

# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

TRUSTED RESEARCH DELIVERED BY LOCAL EXPERTS

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

University of Maryland Extension

Wicomico County engages over:

**105,114** Residents

**10** Faculty & Staff

**142** Volunteers

**68** Partnerships

# County, State and Federal Partnerships

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EASTERN SHORE



The University of Maryland Extension, Wicomico 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 lifestyles, youth development, volunteer development, urban agriculture and agricultural nutrient management. These educational and training programs provide current,

For **105,114**  
**Wicomico County**  
**Residents**



practical information through workshops, seminars, clinics, camps, displays and newsletters.

The University of Maryland Extension Office represents 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.



We are pleased to present our 2024 University of Maryland Extension Wicomico County Annual Report. Throughout the year, we continued to plan and implement educational programs designed to benefit Wicomico County residents. Our Extension educators in the areas of 4-H Youth Development, Agriculture and Food Systems, Family and Consumer Science, Nutrient Management, SNAP-Ed, and Horticulture worked to address the needs of our community members. Our faculty and staff taught numerous educational programs and were assisted by dedicated 4-H and Master Gardener volunteers who greatly increased the number of youth and adults reached by Extension programs.

It is our privilege to provide research-based programs that make a positive difference in the lives of Wicomico County residents. Thank you for the support you provide to Wicomico County Extension.

Sincerely,  
Tom Hutson  
Interim Area Extension Director



# Extension Advisory Committee

The Extension Advisory Committee is a volunteer board of local residents who advise and support the work at the Wicomico County Extension office. They represent leaders who value the impact Extension makes in Wicomico County and Maryland.

|                         |                     |                        |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Tomasha Blount</b>   | <i>Education</i>    | <b>Gretchen Boggs</b>  | <i>Education</i>    |
| <b>John Cannon</b>      | <i>Government</i>   | <b>Alexis Dashield</b> | <i>Community</i>    |
| <b>Douglas Fox</b>      | <i>Community</i>    | <b>Laida Linares</b>   | <i>Horticulture</i> |
| <b>Kathleen McClain</b> | <i>Horticulture</i> | <b>Vastina Omosebi</b> | <i>Community</i>    |
| <b>Ardealia Ross</b>    | <i>Education</i>    | <b>Wayne Shaff</b>     | <i>Community</i>    |
| <b>Michelle Wright</b>  | <i>Agriculture</i>  |                        |                     |

# Family & Consumer Sciences

The University of Maryland Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) program is dedicated to enhancing the health and economic well-being of Maryland residents at every stage of life. Through education, research, and outreach, we empower individuals and families to prevent and manage chronic diseases. We promote healthy eating, physical activity, safe food handling practices, and improving digital, financial, and health insurance literacy. We also focus on creating safe, healthy environments for people to live, work, play, and learn. Our programs equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions that positively impact their health and financial futures. Our financial literacy initiatives help people reduce debt, build savings for emergencies and long-term goals, and develop spending plans aligned with their income and expenses. We collaborate with adults, youth, schools, organizations, businesses, and communities, building partnerships to maximize our reach and expertise.

**Lynn Matava, Family & Consumer Sciences Educator**  
[lmatava@umd.edu](mailto:lmatava@umd.edu)  
(301) 226-7713

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## Program Highlights

**Individuals Reached via Programs:**

**741**

**Classes/Workshops Held**

**48**

**Broadcast and Education**

**Outreach Contacts:**

**200,000+**

**Cooking with Lynn segments:**

**31**

### FCS Programs Implemented:

- ◇ Nutrition, Health & Wellness
- ◇ Food Preservation & Safety
- ◇ Health Insurance Literacy
- ◇ Diabetes Education
- ◇ Nutrition for Seniors
- ◇ Health Literacy
- ◇ Financial & Tech Literacy

Lynn Matava teaching a tomato canning class.







Dr. Escobar, Asst. Professor UMES and Emily Zobel make pickles at UMES Small Farms Conference

Lynn Matava on *Cooking with Lynn* WMDT



Keri Grant at a canning workshop



Canning carrots at the Food Safety Boot Camp



Spices displayed during a local international market tour



## Digital Literacy Program

Within FCS, this program aims to bridge the digital divide and promote digital literacy, equity, and inclusion throughout the state of Maryland. In order to achieve this, our residents need to have access to devices, an affordable internet and enough skills to utilize these things effectively. The program builds partnerships in order to provide digital skills training to community members in need. We teach older adults, youth and everyone in between. Technology is constantly changing and there is always more to learn.

The Wicomico office assisted in planning the 2024 Cultivating Innovation in Maryland's Agriculture & Technology conference. 74 attendees learned from AgTech industry experts about the current and emerging technologies revolutionizing the future of agriculture.

**Keri Grant, Digital Literacy Educator**

[kgrant16@umd.edu](mailto:kgrant16@umd.edu)

(301) 226-7714

## Program Highlights

**Individuals Reached via Programs:**

**471**

**Classes/Workshops Held**

**12/6**

**Indirect Contacts via Events:**

**1,143**

**Participants learned new skills:**

**94%**



Keri Grant presenting at the Technology and Agriculture Conference

## 4-H Youth Development

4-H has a 100 year tradition of voluntary action through strong public-private partnerships at federal, state and community levels.

