



HARFORD COUNTY

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



[EXTENSION.UMD.EDU/HARFORD-COUNTY](https://extension.umd.edu/harford-county)





UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

HARFORD COUNTY

We are proud to present the 2025 Annual Report of the University of Maryland Extension Harford County.

These highlights of our programming illustrate an array of educational initiatives that revolutionize agricultural practices, empower leadership in youth, embrace nutrition, health and wellness, enhance our landscapes for people and the environment, and cultivate the work of Master Gardeners.

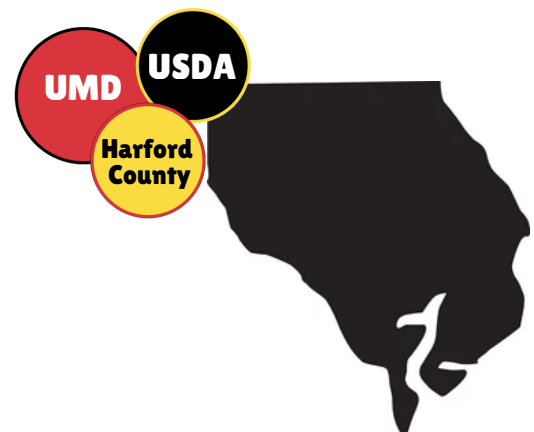
Our programs tackle the most pressing challenges of our time through trusted, research-based education accessible to all. This mission is supported by hundreds of dedicated 4-H and Master Gardener volunteers who are invaluable to our efforts.

We appreciate our robust partnerships with the UMD College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, US Department of Agriculture, and Harford County Government, whose support is instrumental to our success.

In 2026, we are eager to deliver another year of important programs aimed at enriching lives. UME is embarking on a comprehensive strategic planning process to develop its roadmap for the future, as we seek to ensure that our programs and services reflect the needs of our communities. Please reach out to me with any insights or suggestions on how we might enhance our efforts.

Andrew A. Kness

Interim Harford County Extension Director
and Senior Agent, Agriculture & Food Systems



OUR STAFF

Andrew Kness

Interim County Extension Director &
Sr. Agent, Agriculture & Food Systems
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Patricia Hoopes *(retired 7/25)*

Rob Mehlman *(hired 1/26)*
Nutrient Management Program
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Lynne DiBastiani *(retired 7/25)*

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Charae Harris

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Olivia Huber

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Claire Cambardella

Environment, Natural Resources & Sea Grant
Watershed Restoration Spec./Agent Assoc.
ccambard@umd.edu

OUR EAC



The **Harford County Extension Advisory Council (EAC)** is a registered non-profit board of volunteers who advise and support the work at the Harford County Extension office. They are local professionals, leaders and stakeholders who value the impact of Extension in the community. Contact akness@umd.edu with questions about the Harford County EAC or how you can get involved.



Harford County legislative tour organized in collaboration with the Harford Soil Conservation District, Harford County Farm Bureau, Harford County Economic Development, and University of Maryland.

Andrew Kness, Senior Agent

Agriculture & Food Systems

UMD Extension offers a variety of services to the commercial farm community that help improve production and operate more profitably while maintaining minimizing environmental impacts.

In Harford County in 2025, \$1.5 million in grants was secured to support active research and education programs aimed towards helping our county farmers thrive. Research into drone technology in agriculture has been an ongoing project, as farmers are interested in utilizing drones on their farms to reduce pesticide use, scout crops, and seed cover crops. Research continues to be conducted on best management practices for tar spot, a novel disease of corn first detected in Harford County in 2022.

Program HIGHLIGHTS

- \$1.5 million in grants secured to fund 8 projects
- 134 farmers certified in pesticide safety
- 119 farmers received nutrient management training
- Farmers report 6-10% yield increase due to knowledge gain through Extension programs
- UME's "Ag 101 Training for Government Ag Service Providers" program, led by Kness, was nationally recognized for excellence in Extension programming
- Local research on Tar Spot, a new disease of corn in Maryland, was featured on *Maryland Farm & Harvest*

AgFS BY THE NUMBERS

42

Educational Programs

127

Farm Consultations

1,756

Direct Teaching Contacts

127,000

Indirect Contacts through educational articles and publications



"Beers and Steers" outreach event where the public sampled locally brewed beer and sampled locally grown beef while meeting farmers and learning about beef cuts and beef production led by UME faculty.



