projects totaling \$970,671 with \$18,878 directly to local programming.
- The AgFs program conducted various workshops and conferences including the Southern Maryland Vegetable Conference, Southern Maryland Crops Conference, Hay and Pasture Conference, Integrated Weed Management Workshops, and Grape Growers Workshop. In 2021, the program taught 62 educational sessions reaching 1775 participants.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The 4-H Program provides a supportive setting for youth to learn beneficial life skills in order to reach their fullest potential as responsible, caring citizens. University of Maryland Extension (UME) 4-H faculty and staff work directly with adult and teen volunteers to provide programs, guidance, and support for youth clubs and community activities.

After a year and a half of COVID restrictions, St. Mary’s County 4-H was glad to return to in-person programing again in 2021. With 197 youth enrolled, our 10 community clubs were able to hold club meetings and do hands-on activities as well as virtual programming to enhance their skills and knowledge. The St. Mary’s County fair was once again able to have an in-person fair with over 1,412 4-H entries received from 100 4-H youth members.

As part of the 4-H program, members keep track of their 4-H project work by completing record books. During the year, members set goals, record their project activities and learning opportunities, record income and expenses, and summarize what they learned during the project year. In 2021, 69 record books were completed which included over 157 projects.

St. Mary’s County 4-H also participates in the “Maryland 4-H Military Clubs” program through a chartered 4-H club and other activities at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, including leadership, STEM, and fine arts.

2021 Program Highlights include:

- Provided opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills through club officer training, camp counselor training, and public speaking competitions.
- Held a three-day, 4-H Summer Day camp for 25 youth, which included activities in science, agriculture, crafts, fire safety and games.
- Engaged over 1,220 children in short-term, special interest programs, as well as 4-H clubs and activities.
- Recorded over 3,370 hours of volunteer service which was provided by 90 certified adult 4-H volunteers through in-person and virtual activities during the year.
- Our 4-H clubs provided eight community service projects to assist in making our community a better place by collecting food, coats, and pet supplies, cleaning up school and community gardens, and making donations to organizations.
- Members successfully raised over 500 chicks through the poultry project while learning proper nutrition, care, and biosecurity protocol for poultry.
- Safely conducted in-person Archery and Air Rifle practices for youth participating in the shooting sports project through the 4-H Shooting Stars project club.



WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM (WPRP)

In 2021, Nicole Basenback collaborated on community projects and activities that engaged residents in stormwater and natural resource conservation activities. Efforts supported bringing over \$10,000 in grants and solicited funds into St. Mary’s County. Stormwater best management practices installed in 2021 will divert 1.8 lbs of nitrogen, 0.16 lbs of phosphorus, and 191 lbs of sediment per year from local surface waters.

Nicole partnered with Friends of St Clements Bay to bring a “Greener Front Yard” to the new building that houses the Leonardtown Library and Garvey Senior Activity Center. This is an ongoing project to convert one-quarter acre of lawn into a beautiful public outdoor space that celebrates Maryland plants and trees. To prepare the new garden site, 59 volunteers spent over 200 hours spreading 30 cu yd of compost and 40 cu yd of mulch, before planting 65 native trees and shrubs.

University of Maryland faculty and Master Gardener volunteers partnered with Southern Maryland Resource Conservation and Development to design and install a native plant demonstration garden, tree planting, and educational signage at the new regional farmers market in Charlotte Hall - “The Barnes at New Market”. The 350 sq ft native plant demonstration garden was planted with 65 native plants and shrubs by six St. Mary’s County Master Gardener volunteers. Community members volunteered to plant almost 100 native trees and shrubs on the new site.



Community Outreach and Education

- Rain Barrel Workshop - 30 attendees and 23 rain barrels distributed.
- Provided an educational watershed video for the Town of Leonardtown’s virtual Earth Day Event. <https://www.visitleonardtownmd.com/earthday>
- Facebook Video Link: <https://fb.watch/6pWhpCroV0/> (148 views as of 9/1/2021)
- YouTube Video Link: <https://youtu.be/A0EXeOtOx2Q> (9 views as of 9/1/2021)
- Stormwater educational booth at 2 community events.

MASTER GARDENER (MG)

The Master Gardener program mission is to train and support volunteer horticultural educators who put their knowledge to work for the citizens of St. Mary’s County. They pass along safe, effective, and research-based sustainable practices to county residents through “Ask a Master Gardener” plant clinics, “Bay-Wise” site visits, St. Mary’s County community events, public presentations, and various other venues within the county. Certification is maintained through advanced training and continued volunteer service. The program is supported by a part-time Master Gardener Coordinator. In 2021, the Master Gardener Program consisted of 70 active volunteers and 35 interns, who performed 3,000 hours of volunteer service in St. Mary’s County. 2021 was a year unlike any other. We began with only virtual programming then began doing some in-person programming again. Collectively, between plant clinics, the St. Mary’s County Fair, public presentations, recordings, and public school related activities, Master Gardeners have interacted with approximately 1,850 residents of St. Mary’s County in 2021.

A few of the many projects undertaken by the St. Mary’s County Master Gardeners during 2021 included:

- Designed and installed a native plant garden at the new Northern Farmer’s Market. Also assisted with tree plantings there.
- Facilitated 2 “Virtual Ask a Master Gardener” Plant Clinics virtually with the St. Mary’s County library during the growing season to encourage environmentally sound horticultural practices as well as 6 in person plant clinics.
- Provided garden maintenance to 18 garden entrance signs at county parks, as well as historic and native garden beds at the Sotterley Plantation, Historic St. Mary’s City, and Elms Environmental Center.
- Assisted in the detection and prevention of devastating invasive pests, including the Spotted Lanternfly and Emerald Ash Borer.
- Maintained the St. Mary’s County Agricultural Service Center entrance gardens.
- Participated in the second ever virtual Leonardtown Earth Day Festival.
- Updated our Facebook page to help reach more people and created multiple educational videos.
- Completed our basic training class online with 100% retention. Participated in the virtual state wide collaborated basic training.