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

**Melissa Esley-Collins, 4H Program Assistant**  
[mesleyco@umd.edu](mailto:mesleyco@umd.edu)  
301.226.7719



Junior Achievement 18 under 18 program

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### Program Highlights

**4-H Club Members:**

**106**

**Total 4-H Outreach  
(Club, School, Afterschool):**

**799**

**Certified 4-H Volunteers:**

**28**

**Individual Learning Program  
Participants:**

**51**



WBOC Field Trip



# 4-H Youth Development



Sewing a mini throw pillow



Club members having fun with Clever Clover



Cultural Diversity  
Food Tasting: Dried Figs,  
Apricots, Dates, Raisins &  
Naan



Wreaths Across America Ceremony

## 4-H In the Community



Melissa Esley-Collins with a club member



# Agriculture

## Program Description

UMD Extension Wicomico 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.

In addition, 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 (BMP's) that aim to balance nutrient applications with crop nutrient requirements, thereby enhancing farm profitability while protecting water quality.

**Haley Sater PhD, Agriculture Agent**  
[hsater@umd.edu](mailto:hsater@umd.edu)  
301.226.7718

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## Nutrient Management Plans

Written:

**289**

## Total Acres Covered By Nutrient Management Plans:

**10,678**

## Eastern Shore Farmers Saved:

**\$53,390**

## Program Highlights/Impacts/Outcomes

### Training Sessions:

**27**

### Agriculture Professionals

#### Participants:

**1548**

### Research Grant Funds:

**\$663,140**

### Clients Assisted:

**250+**

### Number of Cooperators Served:

**44**

### Agricultural Consults:

**62**

*Dr. Haley Sater at Women in Ag Conference*



*Junior Achievement Ag Day—5th grade soil science*



**LESREC Twilight Tour**



**Miscanthus Field Day**



**Drone spraying  
watermelon trials**





## Master Gardener Program

Certified 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. The mission of the Master Gardeners is “educate residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.”

**Ginny Rosenkranz, Extension Educator**  
**Commercial Horticulture, Master Gardener**  
[rosnkranz@umd.edu](mailto:rosnkranz@umd.edu)  
301.226.7715

### Program Highlights/Impacts/ Outcomes

**Master Gardener Volun-  
teers:**

**114**

**Pesticide Certifications:**

**309**

**Master Gardener Volun-  
teer Hours:**

**1099**



**Delmarva Shore Home and Garden  
Magazine Articles Readership:**

**1,000+**

**Delmarva Life Gardening Tips  
Viewership:**

**80,000+**

**Class Participants:**

**1000+**



Master Gardeners working a table at the Ocean Pines Library

# Master Gardener Program

Master Gardeners assist county residents through several approaches including:

- ✓ Demonstrations
- ✓ Workshops, Lectures
- ✓ Plant clinics
- ✓ County libraries, Schools
- ✓ Community gardens
- ✓ Demonstration gardens



*Master Gardener Earl setting up a raised bed at the Woodson School Gardens*

Program areas include:

- Bay-wise Landscaping
- Composting
- Native and invasive plants
- Grow It Eat It (Veg Gardening)
- Pollinators

*Junior Achievement Inspire table presenting  
"The Stories Leaves Tell"*



*Junior Achievement Inspire Master Gardener table*



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.

Wicomico County SNAP-Ed program provided community nutrition education and outreach through two initiatives: Healthy School communities and Securing Food Resources.

In 2024, the SNAP-Ed Program reached 160 participants through sharing educational resources with Adopt-A-Block's new market and Glen Avenue Elementary's backpack distribution. Partnerships with 5 elementary schools and 1 headstart were restarted for the 2024-2025 school year for the delivery of classroom nutrition education and resources.

**Lauren Holfeld**  
SNAP-Ed Agent Associate  
[lholfeld@umd.edu](mailto:lholfeld@umd.edu), 301.226.7716



Lauren Holfeld with examples of food tastings

## Program Highlights/Impacts/Outcomes

### Unique Individuals Served:

**1,871**

### Resource and Recipe Distribution:

**160**

### Schoolwide/Family Events:

**7**

### Classroom Lessons Taught:

**554**

## Program Educator

**Eric Buehl, Principal Agent Associate**

### Program Description

Eric works with local and state governments, non-governmental organizations, regional partners, University researchers, and communities on the Eastern Shore counties to improve water quality in local rivers, streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

This work is accomplished by implementing restoration projects and science-based educational programs that lead to behavior change, civic engagement, and community development.

**We work with local governments, community groups and residents to help improve water quality on the local level and in the Bay.**



### Examples of Programming

- Classes and workshops on practices like rain barrels, rain gardens, and tree planting
- Technical Assistance Programs that help local government staff to address water quality regulations and requirements
- On-the-ground projects that reduce nutrient/sediment inputs and involve partner-





# Environment and Natural Resources/Sea Grant



*Traditional Rain Barrel*



*Painting Rain Barrels at the 2024*

## Program Highlights/Impacts/Outcomes

Participated in **1** educational presentation and **1** workshop related to community resilience, stormwater and water quality

Reaching:

**29**

Provided stormwater and grant assistance to **1** residential community.

Want to learn more about what you can do at home to improve the quality of your local rivers and streams? Contact Eric for a site visit, and check out the website.

[extension.umd.edu/watershed](https://extension.umd.edu/watershed)

# 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.

## Wicomico County Extension Office

### Faculty and Staff

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