Patricia Hoopes, Coordinator, Retired 2025

Nutrient Management

The University of Maryland Extension's Agricultural Nutrient Management Program is a component of the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and focuses on balancing nutrient applications with crop requirements to optimize crop production while helping farmers protect the Chesapeake Bay by promoting effective and environmentally sound nutrient application. All farmers in Maryland are required to have a nutrient management plan and UME provides plans to farmers free of charge.

Program HIGHLIGHTS

After many years of serving the farmers of Harford County by writing over 220,000 acres of nutrient management plans, Patricia Hoopes retired at the end of July 2025. Rob Mehlman is her replacement and started January 2026. Please reach out to Rob with your nutrient management needs.



BY THE
NUMBERS

Plans written for

60

Active Clients

Covering

11,012

Acres





Isabel Mooney-Kreidler
Horticulturist & MG Coordinator

Horticulture/Master Gardeners

Horticulturist and Master Gardener Coordinator, Isabel Mooney, answers consumer horticulture questions regarding plants, plant diseases, and insects and coordinates the Harford County Master Gardener program. The mission of the Master Gardeners is to educate residents about safe, effective, and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities. Certified Master Gardeners are county residents who have been selected and trained by the University of Maryland to deliver research-based horticultural information to the public.

Program **HIGHLIGHTS**

2025 Partners and Projects

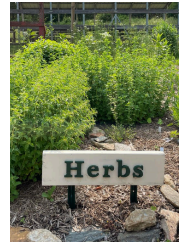
- Anita Leight Estuary Center Pollinator Gardens ●
- Bel Air and Havre de Grace Farmers Markets ●
- Brightview Senior Living Community ●
- Eden Mill Nature Center—Demonstration Garden and Pollinator Garden ●
- Harford County Agricultural Center— Plant and Literature (PAL) Garden ●
- Harford County Farm Fair ●
- Harford County Public Libraries ●
- Harford Glen Environmental Education Center ●
- Havre de Grace Heirloom Victory Garden ●
- Ladew Gardens ●
- Liriodendron Mansion ●
- Maryland State Police Barrack D ●
- Rockfield Manor Gazebo Garden ●
- Steppingstone Farm Museum

MASTER GARDENER

BY THE NUMBERS

141

Master Gardener Volunteers



116

Classes Taught



11,631

Volunteer Hours





Claire Cambardella, Agent Associate/
Watershed Restoration Specialist



Watershed Protection and Restoration

The Sea Grant Extension Watershed Protection and Restoration Program is a member of the Watershed Assistance Collaborative with Maryland Sea Grant, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Environmental Finance Center. The Sea Grant Extension program partners with Harford Streams to conduct a Watersheds Stewards Academy. Master Watershed Stewards are trained to promote Harford Streams' mission to increase water quality awareness and engage communities to take actions to improve water quality.

Program HIGHLIGHTS

The Harford County Watershed Stewards Academy graduated 11 new Master Watershed Stewards in 2025. The Class Project was installing a rain garden designed to treat 1,000 square feet of stormwater runoff at the Izaak Walton League in Edgewood (pictured above.)

Additional 2025 initiatives include the graduates' Capstone Projects: a native conservation garden at Hickory Elementary School (pictured right), a litter pickup event, storm drain stenciling, a riparian buffer planting, and educational programming with the Boys and Girls Club. Overall, the Master Watershed Stewards hosted and participated in 11 educational events and engaged an additional 387 volunteers in their activities.

BY THE NUMBERS

870

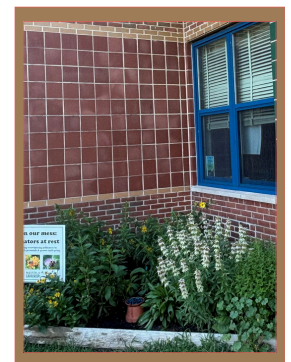
Hours Volunteered by Harford County Master Stewards

200+

Native Plants Planted

904

Individuals Engaged in Educational Activities



Hickory Elementary School Native Conservation Garden
Before *After*



Jennifer Dixon Cravens, Sr. Agent Associate/
Nutrition Educator

Family and Consumer Sciences

The Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) program provides healthy living, nutrition, health, and wellness programs. Our mission is to strengthen families and communities through Nutrition, Health & Wellness Education and programming efforts. Our goal is to empower the citizens of Harford County and Marylanders to make decisions that lead to healthy living, financial success, and wellness.

Harford County Family & Consumer Sciences Nutrition Educator Jennifer Dixon Cravens' primary areas of expertise and teaching are nutrition, health, wellness, chronic disease management, health literacy & food safety.

Program HIGHLIGHTS

Online and In-Person Classes

Nutrition, Health, Wellness | Health Literacy
Food Safety & Preservation

FCS Healthy Living Quarterly Newsletter

Distributed to over 1,200 recipients

Free Pressure Canner Gauge Testing

2025 Partnerships Included:

Harford County Department of Social Services |
Havre de Grace Housing Authority | Village at
Lakeview Community Center | Harford County Public
Schools | Catholic Charities



BY THE
NUMBERS

52

Nutrition, Health &
Wellness Classes

10

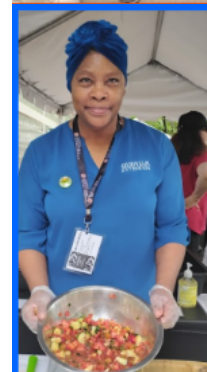
Food Safety
Classes

800

Program
Participants

38

Youth
Outreach





Charae Harris, Project Leader /Nutrition Educator

Olivia Huber, Program Assistant

SNAP-Ed Program

For more than 25 years, Maryland SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) helped local families lead healthy lives through increased food access, improved nutrition, and physical activity. Through partnerships with state and community organizations across Maryland, SNAP-Ed has provided comprehensive programs, which consist of delivering nutrition education and cultivating policy, system and environmental-level changes that support healthy choices and behaviors.

The SNAP-Ed program ended in 2025 due to a national cut of the funding. SNAP-Ed was 100% federally-funded through the USDA and funding ended September 2025. Nutrition education resources have been compiled and are publicly-available on our website at the link to the right.

Program HIGHLIGHTS

In FY25, Maryland SNAP-Ed worked with 772 local partners, including 40 multi-site and district-wide collaborations, to deliver comprehensive educational interventions. SNAP-Ed also trained 6,023 partners to implement SNAP-Ed programs and/or to support healthy eating and physical activity through improved policies, practices, and environmental efforts.



MARYLAND
SNAP-ED

BY THE
NUMBERS

In fiscal year 2025, the final year of implementation for this statewide program, Maryland SNAP-Ed reached over 640,000 residents. Over 55,000 individuals participated in education programs – a number that had been increasing since the program began.

Check here for healthy
recipe and cooking ideas!



<https://eatsmart.umd.edu>

Visit our website for local food resources in your county:
<https://go.umd.edu/food>

You do NOT need SNAP to get food from food pantries or food distribution events.



Marylisa Schaedel, Agent Associate

Karen Taylor, Program Assistant

4-H Youth Development

The Harford County 4-H Program provides a supportive setting for youth to learn beneficial life skills and explore their interests through hands-on projects and workshops in areas such as agriculture, science, technology, and the arts. Local volunteer leaders partner with Extension faculty and staff to provide direct leadership and educational support.

Program Highlights

- Over 95 hands-on workshops, contests, events and activities in varied areas of interest were offered. Many 4-H'ers went on to showcase their projects at the Harford County Farm Fair and Maryland State Fair!
- Residential and Day Camp youth campers spent “A Week by the Creek” at the Harford County 4-H Camp where they learned both independence and a sense of belonging while engaging in fun and rewarding events and activities.
- Partnered again with Harford County Public Schools’ 7th grade science classes on the Embryology project as well as with the Highlands School and Harford Family House after-school clubs
- NEW partnership in 2025: Harford County Public Libraries



BY THE NUMBERS

106

Certified Volunteers

405

Youth enrolled in community clubs

1,000+

Youth reached through camp, workshops and other outreach







COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURE &
NATURAL RESOURCES

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

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